

ethical problems. They describe with refreshing candour the mistakes and omissions. Their tentative conclusions and suggestions are very relevant to general practice.

I believe one of the most important and unexpected outcomes of this trial will be the initiation of the practice nurse, which will have a profound effect on the delivery of primary care.

This is an important book — it should be the basis of hypertension screening and treatment in general practice and as such should be mandatory reading for all those in primary care.

D.W. GAU

*General Practitioner, Beaconsfield, Bucks*

## UNEMPLOYMENT AND HEALTH

### A disaster and a challenge

Richard Smith

*Oxford University Press (1987)*

197 pages. Price £4.95

This is an important, excellently written book on a subject affecting the work of us all and on which none are so well informed that they will not learn a great deal more from Dr Smith. It is based on his series of articles in the *British Medical Journal*, but at £4.95 even doctors who kept them should buy this book and re-read them. Questions derived from the data should be included in the qualifying and MRCGP examinations.

Since 1967 all general practitioners have had two whole-time-equivalent jobs in their gift. The fact that of about 60 000 reimbursable posts we have chosen to fill only 34 500 while we still complain that we do not have enough time to do our work well, indicates that as a group we are wrongly motivated and poorly informed. This book tackles both these problems excellently, with a good balance between anecdotal experience and statistical research.

Richard Smith faces opposition from two groups. On the one hand there are many who deny that unemployment is of particular concern to doctors as doctors and regret the *British Medical Journal's* policy of including social issues in its remit. On the other hand there are those like myself who deny that further research is needed to prove that an event which reduces income by half for about 60% of those made unemployed must affect mental and physical health, and are generally impatient with approaches that seem to evade macro-judgements by concentrating on micro-investigations and micro-solutions. It is really not possible to satisfy both these audiences.

Dr Smith, 'though not frightened' of controversial macropolitics, has chosen 'to say little and step lightly'. So lightly that the political consequences of major social change are not faced seriously, but this does not matter. Dr Smith provides so much excellent, thoroughly referenced, source material that no health worker seriously concerned with the direction taken by society in the past 10 years can afford not to have this book.

JULIAN TUDOR HART

*General Practitioner, Glyncorrwg, West Glamorgan*

## OXFORD HANDBOOK OF CLINICAL SPECIALITIES

J.A.B. Collier and J.M. Longmore

*Oxford University Press (1987)*

789 pages. Price £9.95

Any book which attempts to deal with general practice in 64 pages, half of which are blank, has to be admired for audacity if nothing else. The book also deals with gynaecology, obstetrics, paediatrics, psychiatry, ophthalmology, ENT, dermatology, orthopaedics and trauma and is a companion volume to the *Ox-*

*ford handbook of clinical medicine*. It is described as being written primarily for those taking up their first responsibilities in the major specialties of clinical medicine.

I have to admit to approaching the reading of this book in a hostile frame of mind but found the succinct treatment of the different clinical specialties to be both witty and informative. I anticipate that this book will be found in the pockets of the white coats of many medical students and residents. It will be of particular value to those young doctors who do not gain experience in general practice. This book is a classic of its kind in showing that brevity does not necessarily lead to superficiality.

E. GRAHAM BUCKLEY

*Editor of the Journal*

## THERAPEUTIC FACTORS IN GROUP PSYCHOTHERAPY

Sidney Block and Eric Crouch

*Oxford University Press (1987)*

342 pages. Price £8.95

Small group work has become the hallmark of general practice education and is now firmly established as the model of choice. However, in our clinical work we are still firmly wedded to individualized care. Working with patients in small groups is an avenue very few general practitioners have explored. For this reason this excellent book may not receive the attention it deserves.

The authors have assembled an impressive array of research data and highlight those 'factors' that lead to a positive outcome in group work. A helpful differentiation between 'techniques' used in small group work is a useful reminder of their limitations. Chapters outlining the importance of insight, self-disclosure catharsis, guidance acceptance and the instillation of hope are particularly relevant to anyone seriously involved in group therapeutic work. However, much if not all the work relates to clinical and not educational groups and the application may not always be apparent. The boundary between training and treatment is one which at some stage all those interested in the training of health professionals will have to explore. This particular book provides an authoritative introduction.

PATRICK C. PIETRONI

*Senior Lecturer in General Practice,  
St Mary's Hospital Medical School*

## CHIROPODISTS DON'T JUST TREAT FEET — THEY TREAT PEOPLE (Video)

*Society of Chiropractors, London (1987)*

Price £10.00

This 20 minute video is a well-produced presentation which briefly describes the training, professional accreditation and modern practice of properly qualified chiropractors.

Today the chiropractor should be seen as an integral member of the primary health care team. Care of the feet no longer focuses on repairing the ravages of many years of neglect but starts with health education and prevention in children, young adults and the middle aged. Chiropractors look at the whole person before deciding on their recommended course of action.

Unfortunately the video's brevity is both a strength and a weakness. Its production lacks a clear objective since it would be equally appropriate to show it to other members of the primary health care team, prospective chiropractors or patients themselves. Each audience would have something to learn but no one group would be fully satisfied by the content of the film.

CLIVE FROGGATT

*General Practitioner, Cheltenham*