

Book reviews

Moderated Love – A Theology of Professional Care

Alastair V Campbell, 152 pages, London, £4.95, SPCK, 1984.

Dr Campbell is well used to the complexities of medicine, nursing and social work and the ethical issues that can arise. This valuable book examines the nature of the professional relationship and the way in which power is handled by helpers in relation to those seeking help.

The book opens with an interesting look at what professionals are saying when they profess to 'love and care' for their clients, especially when one reflects that 'other people's ill-health, confusion and social disadvantage are sources of power, status and income for those groups in society who offer their services as professional helpers'.

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Campbell looks first at *medical power* and suggests that medical dominance and paternalism should be replaced by 'brotherly' love. 'The secret of medical dominance is knowledge . . . I have been suggesting that medical knowledge, when incarnated in individual and society, can serve the purposes of love, in the sense that it can overcome fear, hostility and ignorance, and it can open a path to the enhancement of human well-meaning in a non-discriminatory manner'. Doctors may however refrain from encouraging people to live wisely if they are too caught up in 'godlikeness'. The 'godlike' doctor has a vested interest in not encouraging people to take better care of themselves. The Department of Community and Preventive Medicine might think otherwise!

Campbell then moves on to look at some models of *nursing* especially in relation to sexual stereotyping. He illustrates the parallels between nursing and mothering. But the nurse is not the

patient's mother and, if this is not recognised, it can become a subtle means of control and perpetuation of helplessness. In fact the co-operative patient may be preferred as may task-related relationships. It is important to be free of sexual stereotyping and develop a relationship which is 'professional without being distanced and manipulative, which is close to the realities of bodily care, yet also sees the personal potential of the patient'. He suggests the term *skilled companionship* since the good companion is someone who shares freely, but does not impose, allowing others to make their own journey.

The *social worker* is seen as an agent of change in that one of the important contributions that he or she can make is to 'prime political change with the dynamic of personal relationships' and thus express the hope that people can move from being victims of circumstances to being able to take control of circumstances and to alter them.

Campbell exhorts us to resist making professionals into cult heroes and paradigms of loving concern, since this leads to the elevation of doctors as 'gods' and nurses as 'angels'. This obscures the humanity and fallibility of the professional. What the profession can offer is a 'moderated' love which combines a necessary detachment with a concern for individual values and socio-political change and allows the client to maintain a measure of control in his or her own health care.

This is a valuable book for all who seek to examine issues of power and powerlessness in care, together with the ethical issues which may arise from removing control from patients and clients and vesting it in professional care givers – who are 'paid to care'. It is also useful to read this book in conjunction with Campbell's second book on the same theme *Paid to Care? The Limits of Professionalism in Pastoral Care*,

London, £3.95, SPCK, 1985. These should be in every professional's library.

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Changing Values in Medicine

Eric J Cassell and Mark Siegler, editors, Frederick, Maryland, 275 pages, US\$24, University Publications of America, 1984

This volume consists of a series of essays and commentaries presented at a conference held at Cornell University Medical College in November 1979. The conference was held and the book published as a tribute to the work and writings of Dr Otto Guttentag of the University of California at San Francisco. Of the 14 contributors, seven are doctors of medicine, six of philosophy and one a professor of religious studies. It is a pity that five years elapsed between the conference and the publication of the book.

The editors have written an excellent introduction which sets the scene and picks out salient points from the essays. Thereafter the volume is in three parts: The Practice of Medicine; Physicians and Patients, and Directions for Philosophy in Medicine. An indication as to the actual format of the 1979 conference would have been helpful to the reader in putting the contributions into context. In general, the impression given in spite of inter-author consultation is of a series of comparatively unrelated papers rather than of proceedings of a conference which might also have included summaries of discussion.

This general comment should not detract from the value and interest of