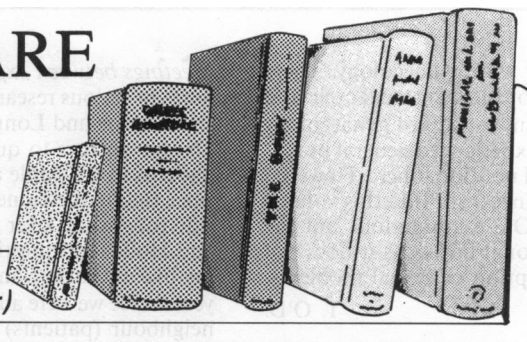


PRIMARY CARE BOOK SHELF

NIGEL STOTT (*Reviews Editor*)



WENDY J. JONES
KAREN WALKER
T. O'DOWD
M.G. SADLER

MODERN OBSTETRICS IN GENERAL PRACTICE

Oxford general practice series 9

G.N. Marsh (Ed)

Oxford University Press (1985)

448 pages. Price £15.00

ANTENATAL CARE ASSESSED

Marion Hall, Sally MacIntyre and Maureen Porter

Aberdeen University Press, Aberdeen (1986)

139 pages. Price £12.50

FUNDAMENTALS OF OBSTETRICS AND GYNAECOLOGY

Volume I Obstetrics. Volume II Gynaecology. Fourth edition

Derek Llewellyn-Jones

Faber and Faber, London (1986)

Volume I 503 pages. Price £12.50

Volume II 315 pages. Price £9.95

MICROBIAL DISEASES IN NEPHROLOGY

A.W. Asscher and W. Brumfitt (Eds)

John Wiley, Chichester (1986)

366 pages. Price £35.00

CARDIOLOGY

C.P.F. Wharton and A.R. Archer

MTP Press, Lancaster (1986)

161 pages. Price £12.95

MEETINGS BETWEEN EXPERTS

David Tuckett, Mary Boulton, Coral Olson and Anthony Williams

Tavistock Publications, London (1985)

290 pages

Modern obstetrics in general practice is the ninth and latest addition to the *Oxford general practice series*. It is aimed specifically at general practitioners who are practising or beginning to practise obstetric care. It should also make essential reading for trainees. However, this is not a textbook, but a structured collection of contributions on interrelated topics that bring the reader up to date with current thinking. Each chapter is written by a different author and there are contributions from consultant obstetricians, a psychiatrist, general practitioners, health visitors, midwives, a statistician, research workers and mothers.

As might be expected from such a broad spectrum of contributors, a wide range of topics are covered including preconception counselling, assessment of risk factors, intervention in labour, natural childbirth, audit and obstetric records, and several chapters compare different sites for intrapartum care. This highlights the importance of team-work in this area of primary health care.

Other chapters cover more standard topics such as postnatal care and depression. These are sympathetically written and young general practitioners, especially those with no personal family experience, may find the hints useful.

Not only does the book cover modern obstetrics from the

viewpoint of the general practitioner, it also gives an account of why modern obstetrics has become what it is today, and more particularly, why the largest percentage of births now take place in hospital. It suggests furthermore that routine fetal tracing of low-risk obstetric populations is unnecessary and may, in fact, be deleterious owing to false positive interpretations.

The book explains the rise of the woman's consumer movement and the first chapter is a subjective account of labour by an elderly primigravida who went 17 days postdates and was induced and delivered in a general practitioner unit. The account also puts forward the feminist viewpoint which is, on the whole, a balanced criticism but does occasionally resort to sweeping statements.

Overall, this is a well written and readable book which is pertinent to general practitioner obstetrics. It deserves a place in any practice library, filling the gap left by formal obstetric texts.

W.J.J.

Antenatal care assessed reports a study carried out in Aberdeen where antenatal care was changed to make more use of general practitioner and midwife care for uncomplicated cases. The authors give a history of antenatal care, set out its aims and compare the antenatal care in the setting of hospital, general practice and satellite clinics before and after the change. The methods of assessment are clearly described and the results are well tabulated and reported and easy to follow. The opinions of mothers and professionals have been considered and the results looked at from both a clinical and a psychological point of view.

I enjoyed the book and was pleased to see a fair evaluation of the role of the general practitioner in antenatal care as well as that of the hospital. It is interesting that the general practitioners enjoyed their participation in this scheme despite it causing a considerable increase in their workload.

Any general practitioner involved in antenatal care would appreciate this book and be interested to see how other professionals and mothers feel about our role in this field.

K.W.

Fundamentals of obstetrics and gynaecology comes in two volumes but the first, on obstetrics, is almost redundant for the modern general practitioner. There are 20 useful pages on antenatal care but the bulk of the book deals with normal and abnormal labour, abnormal pregnancy and puerperium and obstetric operations. The author assumes that delivery will take place in hospital so the general practitioner undertaking deliveries in the home or in a general practitioner unit might not find the text adequate.

Like generations of medical students I used this book for my undergraduate obstetrics and it is still safe, reliable and non-controversial, avoiding the ethical and political issues confronting obstetricians today.

Volume two deals sympathetically with gynaecology. There are good basic chapters on disorders of the menstrual cycle and the climacteric. However, it covers many aspects of gynaecology from a specialist viewpoint and any experienced general practitioner looking for something new will not find it here. However, students and general practitioner trainees will find this volume useful for either final MB or DRCOG examinations but the postgraduate will need to use additional books as it does not deal adequately with either contraception or sexual problems.

T. O'D.

Nearly 3% of consultations in general practice are for urinary symptoms and the bulk of such illness is diagnosed and treated by the general practitioner. How ironic that the third National Symposium on Microbiological Disease in Nephrology should be held without apparent input from general practice.

In *Microbial diseases in nephrology* the editors have culled 21 papers from this symposium and nearly half are of interest to the general practitioner. Ruthless editing has produced an unusual degree of uniformity and each chapter is concise, appropriately illustrated, well referenced and has a summary at the end.

The papers review topics in depth including bacteriuria in pregnant and non-pregnant women, covert and overt urinary infections in children, the use of antibiotics and recurrent urinary infections. Professor Dontas from Athens provides 'thoughts on the neglected child of microbial disease' or urinary infection in old age and his observations are of great importance to general practice.

This book certainly earns its place in postgraduate libraries and many general practitioners will find it useful on their own bookshelves.

T. O'D.

Cardiology is a new volume in the series *Management of common diseases in family practice*. It is jointly written by a consultant physician and a family doctor and it emphasizes the management and treatment of specific problem areas. Thus, after an interesting chapter on the changing pattern and problems of cardiology today, there are chapters on chest pain, breathlessness, palpitations, syncope, swollen legs, cardiac murmur, hypertension, angina, myocardial infarction, acute cardiac failure, chronic cardiac failure, cardiac dysrhythmia and infective inflammatory and invasive processes of the heart.

Overall, the authors have produced a text which is clear and concise, if a little skimpy in places. General practitioners would find it easy reading at the end of a busy day, and would be able to update their knowledge of cardiology with the investment of only a few hours. The modern techniques of investigation and management are emphasized, and the use of the newer cardiac drugs explained. In certain sections, case histories are usefully employed to illustrate points in management, together with electrocardiographs as appropriate.

Some of the views expressed in the text are controversial, and sometimes conflicting, for example, the authors state 'extremely rarely a syphilitic aortitis may involve a coronary ostia' then shortly afterwards 'simple investigations include serology for syphilis'. In other areas there is a blur between management by general practitioners and specialists, for example in the section on murmurs, echocardiography is mentioned prior to referral to a specialist unit — how many general practitioners are able to do this? This blurring occurs in many of the chapters and is the result of a jointly written text. Perhaps greater clarity would have been achieved if the text had been separated into general practitioner management, followed by consultant comment.

This volume provides a concise, up-to-date account of cardiology, presented with practical medicine in mind. Its value is diminished by poor presentation which could easily be corrected in the second edition.

M.G.S.

Meetings between experts is an academic monograph of importance to serious researchers in general practice. It is now 10 years since Byrne and Long's classic study which caused many complacent doctors to question their ability to communicate with patients in a flexible and sensitive way. It is more than 20 years since Balint questioned doctors' 'Apostolic function' which may ride roughshod over patients' views. It is 30 years since Szasz and Hollender questioned the justification for doctors behaving like authoritarian parents who know best. It is nearly 2000 years since we were advised on the highest authority to 'love your neighbour (patients) as yourself'.

The four social scientists who researched more than 1000 primary care consultations to produce this new book have contributed to our understanding of what may happen in doctor-patient encounters. The authors focus on the ideas doctors and patients share within four predefined areas: the diagnostic significance of a patient's problem; the treatment-action of a patient's problem; the treatment consequences; and the illness consequences.

A lack of dialogue, incomplete explanations and failure to elicit the patients' fears, feelings and expectations were the main findings. However, most patients seemed to understand more than the research workers thought they should, and patients correctly made sense of over 50% of key points in consultations. This paradox is well researched and amplified helpfully. The detail of the research methods and the honest discussion of limitations to the study design make this work another classic for doctor-watchers. The implications described when changes are made in consultation skills are logical in the light of the data base but are not underpinned by a full understanding of why doctors (and no doubt others) function in this way or of the systems which help to perpetuate the *status quo*.

This book is a readable and careful account of an important piece of research which deserves a place on the library shelves of research workers and teachers.

N.C.H.S.

BOOKS RECEIVED

ABC OF PLASTIC AND RECONSTRUCTIVE SURGERY

Dai Davies, *British Medical Journal*, London, 1985.
67 pages. Price £6.50

IDEAS IN PRACTICE

Community Health Council, Leeds, 1985. 26 pages

THE CASE FOR HOMEOPATHY

Albert Leiser (Presenter), Hippocrates Publishing, High Wycombe, Bucks., 1985. 88 pages. Price £1.50

MORTAL OR MORBID? A DIAGNOSIS OF THE MORBIDITY FACTOR

John Ashley and Gordon McLachlan, The Nuffield Provincial Hospitals Trust, London, 1985. 85 pages. Price £6.00

DRUG THERAPY DURING PREGNANCY

Tom K.A.B. Eskes and Mieczyslaw Finster (Eds), Butterworths, London, 1985. 230 pages. Price £35.00

THE 36 HOUR DAY. CARING AT HOME FOR CONFUSED ELDERLY PEOPLE

Nancy L. Mace and Peter V. Rabins with Beverly A. Castleton, Christopher Cloke and Evelyn McEwen, Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1985. 232 pages. Price £5.95

ALL ABOUT ADOLESCENCE

C.G.D. Brook, John Wiley, Chichester, 1985. 152 pages. Price £4.95

BAILLIERE'S HANDBOOK OF FIRST AID (7th edition)

Norman G. Kirby and Stephen J. Mather, Bailliere Tindall, London, 1985. 360 pages. Price £6.95