
MEDICAL LITERATURE

BOOKS REVIEWED

PARTICIPATION IN HEALTH

J. McEwen, C. J. M. Martin
and N. Wilkins

Croom Helm,
London (1983)

264 pages. Price £14.95

The three authors, who represent different interests, have selected topics such as self-help, the women's health movement and education for health to show the influence that wider participation in primary health care is likely to have on medicine in the future. There is a thorough and excellent review of the literature, and a particularly interesting feature of the book is the way in which the authors have incorporated quotations from other works. The end result is a book which, while giving due regard to the doctor and his role, considers other health workers as well. This is a good book, a useful introduction to the subject and worthy of serious study.

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THE NORMAL CHILD (8th edition)

Some Problems of the Early Years and their Treatment

Ronald S. Illingworth

Churchill Livingstone,
Edinburgh (1983)

374 pages. Price £12.00

This edition coincided with the thirtieth anniversary of the first edition of this classic text. A previous review in this Journal described the book as the best of its kind, and this continues to be the case.

There is a new introduction, which emphasizes the importance of 'knowing the normal'. A new chapter entitled 'Bringing the best out of a child' will appeal to all who are concerned with giving guidance to families with young

children. The 'Basis of behaviour' chapter is a good example of the way in which Professor Illingworth can authoritatively review a complex subject and extract the common sense. His sympathy for mothers who have to bring their children up in difficult social circumstances is apparent, particularly in the section on the annoying characteristics of the developing child.

In my view, this book should be essential reading for anyone who is training to be a general practitioner or a health visitor. It helps to redress the balance in the education of doctors, which is at present so weighted towards study of the pathological and abnormal.

E.G.B.

CLINICAL EPIDEMIOLOGY: THE ESSENTIALS

R. H. Fletcher, S. W. Fletcher and
E. H. Wagner

Williams and Wilkins, Baltimore
and London (1982)

224 pages. Price £11.00

Clinical epidemiology has been pronounced, by its exponents, 'a basic science for clinicians'. It consists of a marriage between quantitative concepts long used by epidemiologists in studying disease in populations (frequency, rate, causality, etc.) and decision-making in the individual case (diagnosis, treatment, prognosis, etc.)—the daily fare of clinical medicine. The three authors are academicians with combined training in general medicine and epidemiology. Their intention is to help medical practitioners develop skills for assessing the scientific merit of research upon which clinical decisions are premised. The book is evenly apportioned among 10 central chapters, each dealing with a fundamental focus of clinical research, such as defining abnormality, assessing efficacy of treatments and employing case-control study design to test causal hypotheses. The theme of each chapter is illustrated with an excellent selection of published studies which demonstrate both proper and improper applications of the epidemiological principles under consideration.

For what it sets out to accomplish, *Clinical epidemiology: the essentials* achieves its purpose in an admirable, if textbook-like, fashion. However, from

the point of view of the general practitioner, the book lacks some of the essentials of epidemiology. First, the classic epidemiological phenomena of epidemic, endemic and pandemic occurrence of disease are not addressed. Surely the clinical skills of recognizing, reporting and responding to an epidemic or local outbreak of disease are a critical part of practice in the community? Secondly, the skills for efficiently maintaining and reviewing practice morbidity data, including use of microcomputers, receive no mention. Yet herein lies a prime opportunity for the practitioner both to study critically his own patient population and to contribute to the epidemiological knowledge of common diseases. On these two scores, *Clinical epidemiology* would benefit by extending its scope to take account of the epidemiological work of community-based clinicians such as Will Pickles, John Fry, Julian Tudor Hart and their like.

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HOSPICE CARE Principles and Practice

C. A. Corr and D. M. Corr (editors)

Faber and Faber,
London (1983)

364 pages. Price £4.95 (paperback)

The literature in this field has increased considerably in the last decade, so this book faces stiff competition. Two thirds of the contributions are from North America and do not always reflect the day-to-day problems seen in the UK, and while there are nine chapters by British contributors six have been published previously.

Although all the vital aspects of this branch of medicine are included, one has to search for them. Some of the practical aspects described are not up to date: it is not necessary to prescribe an antiemetic routinely with morphine, and no mention is made of the syringe driver—a convenient means of administering subcutaneous diamorphine, at home or in hospital, when morphine cannot be given orally.

For the general practitioner in the UK there are other more attractive, concise and relevant texts available.

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**PRIMARY HEALTH CARE
Bridging the Gap between
Theory and Practice**

Nigel C. H. Stott

Springer-Verlag,
Berlin, Heidelberg, New York and
Tokyo (1983)

113 pages. Price DM40 (approx.
£10.50) (paperback)

This paperback, aimed at all who are interested and involved in primary health care—whether undergraduates, nurses or doctors—propounds a philosophy of care which goes far beyond the traditional 'fire brigade' approach of crisis-intervention medicine. The author starts with the heart of all clinical medicine—the consultation—and stresses the

importance of communication skills and behaviours in managing the presentations familiar in general practice. He then proposes a model, not necessarily to be followed through in every contact with patients, which takes account of reasons for consulting, of other problems not offered, and of opportunistic health promotion. Each of these themes is expanded in subsequent chapters, written against a background of the author's experience and wide-ranging studies on health topics from different cultures. In the chapter on disease prevention and health promotion possibilities and opportunities for assimilating this dimension of care into everyday practice are examined; nutrition, prevention of destructive behaviour (of which accident prevention is a subset) and developmental scanning (*sic*) are singled out for special treatment. The final chapter looks at trends in general practice—towards greater operational efficiency, less prescribing, more teamwork, more anticipatory care, the goals of the Alma-Ata Declaration—and at the stresses all these forces impose on general practice as we know it today.

This remarkable, comprehensive and readable book is likely to have a considerable impact on all who read it. It is full of the author's idealism, which this reviewer found stimulating while not fully sharing his views on the primary-secondary-tertiary prevention concept, or the commercial promotion of glucose-electrolyte solutions for diarrhoea in infants. The diagrams, figures and tables, with the possible exception of that on viscosity of foods, are helpful and to the point. The bibliography is extensive and useful, and a short index is included.

This is a book to be read widely, especially by those concerned with undergraduate medical education. Young entrants to general practice will be stimulated, some of their seniors may be irritated, but most clinicians will find something of value, as they examine their approach to the care of their patients against the challenges posed by this book.

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**BOOKS
RECEIVED**

RESEARCH IN PRACTICE TEACHING. Papers and Projects from a Workshop, (CCETSW Study 6), CCERSW, London, 1983. 128 pages. Price £5.50 (paperback).

CURRENT MEDICAL TREATMENT, C. W. Havard (editor), Baillière Tindall, Eastbourne, 1983. 562 pages. Price £19.50.

THE G-JO INSTITUTE MANUAL OF MEDICINAL HERBS, Michael Blate, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames, 1983. 128 pages. Price £3.95 (paperback).

HOW TO HEAL YOURSELF USING HAND ACUPRESSURE, Michael Blate, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames, 1983. 194 pages. Price £3.95 (paperback).

HOW TO HEAL YOURSELF USING FOOT ACUPRESSURE, Michael Blate, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames, 1983. 178 pages. Price £3.95 (paperback).

ACTIVITY, HEALTH AND FITNESS IN OLD AGE, Jean A. Macheath, Croom Helm, London, 1983. 179 pages. Price £12.95.

MEDICAL DIAGNOSIS, From Student to Clinician, Janet Gale and Philip Marsden, Oxford University Press, 1983. 218 pages. Price £17.50.

ABC OF COMPUTING. Articles from the BMJ, A. J. Asbury, British Medical Journal, London, 1983. 69 pages. Price £5.75 (paperback).

PREPARATION FOR MRCP PART II, Paul Siklos and Stephen Olczak, MTP Press, Lancaster, 1983. 186 pages. Price £9.95.

THE REAL MENSTRUAL CYCLE, Doreen Asso, Wiley, Chichester, 1983. 214 pages. Price £6.95 (paperback).

PSYCHOPHARMACOLOGY AND SEXUAL DISORDERS, David Wheatley (editor), Oxford University Press, 1983. 178 pages. Price £17.50.

SIX WEEKS TO A HEALTHY BACK, Alexander Melleby, Sheldon Press, London, 1983. 102 pages. Price £3.95 (paperback), £6.95 (cased).

COMMUNITY HEALTH, PREVENTIVE MEDICINE AND SOCIAL SERVICES. J. B. Meredith Davies, Baillière Tindall, London, 1983. 485 pages. Price £7.95 (paperback).

A MANUAL OF ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY RESUSCITATION, Colin Robertson and Keith Little (editors), Wiley, Chichester, 1983. 181 pages. Price £3.95 (paperback).

ALL ABOUT TWINS. A Handbook for Parents, Gillian Leigh, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames, 1983. 253 pages. Price £4.95 (paperback).

COOKING NATURALLY FOR PLEASURE AND HEALTH, Michael Blate and Gail C. Watson, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Henley-on-Thames, 1983. 241 pages. Price £4.95 (paperback).

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE INFANT AND YOUNG CHILD, Normal and Abnormal, Ronald S. Illingworth, Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, 1983. 299 pages. Price £11.00 (paperback).

THE ABC OF EATING. Coping with Anorexia, Bulimia and Compulsive Eating, Joy Melville, Sheldon Press, London, 1983. 106 pages. Price £2.50 (paperback), £6.95 (cased).

NEW DRUGS. Articles from The British Medical Journal, British Medical Journal, London, 1983. 215 pages. Price £6.00 (paperback).

DYING AT HOME, Harriet Copperman, Wiley, Chichester, 1983. 158 pages. Price £3.95 (paperback).

A GUIDE TO THE MENTAL HEALTH ACT 1983, Robert Buglass, Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, 1983. 152 pages. Price £9.95 (paperback).

HEALTH SURVEYS in Practice and in Potential. A Critical Review of their Scope and Methods, Ann Cartwright, Oxford University Press, 1983. 277 pages. Price £8.50.

GASTRO-INTESTINAL DISEASE, C. J. C. Roberts (editor), Springer-Verlag, Berlin, 1983. 236 pages. Price £9.00 (paperback).

RHEUMATIC DISEASE, Hilary A. Capell, T. J. Daymond and W. Carson Dick, Springer-Verlag, Berlin, 1983. 196 pages. Price £9.00 (paperback).

HIP REPLACEMENT: the Facts, Kevin Harding, Oxford University Press, 1983. 115 pages. Price £6.95.

MEFANAMIC ACID. Some Practical Aspects of the Treatment of Rheumatic Disease, The Royal Society of Medicine, Oxford University Press, 1983. 45 pages. Price £5.00 (paperback).

BEWARE ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE. The Christian View, Roy Livesey, Bury House Christian Books, Kidderminster, 1983. 81 pages. Price £1.50 (paperback).