

THE FIGHT FOR FAMILY PLANNING. THE DEVELOPMENT OF FAMILY PLANNING SERVICES IN BRITAIN 1921-74

Audrey Leathard

MacMillan Press
London (1980)

293 pages. Price £15

Public attitudes to contraception have, without doubt, taken a very long time to change. Those pioneers who attempted to inform the public about the ways in which they could plan their families had an uphill struggle—not only against the church and politicians, but against the medical profession as well.

An account of the development of family planning in the UK could be fascinating. Unfortunately, I found this book tedious, not least because it is laid out like a students' textbook, with countless headings, tables, and charts. As a source book, with its 17-page index and incredible total of 1,139 references, it might be of interest to a dedicated student of social history; to others, and particularly at a cost of £15, I cannot recommend it.

DAVID HASLAM

COUNSELLING AND THE NURSE (REVISED EDITION)

Gaynor Nurse

HM & M Publishers Ltd
Buckinghamshire (1980)

116 pages. Price £3

It is not easy to write about a process which takes its shape from the personalities of and interaction between helper and client. Yet here it is, set out simply and clearly from the different points of view of nurse, patient, colleague and authority figure, and in a way which recognises the freedoms and constraints of the work setting.

First principles of counselling are stated, and then reinforced in sections on the helping process, on responding to individuals, on the roles of counsellor and client, on preparing for counselling and in discussing its practical applications. All these factors are kept firmly within the boundaries of the professional task; the importance of the patient is at the core of the book.

The author examines different ways of using counselling skills and underlines the need for counselling and support for those working with people under stress. The importance of the

counsellor's personality, the need to understand one's own motivation, and the need for self-awareness and appreciation of the common humanity of counsellor, client, nurse and patient are all clearly stated. These factors are often ignored by the profession under the pressure of daily contact with those who are ill and/or under stress.

Easy to read, concise, lacking the woolliness often attributed to counselling, this book also has appendices listing a variety of agencies for referral and reference guides. It also has an extensive bibliography. An important book for group practice medical centres, and for both those doubtful of the value of counselling and those who are more convinced, *Counselling and the Nurse* contains essential basic theory, presented in language free from jargon. Though written for nurses, much of it is equally pertinent to general practitioners.

DAPHNE BENTLEY

THE HEART BOOK

Eve and Barry Lewis

Hutchinson
London (1980)

207 pages. Price £5.95 (Hardback)
£3.95 (Paperback)

Anyone who stresses the recent and epidemic nature of coronary heart disease incurs my displeasure. Professor Lewis falls into this trap but otherwise he has written, to my mind, a balanced account of the epidemiology of coronary heart disease with special emphasis on the role of diet. Designed for the layman, it nevertheless makes use of original sources, and while the sources are selected in order to support the thesis, they are clearly and fairly presented. The thesis is that modification of lifestyle, including diet, will diminish mortality from ischaemic heart disease.

The second and smaller part of the book, which is primarily Eve Lewis' contribution, is a series of recipes which replace butter with soft margarine, eschew egg yolks, and trim off animal fat. I do not know what they taste like.

I find it a little difficult to be sure under what circumstances I would recommend *The Heart Book*. It is a bit long for the young, who might heed the advice, and a bit late for those with established disease. Books of this sort are inevitably evangelical—which may not be a fault if they promulgate the true gospel—but this one is too evangelical for most scientists and doctors

and it must rate as a brave try with only limited usefulness.

J. S. MCCORMICK

A PATIENT'S GUIDE TO DIALYSIS AND TRANSPLANTATION

Roger Gabriel

MTP Press Ltd
Lancaster (1980)

128 pages. Price £4.95

“Everything you always wanted to know about dialysis and transplantation but were afraid to ask.” It's all here—the principles of dialysis, preparation for dialysis, haemodialysis, problems with dialysis, intermittent peritoneal dialysis, continuous ambulatory peritoneal dialysis, home dialysis, dialysis and holidays, transplantation and social service support—written in simple language by a renal physician and with a glossary of technical terms. No patient with renal failure should be without his copy, but the ‘you’ in the first sentence means not only the patient but the general practitioner—and the receptionist, nurse, health visitor, and social worker.

S. L. BARLEY

HUTCHISON'S CLINICAL METHODS. 17TH EDITION

Stuart Mason and Michael Swash

Baillière Tindall
London (1980)

495 pages. Price £3.50

Skill in clinical medicine, like any other pursuit, is acquired only if one achieves a good grounding. By going into its 17th edition Hutchison's book has stood the test of time. Reading it for the first time I found it thoroughly enjoyable. Its style is simple and precise but it covers most subjects in adequate detail. New chapters on haematology, the examination of the abdomen, and the unconscious patient have been introduced. The amount of space devoted to different topics varies and to some extent makes the book slightly unbalanced. The chapters on neurology and haematology are expansive but the chapter on child examination and developmental assessment is brief to the point where it hardly seems worth including.

Undergraduates will find this book indispensable and I would also recommend it to anyone studying for post-graduate examinations who could do with a refresher course.

JOHN DRUMMOND