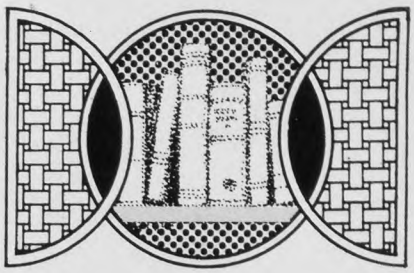
Book Reviews



All Our Children: The American Family Under Pressure. *Kenneth Keniston and the Carnegie Council on Children. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, New York, 1977, 255 pp., $3.95 (paper).*

Most family physicians are quite sensitive to the impact which employment, social services, health insurance, and the law have upon the individual families for whom they care and to whom they give counsel. Often, the physician becomes the family's advocate in dealing with these systems. However, family physicians have remained too passive in their role as public advocates for families in shaping the development of those policies which so profoundly affect the daily lives of our patients. *All Our Children* is an outline of those areas which most need attention from family advocates and begins by recognizing that traditional passivity.

The Carnegie Corporation created the Council on Children and commissioned this study in 1972, long before 1979 was declared the International Year of the Child. Kenneth Keniston, a psychologist best known for his work with social change, protest, and alienated youth, was intentionally chosen in order to bring a fresh viewpoint and deep concern about children to this study. The result is a carefully documented assessment of the pressures American families bear in trying to raise healthy, happy, and productive children. This led the Council to address the areas of public policy it saw as most relevant to easing those pressures on the family—employment, social services, health care, and legal rights.

All Our Children, the central volume of a series by the Council, challenges many of the myths which have molded our view of childhood and our children's futures—the myths of equal opportunity, technological progress, and a laissez-faire economy, the myth of the self-sufficient family that equates needing help with inadequacy. The Council examined the changing roles of marriage, of parenting, and of the family itself in children's lives, all while seeking "the best interests of the child."

The choice of the health and well-being of children, our greatest natural resource, as the nation's first priority, over alternatives such as controlling inflation or maintaining international military supremacy, leads to an extensive critique of current economic, legal, social service, and health policies. This principle is argued with simple and lucid language that does not dull its points or criticisms. "Why should human services be most available to those well-off enough to buy them, when all families need them?" the Council asks in a recurrent theme.

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The Council reminds us that in 1940 1 of every 2 federal dollars spent on health care went to children, while in 1970 it was only 1 in 17! They recognize that without changes in the appropriateness and accessibility of health services, national health insurance will only be inflationary. They propose that the public schools serve as a model. A school system is responsible for all of a community's children, a medical practice only for those whose families seek care. Their model shifts the perspective from the needs of the marketplace (those who *buy* services) to those of the population (those who *need* services).

All Our Children is a provocative assessment of the state of the American family and offers realistic alternative policies that deserve wide attention and debate. The logic which follows a primary commitment to the health and well-being of all our children represents a serious critique and profound challenge to our current conduct of public and family affairs.

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Endocrinology: A Logical Approach for Clinicians. *William Jubiz. McGraw-Hill, New York, 1979, 418 pp., $20.00.*

The author of this valuable, manageable, brief reference book has detected and very adequately filled a need for a book containing basic principles and a physiologic approach to endocrine problems as they occur in practice. This book is intended to benefit medical students, residents, and practicing physicians, and to assemble for them useful information which will assist them in understanding the intricate but logical aspects of the endocrine system. Increasingly, the impact of endocrinology on general medicine is being realized, and this is demonstrated with clarity in this text. Practicing family physicians will certainly find it a useful reference, with clear explanations of recent advances in biochemistry and physiology.

The book is clearly presented and readable. The text is amply illustrated with figures and tables, but minor irritations are caused by the fact that some of the figures do not occur on the pages to which reference is made to them in the text. Perhaps the weakest thing about the book is the paucity of illustrations of patients with endocrine conditions. Apart from reproductions of radiographs which appear in the text itself, there are only 20 other illustrations which are not representative of endocrinologic conditions as they occur in practice.

Apart from these few minor criticisms, which could possibly be dealt with in future editions, the book will be a valuable addition to the library of any family physician.

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Exercise Electrocardiography: Practical Approach. *Edward K. Chung (ed). Williams & Wilkins, Baltimore, 1979, 354 pp., $30.00.*

Family physicians are experiencing a growing interest in the use of exercise electrocardiography. Among reasons for this appeal are its success in helping to clarify the na-

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ture and etiology of chest pain, its augmentation to the diagnosis of coronary artery disease, and its value in assessing the functional capacity both of the patient with cardiac disease and of the well patient desiring a specific exercise prescription. All of these categories fall into the realm of responsibility of the family physician.

Dr. Edward Chung has assembled 14 experts in cardiology, exercise physiology, and rehabilitation, and has produced a refreshingly readable work, written with the primary goal of describing every pertinent aspect of exercise electrocardiography related to the care of the patient.

Dr. Chung first reviews fascinating historical considerations including shortcomings of early attempts to quantitate exercise tolerance with respect to the human cardiovascular system. He then precisely outlines the basic principles of exercise physiology, the fundamentals of exercise testing, and the roles of the staff and patient with respect to the mechanics of the test. The technical aspects of Chung's exercise testing protocol are discussed, including a review of other successful protocols used in this country. Further chapters delineate the indications, contraindications, complications, and the documented specificity and sensitivity of exercise evaluation. A major chapter thoroughly covers interpretation of the test. Beyond the general presentation are interesting chapters on the testing of children, exercise physiology, the pathophysiology of exercise, exercise induced arrhythmias, and potential complicating medicolegal problems.

One notices immediately that Chung has a style which promotes rapid assimilation of the material, building one's knowledge from chapter to chapter based on the preceding chapter's content. Summaries are written in outline form and provide quick material review. Other significant features include the excellent literature documentation in each section and the detailed use of approximately 150 figures, mainly pertinent illustrative electrocardiograms. A broad category index successfully expedites the location of key material. Another strong feature in the text is that it is written on several levels of sophistication, establishing it as both an adequate reference text in addition to its primary function as a basic introduction to the field. Easy readability and concise summaries at the end of each chapter round out the striking, positive aspects of this work.

There are some shortcomings. One is the lack of discussion of the equipment, its cost, and how to obtain, install, and afford the exercise electrocardiography test in the office. Another is that many electrocardiogram illustrations are not on the same page as the reference to them; this may be somewhat annoying to the reader.

In summary, *Exercise Electrocardiography: Practical Approach,* is a technically well-written, well-organized book which possesses exceptional teaching power in addition to its service as a complete reference for the primary care physician. It is, therefore, a highly relevant and practical text for the family physician and clearly serves effectively an audience caring for patients having chest pain, possible coronary artery disease, or in need of cardiac rehabilitation and exercise prescription.

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