In this number

Clusters, strokes, and free treatment (if cost effective)

Cluster papers spanning 38 years

Our series of historical articles continues with one of George Knox's early papers (from 1959) on clustering of diseases, with a commentary by a colleague who has known his work from the beginning. George has published in the *JECH* as well as in many other journals, and his more recent interests have focused on cancer. Indeed, it seems appropriate that this number also includes a paper on childhood cancer clustering by George Knox and Estelle Gilman—so George's papers on the topic of clustering in this journal spread (so far) over 38 years.

Gender bias

A thoughtful Comment paper from colleagues in Spain and the USA prompts us to consider the extent to which we still have much to learn from feminist views of science and of health and welfare.

All cost effective treatments should be free

The name of Alan Williams is well known by all who think about QALYs—whether they like them or not. His Cochrane lecture, given to the UK Society for Social Medicine in 1996, draws on his lengthy personal experience in health service evaluation and offers (as we might expect) a challenge to all involved in that area of research: how

can cost not be taken account of in any consideration of effectiveness?

Stroke mortality analysed and discussed

Two papers from the University of London analyse stroke mortality in south east England with regard to cohort effects, deprivation, and ethnicity. We are grateful to other colleagues (from London and Bristol) who have commented on these two important papers and added further comments from their own perspectives and experience.

International dimensions of epidemiology and health services research

Further papers range through eastern and western Europe and the former Yugoslavia to Japan, and from the prevention of suicide to the prevention of strokes, cancer, problems related to over-weight and under-exercise, and mortality in the elderly.

Reminder—papers on Aging

In the February issue I invited authors to submit papers on topics related to aging for a special section in the October issue of the Journal. I would welcome manuscripts as soon as possible, certainly before mid-May.

STUART DONNAN
Editor