The ideology behind the Pioneer Health Centre

“The Peckham experiment was then, from the beginning, essentially a family health centre. It was more: an unusual mixture of family club and biologist’s laboratory dealing with the leisure life of the family and its personnel. This particular set-up cannot be appreciated unless we understand the biological distinction between health practice and medical practice. The Peckham health technique is fundamentally different from any form of medical technique.

Health technique as applied to the family and its personnel is directed to determining how healthy they are by looking for and assessing what is right with them – physically, mentally, and socially. By contrast, the medical technique and services
are determining how disordered and/or diseased the person is, by looking for and assessing what is wrong (physically and mentally, and now, belatedly, socially).

The medical approach is essentially one derived from the study of pathology. The Peckham approach – the determination of what is right with the family and its personnel and home – is derived from the other branch of biology not previously differentiated, and for which hitherto there has been neither name nor technical procedure. Let us call this branch of biology – ethology.”


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