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Charles Webster

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Charles Webster : The National Health Service: A Political History (OPUS) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The National Health Service: A Political History (OPUS):

The National Health Service was established at a time when health care in the United Kingdom was desperately in need of improvement. This OPUS looks at the political decisions surrounding its foundation and the purpose which it was intended to serve. Despite many changes of political ethos since its foundation on 5 July 1948, every government has declared its intention to maintain and improve the National Health Service. Nevertheless, the National Health Service has faced some almost cyclical problems, while apparently new ideas (for example, the introduction of a chief executive) in fact have a long ancestry, and there is a drift towards a seemingly endless pattern of reorganization. Charles Webster's narrative concentrates on policy issues of major import to the patient and consumer including funding, resources, and health issues, as well as recognizing the achievements and limitations of this major national institution.

".. well written ... Public health and health service planners, particularly those in government or those who try to deal with government, would find value in it." Annals of the RCPSC (Dec 1998)"Webster brings the story up to date with his paperback political history". Medical History April 1999In this short book, which is brilliant digest of his magisterial two-volume official history of the NHS up to 1979, Webster continually points out that while no one was

ever completely in charge, vested interest often exerted undue influence" E.H.R Sept 1999 Charles Webster has established himself as the doyen amongst modern medical historians in Britain and is the author of the magisterial two volume History of the N.H.S which took the story up to the election of Thatcher./Joseph Melling University of Exeter/Science and Public Policy August 1998. Of the many books that will be published to mark its anniversary, it seems likely that this one, by Charles Webster, the former official historian, will receive the most attention... What is really interesting about this book, and is reflected in the choice of subtitle, is the third chapter, which takes over from where the official history leaves off, with the election of Margaret Thatcher in May 1979... This valuable and powerful book packs 50 years into just over 200 pages, offering both an indispensable examination of the NHS in its first five decades... However until then, some time in the twenty-first century, this book will remain the standard guide to the middle-aged NHS./John Welshman University of Lancaster/Social History of Medicine Vol 12, no.3 1999. Charles Webster's magisterial and monumental two-volume history of the National Health Service (1988, 1996)... His status of official historian, while it gave him access to the archives denied to others under the thirty-year rule... the two volumes are likely to remain the definitive account of the evolution of the NHS for the foreseeable future... Oxford University Press are to be congratulated on making it available at what is, by today's inflationary standards, a remarkably cheap price. It provides an incredibly comprehensive account of the main developments in the NHS./Rudolph Klein/Social Policy, vol 28 - No.1, 1999. About the Author Charles Webster is Senior Research Fellow at All Souls College, Oxford. Between 1972-88 he was Director of the Wellcome Unit for the History of Medicine.