AIMS For a better birth...

Letter to AIMS - Fathers in the birth space

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In 1961, I wanted to have my husband with me for our baby's bir th; and was refused. In 1963, in another hospital in Edinburgh, another consultant agreed. In 1965 in York, I was at first refused: only doctors' wives could have their husbands, said the consultant. But I slipped through the barrier, by being a professor of biology's wife. All went well; and after that, all women in that maternity unit could have their baby's father with them.

This little history raises questions. Why did I want my husband so much? How much did I feel spontaneously and how much was I influenced by AIMS, magazine ar ticles, etc.? Why was I determined and confident? That is easily answered: reading the AIMS Journal and feeling approved of and socially suppor ted by its members, though I knew none personally.

Why did social status – being married to the right man – matter so much? Why did one successful case of a non-doctor father have such a far-reaching effect? Whatever the answers, the conclusion is clear : know what you want; feel socially justified; ask for it; and sometimes you will receive it.

Charlotte Williamson
Charlotte is a long-standing AIMS member