BOOK REVIEW

Fertility Counselling: Clinical Guide and Case Studies

Sharon N Covington (ed.). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2015. ISBN-13: 978-1-107-64311-6. Price: £40.00. Pages: 348 (paperback)

Having recently reviewed resources for women struggling with fertility challenges,[1] I was delighted when I was asked to review *Fertility Counselling*, a compilation of 22 articles curated and edited by Sharon Covington, Director of Psychological Support Services in a Maryland fertility centre. The range of topics the book covers is extensive: from basic support, through to loss counselling, adoption issues, the role of spirituality, and the ethical and legal ramifications of the entire fertility field. Particularly interesting is the coverage of issues for varying client segments, including older parents, single individuals (male and female), and the lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender cohort.

The book aims to meet head-on what the foreword describes as the "ever-changing world of reproductive medicine", which has created, and of course reflects, the ever-changing world of parenthood itself. The book focuses on the 'best practice' concept of collaborative reproductive healthcare, which forms both its theoretical foundation and the topic of its initial chapter.

The book's format and chapter structure is then based on 'best practice' in action as reported in clinical encounters. Each chapter begins with, and is punctuated by, case studies (hence the subtitle of the book). Each chapter contribution is supported by references, there is a glossary, and a supporting weblink leads to resources offered by the publisher, Cambridge University Press.

My only caveat would be about the back cover claim that the book is written by 'international experts' which, though factually accurate – three contributors work in Germany, Belgium and the UK, respectively – seems to gloss over the fact that the other authors are based in the USA and the focus of the book is on the Western approach to fertility issues That said, one cannot do everything in a single book, and straying into a more multicultural perspective would arguably have compromised the work.

I like this book. It offers counsellors not only wide coverage of infertility reproductive healthcare topics, with excellent insights and useful strategies, but also a solid, comprehensible and accessible description of the medical background. Meanwhile, it offers medical practitioners a clear and informative understanding of how counselling can help patients through the journey.

In short, while my previous review of infertility resources[1] stated that there is a "way to go" when it comes to emotional support, this book clearly contributes to good progress along that road.

Reviewed by **Susan Quilliam**

Writer, Broadcaster, Consultant and Trainer, Cambridge, UK; susan@susanquilliam.com

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