

IN THIS ISSUE

John R Ashton, CBE
Joint Editor

POSTMODERN PUBLIC HEALTH

Public health challenges are complex, programmatic and context dependent, and so are the interventions required to address them and the research methods sufficient to the task of throwing light on the most effective solutions. It has been said that practitioners and researchers should first of all define the problem and then make use of the most appropriate methods in the tool bag. In this postmodern world diversity is the keynote, and in this issue there should be something for everybody.

There is a strong flavour of the arguments about evidence, and in our Theory and Methods section there is an a la carte of useful ideas and experiences for researchers and practitioners alike. This month's research reports throw light on adolescent health and family rituals (eating together is a good idea); stress and suicide in nurses; the benefits of sexual intercourse for cardiovascular health (hooray); and the complexities of the risk factors for HIV infection in women. In a full hand of papers on Public Health Policy and Practice, the debates about evidence and health impact assessment are brought together; a traditional problem of noise, in this case around Heathrow Airport, is given an airing; and valuable reports are presented on genetic screening for familial hypercholesterolaemia; the most effective approaches to controlling the malaria mosquito; and the effectiveness of antiretroviral therapy among HIV-1 infected women.

All in all, we hope that those in the northern hemisphere will find plenty to fill the winter hours, and in the southern hemisphere will be tempted by the offerings despite the attractions of the summer.

THE JECH GALLERY.....

Community amenities: a neglected health resource?



This picture shows residents demonstrating against a local swimming pool closure in an area of Glasgow where the chance of dying before the age of 65 is 2.3 times the British average. The pool, built in 1914, is being closed because of the expense of repairs. Residents of high amenity areas have been shown to experience improved health independent of amenity use and social class.

H Thomson
Social and Public Health Sciences Unit,
University of Glasgow,
4 Lilybank Gardens,
Glasgow G12 8RZ, UK;
Hilary@msoc.mrc.gla.ac.uk

This issue live
and online
www.jech.com