

## BOOK REVIEW

### Critical Issues in Reproductive Health

Andrzej Kulczycki (ed.). London, UK: Springer-Verlag, 2014. ISBN-13: 978-9-400-76722-5. Price: £93.50 (eBook), £117.00 (hardback). Pages: 351

*Critical Issues in Reproductive Health* (Volume 33 in the Springer Series on Demographic Methods and Population Analysis) is an interesting book. It contains 15 chapters that can be read individually, all referenced throughout. The book is divided into three sections: Expanding the Research Base, Advancing Policy, and Strengthening Service and Program Capacity.

In Expanding the Research Base, the chapters cover physical violence during pregnancy, men's reproductive health concerns in Northern Ghana, social class and sexual stigma of emergency contraception in Egypt, and infertility service and maternal and perinatal outcomes.

In the second section on Advancing Policy, the chapters examine policy and

programme action in population development, liberal abortion policy, population and reproductive health, reproductive health aid, and past, present and future reproductive health.

The third section on Strengthening Service and Program Capacity covers areas such as fostering change in medical care settings, revitalising intra-uterine device use in Kenya, community provision of injectable contraception in Africa, the introduction of a low-cost contraceptive implant, and programmes for vulnerable young people in Liberia.

Whilst none of the contributing authors are from the UK, this book does address common issues within reproductive health that are pertinent throughout the world. As the UK is a multicultural society, what this book offers health professionals is a background understanding of the historical, political, cultural and religious dilemmas facing men and women around the world. I particularly enjoyed reading Chapter 5 about emergency contraception in Egypt, as this gives a comprehensive account of religious and cultural taboos surrounding the provision and use of emergency contraception. Chapter 8 entitled 'How

problematic will liberal abortion policies be for pronatalist countries?' provides a strong argument for women's right to choose. The third section contains interesting chapters on contraceptive provision development in Africa that highlight many of the problems faced by health professionals, and men and women generally.

This is a book that provides background knowledge and insight into a number of reproductive health topics and the chapters can be read independently of each other. It is most likely that health professionals will want to refer to such a book occasionally, and therefore it would be a useful reference source in a good reproductive health library.

Reviewed by **Su Everett**

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