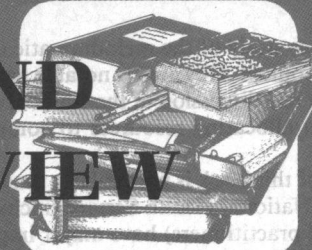




# BOOK AND VIDEO REVIEW



## RESEARCH METHODS FOR GENERAL PRACTITIONERS

*D Armstrong, M Catnan and J Grace*  
Oxford University Press (1990)  
194 pages. Price £15.00

Would you buy a book written by two academic sociologists and a general practitioner? I would. Let me tell you why.

A south east Thames experimental course in research methods evolved into a practical manual which takes the form of a 10-chapter book of 194 pages. The reader is eased into a journey through asking questions, study design, measuring, collecting data and onwards to writing up research. The first two chapters are so full of common sense and so well written that the reader arrives fresh and ready for the technical and statistical details of the middle chapters. Even here the reader's journey is made comfortable by the use of believable problems and examples from projects. Each chapter has a set of questions and answers, a concise summary and a list of suggested tasks. Near the end of this journey is a classic chapter on writing up. The reader is shown first drafts of a 'Dr Greatman's' paper and shown how to criticize and re-write them. Aside from being rather good fun, the process lets the reader recognize and solve the many problems of 'writing up'.

The structure of the book encourages the reader to progress from one section to the next, but each chapter can be read or referred to on its own. The authors may well receive requests for the book to be serialized in journal form.

This book is good, but is it better than the second edition of its northerly rival, J G R Howie's *Research in general practice?* The answer is yes and no. *Research methods for general practitioners* is ideal for trainees and research novices who wish to learn about 'O' level research. *Research in general practice* will remain the bible for 'A' level studies.

Reviewers are asked to send unwanted books to the College Library after reviewing but I think I shall keep this one. It will be helpful to senior students, trainees and colleagues. It will also be useful to me.

R G NEVILLE

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## HIV AND AIDS (video)

### Counselling skills for the GP

*Scottish Health Education Group, Edinburgh (1990)*  
Price £95.00

Most of us find it difficult to talk about sex and drugs. The advent of the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) has added to these difficulties, as well as creating new demands on our counselling skills. This video sheds welcome light on these important areas. It is intended for use by groups of general practitioners who wish to explore and develop their counselling skills

with patients who are at risk from or have already acquired HIV infection.

The video contains excerpts from consultations by two Edinburgh general practitioners. In the first part, Dr Donald Thompson interviews a gay man who requests an HIV test, which is subsequently found to be positive; in the second part, Dr Roy Robertson interviews a female drug user who requests a prescription for drugs. Counselling skills demonstrated during the consultations are highlighted by the use of subtitles, and the tape is interspersed with comments by the practitioners and Dr Linda Gask, a Manchester psychiatrist.

Both consultations are realistic, and are sufficiently complex to allow plenty of scope for comment and criticism. The consultation with the drug user is interesting in that it demonstrates a firm doctor-directed consultation, which is in contrast to the more open consultation with the gay man.

The video is accompanied by concise teaching notes which contain additional material on managing uncertainty, talking about safer sex and the advantages and disadvantages of the HIV test.

This is an excellent teaching resource that should find a place with any group of practitioners or trainees, who wish to explore and improve their talking skills and attitudes towards these important groups of patients.

MORRIS GALLAGHER

*General practitioner, South Shields*

## ETHICS IN HEALTH EDUCATION

*Spyros Doxiadis (ed)*

*John Wiley, Chichester (1990)*  
215 pages. Price £34.95

What is the difference between education and indoctrination? To what extent should we allow the state and other agencies to influence our life and behaviour? What is the hidden curriculum in health education? In confronting the anti-health forces amid us, do the means justify the ends?

An impressive collection of philosophers, physicians, pedagogues and public health experts have come together (thanks to the European Community) to ponder on these and other such weighty matters. The result is an eclectic collection of essays on the dilemmas of policy and practice in health education, exemplified by references to mental health, nutrition and the acquired immune deficiency syndrome. Other topics addressed include health care advertising, the promotion of self-care and the education of children.

Gillon provides a useful framework of moral principles: autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence and justice. But are health education methods that respect people effective in practice? Pattison and Player illustrate the political tensions in health