

Abrahams calls for more extensive freedom of information, alongside greater autonomy of government scientists from the pharmaceutical industry. The development of independent drug testing by the regulatory authorities is also proposed, in order to ensure that the results obtained are unaffected by corporate bias.

The publishers' notes suggest that this book will be of interest to those working in the fields of the sociology of science, medical sociology, the medical and pharmaceutical professions and to anyone who cares about how medicines should be controlled in modern society. It may also be of interest to anyone who holds the unquestioning assumption that the declared *and* actual purposes of drug regulation are to provide patients with safe and effective medication.

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G.I. Albrecht (ed) *Advances In Medical Sociology Vol. IV: A Reconsideration of Health Behaviour Change Models*, Greenwich, CN: JAI Press, 1994, £47.00, vii + 286 pp. ISBN 1-55938-758-0

In this volume a number of key authors provide the reader with, as the series title indicates, a range of up-to-date literature reviews which consider health and behaviour change in broad perspective. By and large the material refers to the social psychology of health rather than medical sociology *per se*, but medical sociologists with a concern about disease prevention, health promotion and health education will find much to interest them in it. To some extent the title is misleading. It appears to be the case that each

author had not so much been given the task of reviewing an area, as the opportunity to present their own work and to demonstrate its importance in terms of current developments. The majority of the material presented is North American, and to the British reader the underemphasis on British or European material is slightly irritating. Nevertheless, members of the Research Unit in Health and Behavioural Change at Edinburgh get a mention, and in the chapters by our own Calnan and Ingham there is material from British studies.

In the introductory chapter, Albrecht provides a useful review and clarification of the subject matter of behaviour change in health and presents an outline of the social psychology (with a sociological bent) concerned. In the next chapter Flay and Petraitis present what they call a new theory of health behaviour and describe its various implications for prevention. Theirs is an attempt to develop a more general theory from the familiar and well established models such as that of Ajzen, Becker and others. Zimmerman and Dee Vernberg also consider the main paradigms of the health belief model, the theory of reasoned action and social cognitive theory and attempt to draw it into a meta analysis. Calnan's chapter provides an interesting British interlude and contains much which most British medical sociologists would find familiar. It also has the interesting role in the volume of discussing qualitative work rather than large scale statistical analysis. Ingham examines rationality and this is helpful because so much of the social psychology reviewed elsewhere in the volume, makes assumptions about human nature and its particular linkages to rationality. The review provides an important antidote. Hafferty and Salloway focus on the

physician-patient model and ask a number of important questions about the absence of the doctor-patient relationship in the health belief model, locus of control theory, and Mechanic's work on help seeking. They make an interesting case for a reconsideration of the doctor patient relationship in issues of help seeking. Their critique is particularly powerful. Prohaska and Glasser consider the question of older adults and some of the problems of applying models, which have been principally developed in young adult populations, to older adults where the problem of 'normal' pathology is paramount. Wolinsky *et al's* chapter on the myth of the worried well makes interesting reading, not least as a detective story trying to locate in the literature the origins and history of this concept. It is a concept, after all, which has wide currency and they demonstrate that the popular conception of this is both difficult to measure and has in fact been very little studied. They present a set of results to illuminate their discussion.

Wells' chapter on condom use and its relationship to fear about AIDS makes salutary reading. He describes a cross-national study (interesting in itself in this volume) looking at this relationship. The statistical presentation is particularly helpful. But what is most significant about the chapter is that he finds a direct relationship between the willingness to use condoms and the amount of fear people have of contracting AIDS. As he acknowledges, this runs counter to most of the conventional wisdom in health education. This is probably the most important and controversial chapter in the volume. Frankish and Green consider broader-based community models and while their account provides a helpful review of the field one is left with the feeling that there is perhaps little of substance here. Glik and her colleagues

consider the issue of adherence to what they call well-roles among adults and the problem of the relationship between health and illness and subjective as against objective accounts. In the final chapter Gallagher returns to the theme of rationality and extends his purview to the third world. In an important chapter dealing with the use of oral rehydration therapy for infants he considers some of the key problems of applying models derived from western conceptions of science to societies where cultural forms are different.

Overall then a comprehensive book but one which is a little uneven. The chapters by Albrecht, Calnan, Ingham, and Hafferty and Wells are very useful and should appear on book lists, particularly for post-graduate students taking advanced courses in health education and health promotion. For general medical sociology undergraduates much of the material is probably too detailed and seems to be addressed at fellow professionals rather than students. Perhaps this is inevitable in something which tries to describe the leading edges of the field. My main concern however, was the theoretical problem of considering health related behaviour change as against behaviour change more generally. Implicit in many of the chapters is an assumption that behaviours relating to health are somehow fundamentally distinct from and different to other forms of social action. In the end I am not convinced of this, and perhaps in future volumes of advances we might begin to see health behaviour theory more fully integrated within mainstream sociological theorising. It still appears to be an area where social psychology predominates and in which mainstream sociological theorising is to some extent invisible.

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