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[Book Review of] *Proceedings of a Research Conference on Natural Family Planning* Edited by William Uricchio, Ph.D. and Mary Kay Williams

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role of chaplain as supervisor in training programs for seminarians and ordained clergy learning ministry to the sick is considered. Individual articles also deal with the physical and mental health of the chaplain himself, an important but often neglected subject of concern. One of the final articles deals with present-day trends in the field of medical ethics, always a very pertinent subject for a Catholic chaplain in a health facility.

In a brief review of this kind a reviewer must be satisfied with acquainting the reader with the contents of the book and a very general estimate of its value. The present reviewer would not hesitate to recommend this book highly to the specialized reader for whom it is destined. It will be particularly, but not exclusively,

helpful to beginners, but veteran chaplains will also find it useful, at least as an examination of conscience regarding their own practice. In a more detailed review a few questions would have to be raised. As a moral theologian, the present reviewer's questions would center around the article on medical ethics. Experienced chaplains may have questions about articles ranging within their experience, but this should not detract from the value of the book. The book that is worthwhile and does not raise questions probably does not, and should not, exist.

Reviewed by:

John R. Connery, S.J.
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Jesuit School of Theology
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Book Review

Proceedings of a Research Conference on Natural Family Planning

Edited by William Uricchio, Ph.D. and Mary Kay Williams
The Human Life Foundation. Washington, D. C. 1973

The Airlie House Conference held at Warrenton, Virginia, must have been an enriching experience for all participants. Halberg's, Brown's, Nalbandov's and Bogumil's discussions of biorhythms provide a highly theoretical base. Treloar follows with his vast experience of collections of menstrual cycles sometimes over two generations. It is interesting to

this reviewer to find that the practical experience that "anovulation is a normal variant of the menstrual cycle" is shown experimentally by Treloar and mathematically recovered by Bogumil when he departs from the previous deterministic computer model to the stochastic process. The effects of aging of sperm and ova are discussed mostly theoretically

because very little human data is available. The question of adverse effects of periodic abstinence in terms of producing genetically defective offspring are raised; Jongbloet's work is discussed and partly refuted by Guerrero's reference to Penrose and Berg who have concluded that maternal age is far more important in producing offspring with Down's syndrome than is the infrequency of intercourse with its presumed adjunctive danger of aging of the gametes. The section on Clinical Experiences appears weak; it describes various correspondence courses but suffers from a real paucity of followup data.

For a person more interested in the application than the theory, the heart of the book begins with section four. An Overview by John Marshall on Prediction, Detection, and Control of Ovulation is followed by the presentations of John and Evelyn Billings on the Ovulation Method and Döring on the Basal Body Temperature Method. The crux of the argument appears to be how many days a woman is actually fertile. John Marshall, quoting Hartman, pinpoints fertility around four days per month allowing three days for sperm survival and one day for egg survival, while the Billingses disagree. Dewan's very interesting discussion on control of ovulation follows.

Conrad Baars introduces the section of Psychological Implications. He focuses the discussion within the context of the emo-

tional maturity of persons. Judith Bardwick, in a purely speculative paper, points out that ambivalence is the normal adult state, that there are always pros and cons for choosing any options, which a healthy person can recognize and use as a basis for making choices. Her general discussion is incisive but lacks the support of experience because Dr. Bardwick had not studied any natural method users. Marshall and Rowe follow with a detailed questionnaire of a self selected group of temperature rhythm users. They report that most of their clients (83%) feel that on the whole it's a good experience and contributes to the building up of their marriage. Unfortunately, the nonresponders could not be interviewed, hence their possibly valuable negative contributions are absent. National experiences are reported from Mauritius, the Phillipines, and the United Kingdom. They focus on the important role of culture and family structure which are explored in detail by Dr. Mary Ella Robertson. Dr. Andre Hellegers summarizes by stating that the population problem is ultimately a behavioral problem. Dr. Bernard Greenberg outlines requirements for a proper use effectiveness study which will test the various parameters discussed up to this point in the conference and Vollman offers an outline for Methodology of Research in Family Planning.

It is evident that the participants of this conference did a

great deal to enlarge one another's outlook. The book is well worth reading and can be recommended both to the person who has little knowledge on the subject of Natural Family Planning and to the one who knows a considerable amount but would like to explore further.

Reviewed by:
Hanna Klaus, M.D.
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Medical School
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We welcome Dr. Klaus to the pages of the Linacre Quarterly. An Assistant Professor in the department of OB-GYN at St. Louis University Medical School, she is the author of numerous scholarly papers. Dr. Klaus is a Diplomate of the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology and a Fellow of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.

Book Review

The Pastor and the Patient: An Informal Guide to New Directions in Medical Ethics

by William Jacobs

Paulist Press, 1973, 186 pp.

First-hand experience, active faith, and prayerful reflection are evident ingredients in this book, clearly written out of love for the Church — to criticize where that is called for, and to share the fruits of carefully interpreted observations. It is required reading for any priest who claims to minister to those in need of medical attention.

Dr. Jacobs discusses every major medical field involving moral decisions. Thirteen chapters treat contraception, sterilization and abortion, life and death, experimentation and organ transplantation, genetic engineering and surgery, artificial insemination, psychiatric care and drug addictions, physician-patient relationships, health care policies and expenses, confidentiality, and the intricacies of decision making.

The primary theme of the book is the priest's role in all of this. Jacobs repeatedly points out that the Church does not, cannot exercise the kind of arbitrary authority for which we may have once looked. "Our absolutes are fading fast and will probably never be heard from again."

He rejects the domino theory which fears that a broad definition of 'extraordinary means' leads to wholesale euthanasia, or that a more open attitude toward contraception and abortion ends in abuses