

accounts as wrong, but rather as inadequate and partial. Her focus is upon specific and singular events that enable her to examine the rivalries and negotiated divisions of labour, so to speak, between the midwife, the surgeon and the physician in the early eighteenth century. For Keller, this is far from being merely a battle of the sexes. However, despite Keller's assertions to the contrary, there is some sense throughout this book of early modern aims regarding the self as having an epistemological and political essence: one of patriarchy as an organizing and orientating means for us to understand what happened and continues to happen when medicine addresses generation and childbirth. It would be fascinating to see explanations of how gender was assembled and distinguished that do not assume underlying and pre-given interests: those of males. None the less, *Generating bodies and gendered selves* is a brilliant example of how early modern history can benefit from a thorough and sustained engagement with the best scholarship in the fields of cultural theory and science studies.

**Steve Ridge,**

The Wellcome Trust Centre for the History of Medicine at UCL

**Alfons Zarzoso,** *L'Exercici de la medicina a la Catalunya de al Il·lustració (segle XVIII)*, Manresa, Publicacions de l'Arxiu Històric de les Ciències de la Salut (PAHCS), 2006, pp. 184, illus., no price given (paperback 84-611-2808-7).

This book won the Catalanian History of Medicine Prize "Oleguer Miró i Borrás" (2005), awarded by the Barcelona Medical Council (Colegio Oficial de Médicos de Barcelona), which publishes the prize-winning works in the Publicacions de l'Arxiu Històric de les Ciències de la Salut series. Alfons Zarzoso specializes in the study of medical practice in Catalonia in the eighteenth century. This was also the subject of his doctoral thesis, *La Pràctica mèdica a la Catalunya del segle XVIII* (2003).

Following an introduction to the historiography of medical pluralism during the final period of the Ancien Régime, Zarzoso analyses medical practice and the relationship between society and physicians by studying the contracts of these professionals with the town councils and the mutual aid associations. He studies the extent to which university-taught medicine was introduced in eighteenth-century Catalonia, and how this reflects the political changes caused by the War of the Spanish Succession (1702–1713). The disappearance of the Estudio de Barcelona and the establishment of the University of Cervera by the new Bourbon dynasty marked a change in the choice of university by medical students: thenceforth most Catalanian students (55 per cent) graduated from the University of Huesca, compared with 28 per cent from the new University of Cervera. The remaining 17 per cent attended other universities such as Saragossa, Valencia, Orihuela, Gandía or Montpellier. But the establishment of the Royal College of Surgeons of Barcelona in 1760 meant that Barcelona became the centre for the teaching of surgery.

Zarzoso's analysis of the medical professionals in the province shows that, during the eighteenth and well into the nineteenth century, as a consequence of the system of *conducció* or *contractació*, university-taught physicians were present in rural areas. Under this system, the municipalities of the Crown of Aragon contracted physicians as well as surgeons and apothecaries specifically to work in the countryside, thus guaranteeing health care even in remote areas. The economic and demographic growth of Catalonia in the eighteenth century led to an increase in the purchasing power of the town councils and of the population in general, and so also to an increase in the medicalization of society.

The author reviews the documentation between 1722 and 1820 preserved in the Archives of the Real Audiencia relating to the municipal medical contracts. The result clearly shows the regulatory mechanisms for health care professionals, physicians, apothecaries

and surgeons, and presents a social reality which goes beyond the world of health care.

The final section of the book and the appendix deal with the mutual assistance societies in Barcelona at the end of the eighteenth century. The demographic changes in the city, mainly among the working class, improved living standards and led to the development of institutions and associations which, in different ways, combined religious customs, subsidies and medical assistance in illness and death.

The archival material used in the book to explicate the development of the health care professions and the organization of medical assistance, draws us closer to a rich reality which, although somewhat similar to that of other areas, also reveals idiosyncrasies which are crucial to an understanding of eighteenth-century Catalan medical practice.

**Pilar León Sanz,**  
Universidad de Navarra

**David E Shuttleton,** *Smallpox and the literary imagination 1660–1820*, Cambridge and New York, Cambridge University Press, 2007, pp. xiii, 265, illus., £48.00, \$85.00 (hardback 978-0-521-87209-6).

Uniting their forces, it seems, by sheer dint of scholarly writing, literary historians of the last generation have rewritten the cultural profile of numerous diseases: cancer, consumption, gout, heart disease, obesity and others. David Shuttleton, a literary historian interested in the interface of literature and medicine, has rounded out this record with his fine study of smallpox's profile in the eighteenth century, its most transformative epoch before inoculation and vaccination turned around its fortunes after 1800. Shuttleton revises smallpox's harsh realities, social effects, and especially its verbalizations and mentalizations by onlookers, close and distant.

Smallpox's narrower medical history is, of course, far from certain. Identified in the ancient world, first described by the Arab

physician Rhazes, and distinguished from measles by Fracastoro, its progress from the Middle Ages to 1600 still conceals mysteries. What can safely be affirmed is that by 1700 it was killing many thousands each year: the scourge from which the eighteenth century could never be free. Jenner's vaccinations at the end of the century, building on Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's earlier inoculations, were the Enlightenment's best hope for prevention. But the resistance to inoculation was immense. It was only when empire and imperialism in the Indian subcontinent made plain that smallpox would become a menace as dire as cholera, that the benefits of vaccination were securely applied.

"Medical history" is a smaller field than "medical profile", which extends to a malady's public understanding: here think of mental illness and AIDS. Shuttleton appropriately begins with this larger, bewildering profile in mind and augments our sense of smallpox's cultural casualties. A scourge that disfigures its victims through visible sores, scars, and red spots erupting hot pus will be moralized despite attempts to neutralize the condition.

Yet if disease clusters possess inherent symbolic resonances, as cultural historians have been demonstrating for three decades that they do, smallpox's salient sign was disfigurement: disfigurement more than death. This perception did not sit easily with a Georgian civilization steeped in the lure of widely disseminated cults of beauty—aesthetic, physical, moral and sublime—and beauty's opposites in the realms of the ugly and grotesque. Historians have interpreted much Enlightenment culture through this specific opposition. Yet read the pathetic accounts of those dying of smallpox and the horror of disfigurement terrorizes them far more than death does.

If obesity in our time has become the site of fiercely contested debates trading on our obsession with symmetrically trim bodies—so slim that they are often anorexic—smallpox before 1800 took a similar toll on the faces and figures of women and men, rich and poor.