

clinically normal legs in a study using duplex sonography.⁵ When we choose a cut off point between normal and abnormal, do we really measure a disease or a physiological variant? Sensitive methods, such as duplex sonography, are undoubtedly valuable but the practical implications of finding subclinical cases in a population must be studied further. In addition, even duplex sonography cannot assess the aesthetic and symptomatic dimensions of varicose disease.

We look forward to seeing the results of the Edinburgh Vein Study.

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NOTICES

Management - Organization - Engineering: Measures required to ensure safety in the use of electricity, gas and other sources of energy at work (11th International Colloquium of the Electricity Section of the International Social Security Association), Paris, 14/15/16 June 1994. Further information: Electricité de France, Service Prévention et Sécurité, Division Communication 22-30, Avenue de Wagram. F-75382 Paris Cédex 08, France.

First International Symposium on Ecosystem Health and Medicine: Integrating Science, Policy and Management, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, 19-23 June 1994. Further information: Office of Continuing Education, 159 Johnston Hall, University of Guelph, Guelph, Ontario, Canada N1G 2W1. Tel: (519) 767-5000. Fax: (519) 767-0758.

Fibrinogen and Cardiovascular Disease, Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh Second International Symposium on Fibrinogen, Edinburgh, Scotland, 1/2 November 1994. Further information: Education, Audit and Research Department, Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh, 9 Queen Street, Edinburgh EH2 1JQ, Scotland.

14th International Conference of the ISSA Construction Section for the Prevention of Occupational Risks, Madrid, Spain, 24-26 October, 1994. The Conference will focus on the new approach to accident prevention in Europe. Further information from: Conference Secretariat, Asociación de Empresas de la Construcción de Madrid, AECOM-CNC, Serrano, 40, 28001-Madrid, Spain. Tel (341) 435 26 80. Fax: (341) 575 55 13.

National Library of Science and Technology of the Cuban Academy of Sciences would like to receive as gifts any copies of the *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*, which subscribers no longer wish to keep. They should be sent to: fao Mrs K Buadze, Exchange Group, Academia de Ciencias de Cuba, Biblioteca Nacional de Ciencia y Técnica, Apartado Aéreo 2291, Zona 2, Código Postal 10200 C. Habana, Cuba.

BOOK REVIEWS

A Review of Common Food Intolerances 1: Epidemiology of Coeliac Disease. Ed S Auricchio and J K Visakorpi (Pp192; £93.00). Basel: Karger, 1991. ISBN 3 8055 5616 0

This book is made up of papers presented at a workshop on the epidemiology of coeliac disease held in October 1991 and is divided into a section concerning the incidence of coeliac disease and another about silent and latent coeliac disease.

After an excellent contribution on the problems of epidemiological studies in coeliac disease, the important component of the first section is the report of a multicentre study by the European Society of Paediatric Gastroenterology and Nutrition on the epidemiology of coeliac disease in Europe and the Mediterranean. The data from each centre contributing to the study are expanded in an appendix. These data are of considerable interest, but this entire study is devoted to the disease in children. There is no involvement of adult gastroenterologists which is surprising considering up to 80% of coeliacs are diagnosed in adult life. There is tremendous variation in incidence rates and differences are seen between countries and within countries. For example, in Scandinavia childhood coeliac disease is much commoner in Sweden than in Norway or Denmark. Moreover, within Sweden the rates at some centres are higher than others. This does raise questions about the reliability of the data on which the

incidence figures are calculated. Are the figures higher in some areas than others because of the availability of paediatric gastroenterological services and the interests of the paediatric gastroenterologists? Another interesting problem is the decline in the incidence in some countries, for example, Ireland and Britain, and the increase in others, for example Sweden. The last two chapters of this section attempt to provide some of the reasons for these epidemiological puzzles, but it must be concluded that it is still unclear why these differences should occur. The second section is devoted to silent and latent coeliac disease. These disorders have major epidemiological implications and are well reviewed here.

Overall this is an interesting publication but it betrays the defects inherent in a book made up of papers presented at a meeting. It is not essential reading, but nevertheless contains interesting information about the incidence of childhood coeliac disease. I would not recommend it to people with little knowledge of coeliac disease, who would be better advised to read one of the available monographs.

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Patients, Policies and Politics: Before and After Working for Patients. By J Butler. (Pp 150; £32.50 (hb); £12.99 (pb).) Buckingham and Philadelphia: Open University Press, 1992. ISBN 0-335-15647 (pb) and ISBN 0-335-15648-7 (hb).

As the NHS runs into yet another end of year financial crisis it is appropriate that we should be reminded of January 1988 when, in similar circumstances, Margaret Thatcher unexpectedly announced during a television interview that a radical internal review of the NHS was already under way. This announcement led to four turbulent years of complex change, opposition, and manoeuvring, the consequences of which are only now beginning to appear. We should, nonetheless, thank John Butler for having the courage to act the contemporary historian and give us an early account of the passionate public debate and clamorous events surrounding the NHS review, the passage of the NHS and Community Care Bill into law, and its subsequent implementation. Whatever posterity's judgement of the provider market, there is no doubt that the NHS reforms represented a major demonstration of the power of the centralised state to overcome its opponents and deserve close scrutiny.

Butler has relied predominantly on the vast journalistic outpouring of the period 1988-91, particularly from the *British Medical Journal*, the *Health Services Journal*, and the "quality" dailies to construct an elegantly written and almost jargon free account of the origins, context, content, purposes, and implementation of the reforms, finding time in passing to survey the range of opposition to the changes and the contemporary prophecies, good and bad, of the results. He preempts the reviewer's task by recognising that other histories remain to be written from the unpublished, internal sources of the service. Fascinating material is also likely to emerge from the main political

protagonists when they are nearer the twilight of their careers. As the volume of empirical research on the effects of the reforms slowly accumulates, yet another story will emerge. In the meantime, this book has succeeded in showing that sense can be made of even the most complex events in the very recent past by a well informed, detached observer.

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Health Promotion: Disciplines and Diversity. Eds R Bunter and G MacDonald (Pp240; £12.99). London: Routledge, 1992. ISBN 0 415 05981 X

This is a useful and timely publication. Its covernote argues that it is the "first book to trace the theoretical roots of health promotion, in disciplines such as psychology, sociology, education, and epidemiology". Following the short introduction, the editors provide an overview of concerns and developments underpinning the rationale for the volume. The remaining chapters address "primary" (those quoted above) and "secondary" feeder disciplines. "Secondary" refers to what the authors admit is a somewhat arbitrary collection of subjects (such as social policy, economics) and sub-disciplines (particular aspects of "communication theory", social marketing). A final chapter by Rawson, subtitled "lessons from the philosophy of science", provides a philosophical perspective and addresses key issues around the development of health education and health promotion as academic enterprise and professional practice. A glossary of terms is included.

The range of issues raised, theories and perspectives appraised, and practical examples presented is vast and a brief review cannot really do justice to these. Specific chapters are highly varied – perhaps inevitably – in their appraisal of concepts and concerns and in their application to practice. Part one certainly provides an accessible overview of the contribution made by the "primary" disciplines to health promotion. Tannahill's chapter provides a clear introduction to epidemiological concepts and a strong case for an epidemiology of health.

Weare draws out recommendations for "effective" education from her lucid account of the competing goals of education – in society and in health. Thoroughgood provides a useful introduction to the role of sociology in terms of substantive content and critical analysis. She identifies the part sociology has played in understanding health and illness. Further, the range of concerns addressed illustrates that "the sociology of health and illness" is but one way in which the subject can illuminate health promotion. However, the critique of health promotion (an important task for sociology) could address more fully debates within health promotion about goals, assumptions, and approaches.

Each chapter is interesting in its own right and a wealth of valuable material is presented. Overall, despite acknowledging that it may not be exhaustive, the rationale for selection of disciplines isn't discussed, though they do give convincing reasons for excluding medicine.

The editors' "scene setting" chapter does not quite meet the intentions set out in the introduction, "to put health promotion in a

public health context and explore its relationship to health education". The account of historical development and interplay of these fields is rather over simplified and presented as fact, despite later touching on issues of epistemology and the social and political influences on "bodies of knowledge".

A conclusion is necessary – which addresses how insights from such diverse disciplines can be integrated and used in practice. Rawson's chapter tackles this to an extent but the editors do not revisit the many important concerns about professional and disciplinary development tantalisingly raised earlier in the book.

Such a book will inevitably tread an uneasy path between comprehensive overview, basic introduction and discursive account of key concerns. This book provides a useful introduction to the multidisciplinary basis of health promotion. It could do more to clarify issues of interdisciplinarity. It is nevertheless, a valuable source for students and practitioners with an interest in health.

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Sexual behaviour and networking: anthropological and socio-cultural studies on the transmission of HIV. Ed T Dyson. (Pp 375; price not given.) Liege: 1992. IUSTP, 1992. ISBN 2-87040-046-2.

Contributions to a seminar hosted by the Committee on Anthropological Demography (IUSSP) in 1990 have been collated by the editor of this volume, Tim Dyson, who introduces a range of papers, focusing on sexual behaviour in various African regions (11 of 17 papers). The volume contains a number of excellent articles on a range of topics, including mathematical modelling of transmission, reviews of problems that must be addressed by policy makers, and pioneering attempts to integrate different methods of research.

The potential uses of simple survey data are illustrated effectively while the problems of generalisation from such data are summarised cogently. The quality of individual contributions, however, is uneven. Some are based on careful empirical research. For example, Hogsborg and Aaby report a methodologically sophisticated study combining baseline and follow up survey data, diary and ethnographic data. On the basis of their study, they are able to provide a highly relevant cautionary note on "core groups". They emphasise the importance of empirical work to establish whether or not "core groups" exist in different places before accepting conventional wisdom on their general importance to HIV transmission. In contrast, other papers rely upon inadequate data, anecdote, and theoretically unexamined concepts of culture, behaviour, tradition, and modernity.

In common with many publications from symposia, there is little thematic unity or, indeed, agreement on key terms such as networkings. A dialogue between the authors on central issues would have been helpful. For example, the paper by Schoepf includes a discussion of the attribution of cultural norms to various ethnic groups or to sub-Saharan Africa generally. As several other papers in this volume catalogue such norms, including contributions by J and P Caldwell

who Schoepf specifically takes to task for their previous "single, virtually timeless model for all sub-Saharan Africa", the lack of discussion creates acute problems of continuity. Such problems are equally apparent in discussions of particular aspects of sexual behaviour. In the African context, polygamy is variously seen to promote or inhibit HIV transmission. It is difficult to evaluate these claims as the authors bring different kinds of data and theoretical considerations to bear upon the question. Further editing might have resolved some of these problems, as well as removing unnecessary repetition, for example, on epidemiological finds about AIDS in Africa. Maps and an index would have been useful too.

Despite these problems, the book includes papers of importance to those involved in HIV research, particularly social scientists and epidemiologists, and provides a useful update of much work in progress.

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The Community Health Worker. Ed. S Frankel (pp291; £17.50). New York: Oxford University Press, 1992. ISBN 0-19-261761-3.

The training of villagers to offer basic health services to local communities is an important feature of health provision in many developing countries. This book assesses the current status of community health workers and their future role within health services.

It begins with a comprehensive overview by the editor, followed by individual chapters from various contributors, outlining the situation concerning community health workers in countries from Africa, South America, Asia and Indonesia.

It is argued that the question is no longer whether community health workers are important for the provision of health care but rather how best to achieve their potential. The outcome of a community health worker depends on the links between the health sector and the community, with the community health worker being seen as a bridge between the two. In the overview, an analysis is presented of the various components identified as important for the success of a programme, namely adequate support for the community health worker in areas such as supervision and continuing education, opportunities for patient referral and the availability of a regular supply of drugs. The features of a community health worker programme are then considered. Should the community health worker be acting in a mainly curative role or one of health promotion? Patterns of financing, hours of work, recruitment and training are discussed and the urgent need for evaluation of programmes is highlighted.

This is followed by accounts of the situation in individual countries. Descriptions of the background and development of community health worker programmes serve to reinforce the vital role played by the political forces in a country. In China, the socio-economic reforms of the last decade led to a situation which threatened the very survival of the community health worker in the newly changed society. The problems of interaction between state and community are highlighted in the Indian situation where a campaign