flawed as a guide to the latter because it says little or nothing about the sources of the denominator data used in calculating mortality and morbidity rates, or about the variety of approaches used in descriptive studies of the relationship of disease frequency to time, place, and personal characteristics. The account of methods used in analytical studies which occupies most of the book can, on the other hand, be recommended most warmly. Although stated in the preface to be intended for those already trained in elementary epidemiology and biostatistics, the book is simply and lucidly written with many clearly worked examples. Even its explanations of such complex procedures as logistic regression and the matching of sample size to desired statistical power demand no more prior knowledge of statistics and epidemiology than is now taught in most British medical schools. Personally, I expect to use this book a lot; and I would recommend every epidemiological unit that engages in analytical studies to obtain a copy for its members' use if the price is too high for them to buy their own.

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Research in preventive community nursing care, Alison While. *Developments in Nursing Research* Volume 4. (Pp 230, £9.95) Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 1986.

During the last ten years it has been possible to identify a shift in health care policy intent from hospital to community care. Running in parallel in emphasis, if not in practice, is a renewed interest in the potential value of preventive health care. Health visitors have been at the forefront of service provision in health promotion and preventive health care so it is fitting that a text should be devoted to research in this area.

This book is part of a series called "Developments in Nursing Research", the purpose of which is to publish literature reviews and original material with the aim of promoting nursing knowledge. Alison While draws together 15 diverse research-based studies in health visiting. The book is divided thematically into four parts. Part I looks at "health visiting as an occupation", and two studies are presented which are extremely good introductions to the historical origins of the occupation and provide some insights into why health visiting is as it is today. Chapter 3 is complementary and although the analysis of data is superficial it does provide an insight into how health visitors perceive their own work.

Part 2 subsumes three studies under the heading "prophylaxis and screening among pre-school

children". Of particular interest is Judy Edwards' chapter on "benchmarks in health visiting practice", giving an honest account of the difficulties in evaluating routine screening procedures using existing records, in this case the "master card". Part 3 brings together five studies under the heading "parental support". The studies address different issues and employ a variety of methods and all make an equal contribution. The final part is aptly named "other aspects of preventive health care". The chapter on "Health visitors' and social workers' perceptions of child care problems" uses an interesting method "the vignette technique". Unfortunately, it does not live up to expectations and is theoretically weak. Health visitors work in multiple locations and use a wide range of techniques to reach their target populations, and the contribution by Jean Orr on women's health groups provides a vivid insight into the potential benefits of group work and highlights in a readable form the problems a group facilitator might encounter. The last two chapters are most welcome as they centre on the elderly as the care group and remind the reader that health visiting is not necessarily concerned with maternal and child health.

I enjoyed reading this book and consider that it makes a valuable contribution to nursing. However, I think that like many multi-authored texts it would have benefited from a stronger introduction and some form of conclusion which might have drawn out recurrent themes for more open discussion. For example, "positive discrimination" is mentioned in a number of chapters, and this might have been a focus for further discussion in a conclusion. The editor's comments between each section of the book are an interesting idea which could have been used in a more discursive way to link the parts of the book together, but in their current form these comments merely repeat material in the introduction and alert us to the content of each chapter. Nevertheless, this book deserves a place on library shelves in schools of nursing and medicine and could be considered as compulsory reading for all health visitors and their students.

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Clinical aspects of AIDS and AIDS-related complex. Eds. Staquet M, Hemmer R, Baert A. (Pp 240 £25.00) Oxford University Press, 1986.

This book is the product of a symposium held in Brussels in October 1985, constituted by the EEC to pool clinical resources into examining the problems