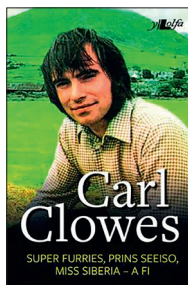


Out of Hours Books

Super Furrries, Prins Seeiso, Miss Siberia — a Fi

Carl Clowes

Y Lolfa Cyf, 2016, PB, 270pp, £12.99, 978-1784611576



COMMUNITY REVITALISATION IN WALES

I first met the author and subject of this book over 40 years ago. I was starting my medical career at the Royal Alexandra Hospital in Rhyl, Flintshire, and he was a Senior House Officer in Respiratory Medicine at Llangwyfan Hospital, near Denbigh, North Wales. Even then he made it obvious that he had certain political leanings.

Carl was a GP who treated the whole patient. But he defined 'holistic medicine' in a much broader way than is usually the case: he believed that, to treat the patient effectively, he had to ensure that not only their immediate family was 'well' but also their extended family, and their society and community too. As he saw the situation, the language of the area, namely Welsh, was part of the community and should be protected and nurtured.

He records his various ventures into community revitalisation while at Llanaelhaearn, Gwynedd, Wales, and afterwards. One of his first attempts at such ventures was, along with other like-minded individuals, to set up Antur Aelhaearn, the first such cooperative venture in mainland Britain, which succeeded in attracting the support of most of the population.

This was in the spring of 1973, and Antur Aelhaearn is still in existence. His next venture was in ensuring that the Welsh language was healthy and the adults living in the area were encouraged and given every opportunity to learn Welsh. To this end he persuaded and cajoled various agencies that the revitalisation of a derelict granite quarry was important because it could be developed into a language centre.

This was bought to fruition and, in 1982, Nant Gwrtheyrn, a Welsh language and heritage centre, was opened. He also took sabbaticals overseas working on health initiatives in Cambodia, Siberia, and India.

This book, tracking the various initiatives by Carl over the years, is an interesting and revealing record of these developments. It could be argued that the record is too personal to be the whole story, and Carl is too close to the action and involved to be able to see the whole picture, despite his best efforts. His spoken Welsh is a little idiosyncratic but this is a volume that should be studied by anyone interested in the role of a committed GP serving a community he loves.

Ieuan Parri,

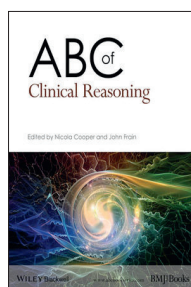
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ABC of Clinical Reasoning Nicola Cooper and John Frain

Wiley-Blackwell, 2016, PB, 64pp, £24.99, 978-1119059080



SOUND AND RATIONAL DECISION MAKING

Sound decision making is routinely cited as a cornerstone of clinical practice. But what techniques actually underlie this process, and why does it — all too often — go wrong? The answers to these questions, and more, are provided by the authors of this book, who have successfully compressed the burgeoning subject of clinical reasoning into a succinct and easily accessible textbook.

The initial chapters review the main components of clinical decision making. These include a rational, evidence-based appraisal of the utility of history taking, physical examination, and diagnostic

testing. Proposed models of clinical reasoning are then outlined, including an illuminating discussion of the application of Kahneman's theory of type 1 and type 2 thinking in reaching a diagnosis.¹

Real-life examples are used to candidly illustrate the results of flawed clinical reasoning in chapters covering cognitive biases and human factors in decision making, which should have a salutary effect on medical practitioners of all degrees of experience. This section forcefully makes the case for greater consideration of tools to counter these intellectual pitfalls, suggestions of which are presented in the next chapter. These strategies are based on the concept of 'metacognition' — thinking about thinking, by which we can identify the blind spots in our own judgements.

The penultimate chapter provides a useful reminder of the values and limitations of guidelines and decision aids, with the final section devoted to methods of teaching clinical reasoning; an appeal that one hopes will be taken up widely.

The text attempts to cover a lot of ground for such a slim volume and occasional sections seem a little cramped. The overall effect, though, is to enthusiastically and intelligently convey the importance of a so far underappreciated yet vital aspect of clinical practice.

Readers should not expect this text to provide a complete summary of the subject [a comprehensive bibliography is supplied]. Nor should they expect a single reading to provide an instant remedy to deficiencies in their own decision making because, as the editors state, developing sound clinical reasoning is a 'lifelong' task. With that in mind, picking up this book would make an excellent start.

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