

12-1-1934

[Book Review of] *Nature's Way, the Fertile and Sterile Periods of Marriage*, By Victor C. Pedersen

Catholic Physicians' Guild

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Recommended Citation

Catholic Physicians' Guild (1934) "[Book Review of] *Nature's Way, the Fertile and Sterile Periods of Marriage*, By Victor C. Pedersen," *The Linacre Quarterly*: Vol. 3: No. 1, Article 4.

Available at: <http://epublications.marquette.edu/lnq/vol3/iss1/4>

Consequent upon this a very successful meeting of the Guild was held at St. Elizabeth's Hospital of Belleville on November 22nd during which a group of new members were welcomed into the Guild. Dr. Joseph G. Beykirch, outstanding physician and surgeon, read a paper on "Birth Control and the Physician." Discussion took place after the reading of this most interesting paper and arrangements were made for subscriptions to THE LINACRE for the new members. All are hopeful that the success already achieved will inspire further efforts to make the Guild in Belleville a glorious success and a blessing to the Catholic physicians in particular and the Church in general.

WICHITA GUILD—The Catholic Physicians' Guild of Wichita held its initial meeting on September 12, 1934, at the home of Dr. Martin Hagan. After a dinner, at which Dr. Hagan was host, the meeting was called to order and election of officers followed with the following results:

President.....	Dr. Martin Hagan
Vice-President.....	Dr. Frank Menehan
Secretary-Treasurer.....	Dr. L. S. Roberts
Moderator.....	The Reverend William Schaefer

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Dr. G. E. Corrigan	Dr. H. W. Gaumr
Dr. Frederick D. Smith	Dr. F. L. Meeninghoff
Dr. H. C. Curtis	Dr. Frances H. Schiltz
Dr. W. T. Elnen	Dr. Strunk

The Guild is outlining a program of public health in the parochial schools of Wichita. Each member is to give his services to examine the school children and recommend them to their family physician if they are in need of treatment. The Guild will also conduct talks on public health and related subjects through the Speakers' Bureau of the County Medical Society to be given to students, teachers, and parent-teachers' organizations.

BOOK REVIEWS

NATURE'S WAY, THE FERTILE AND STERILE PERIODS OF MARRIAGE. By Victor C. Pedersen, A.M., M.D., F.A.C.S. G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1934.

This little book is a clear, simple, easily understandable explanation of what is now known to be a fact—fertile and sterile periods in the monthly cycle of women. Despite its untechnical language the book is a scientific work carefully documented. *Nature's Way* will prove invaluable to doctors, clergymen, social workers and those married people who have a right to this information. It shows clearly that through the way of partial restraint there is a scientific method of spacing births for sufficient reasons even more widely than the spacing which takes place by nature itself. Even healthy couples without the use of contraceptives beget only one to four, and most rarely six to eight, children.

It is pleasant to see that the medical profession is at last becoming more articulate in its denunciation of positive contraception. As Dr. Pedersen says: "Notwithstanding what advocates of the use of contraceptives and advertisers say, our normal bodies are not intended to be invaded by mechanical devices or disturbed

by chemical applications." Again he says: "It cannot be repeated too often that there is no absolutely sure artificial, chemical or mechanical method of birth control, that artificial forms have never received the endorsement of the medical profession through its great medical societies, and that the repeated use of contraceptives is apt to end by causing great physical and mental distress to the user." Indirectly, in the following passage, Dr. Pedersen sums up strongly his indictment of positive contraception: "Some of the results of natural birth control in descending order of importance are: (a) reversal of sterility to fertility in many childless couples; (b) limitation of offspring by methods that do not offend physiological laws, the aesthetic sense, nor the mutual self respect of the man and woman; (c) avoidance of imposing on the marriage bed all the practices and atmosphere of the brothel; (d) reduction in the number of functional sexual disorders, proceeding from the excesses and perversions invited and induced by artificial contraceptives and from the sense of security their use elicits, which, in at least ten per cent of cases, is false security."

This book is so splendid that the reviewer regrets the necessity of differing with a statement in the author's foreword. There he asserts that there is a differential birth rate in favor of *incapables* over *capables* in the proportion of seven to two. This proportion, we believe, is not verifiable by statistics and further involves the very delicate definition of *capables* and *incapables*. Dr. Pedersen finishes his brief foreword by asking, "is a humane, wise policy of sterilization possible and will it meet the issue?" To both these questions, we answer briefly and emphatically, "No." Any policy which invades natural human rights must eventually prove a failure. We feel sure that Dr. Pedersen, following the logic of his opposition to unnatural contraception, will come to agree with the force of this argument.

I. W. C.

CONCEPTION PERIOD OF WOMEN. By Dr. Kyusaku Ogino, Head of the Gynaecological Section of Takeyama Hospital, Niigata, Japan. English translation by Dr. Yonez Miyagawa, Director of Government Institute for Infectious Diseases, Tokyo Imperial University, Hongooku, Tokyo, Japan. June 6, 1934. Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, Medical Arts Publishing Company, 1903 Wood Street.

The publication, by the Medical Arts Publishing Company of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, of this book by the foremost gynecologist of Japan, is the culmination of the author's clinical research on the subject of natural birth control extending over a period of fifteen years. Working independently of one another, Dr. K. Ogino, of Japan, and Dr. Herman Knaus, of Austria, arrived at practically identical conclusions and established the existence of definite and determinable periods of sterility and fertility in women. Their findings have become known throughout the world as the Ogino-Knaus theory, and they have been supported by the independent research of medical scientists in Europe and America. Among the noted gynecologists whose work has corroborated the theory are Dr. Carl Ruge, Dr. Robert Meyer, Professor Schroder of Kile, Professor Tscherdewahn and Professor Fraenkel of Breslau, whose investigations cover a period of thirty years.