



Cristin Hinesley, a health worker at the Feminist Women's Health Clinic, conducts a finger prick, testing for anemia.

Books show woman's health perspective

By Lia Saliccia
Oregon Daily Emerald

For an alternative to mainstream women's health care, the National Federation of Women's Health Centers has released three new books through the woman-centered health perspective.

The books will be available at the Feminist Women's Health Clinic on East 11th Avenue and Hilyard Street in Eugene.

A *New View of a Woman's Body* devotes an entire chapter to a new, woman-centered definition of the clitoris. Formerly the clitoris was medically defined as a small, penis-like organ.

The chapter holds detailed photos of this organ and the changes it undergoes in its many stages of arousal and rest. This book, which was written by the federation, was designed to familiarize women with their anatomy through the perspective of other women, not male doctors and medical artists.

For those who seek more control over the process of childbirth, the Federation has released *Woman-Centered Pregnancy and Birth*.

One of the book's benefits, said Eugene's FWHC Development Director Sally Sheklow, is an actual birth plan that a pregnant woman can bring to her doctor so that it is clear from the beginning what types of procedures she will and will not allow in the pregnancy and birth process.

The birth plan includes information from what types of drugs will be used in the birthing to whether the woman wishes the baby to be placed directly in her arms after it is born.

"In this era of the medical takeover of childbirth," the introduction says, "mothers also need information to enable them to ward off possibly harmful interventions to protect their baby."

A *Woman's Book of Choices*, written by Rebecca Chalker and Carol Downer, informs women of their choices about abortion, RU-486, and the process known as menstrual extraction. Included are chapters on how to find the best available care provider, risks of RU-486, what practitioners need to know about complications, and folk remedies that are dangerous and don't work.

Menstrual extraction "is not home abortion," Sheklow said.

Rather it is a process performed by women's groups where the period is extracted from the uterus by women's groups where the period may have conceived, but for whom a pregnancy test is still premature. It is a way for women "in neighborhood groups to take reproductive health into their own hands in preparing for any restrictions" that could be in store for legal abortions, Sheklow said.

How to Stay Out of the Gynecologist's Office is the "self-helper's Bible," Sheklow said. The book operates upon the theory of a "vaginal ecology," where such things as odors, bacterium and discharge are a regular part of every woman's cycle and can be affected by things like caffeine, alcohol, sugar and lack of sleep.

Home Remedies is a pamphlet including information about herbal healing of such afflictions as vaginitis and yeast infection, as well as a section on herbs that will induce a period.

Besides publishing books, the Federation of Women's Health Centers operates the affiliated clinics around the country, providing woman-centered health care. This type of health care operates on the

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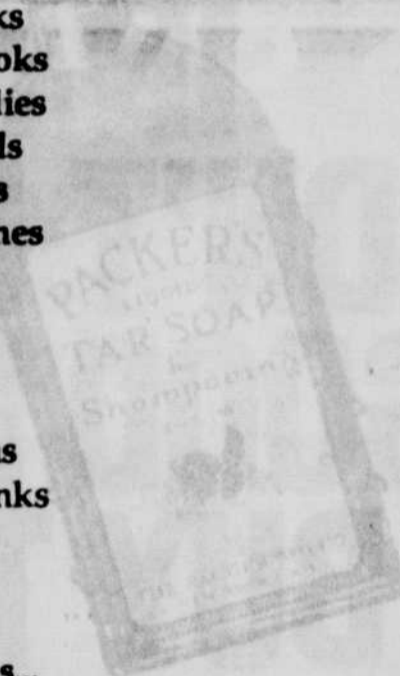
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