

Book Reviews

biological imagery, and three specifically medical; four on art and archaeology; two on cognitive science; and nine on applications, mainly related to computer imaging.

The role of images in the *history* of the sciences has been shamefully neglected until recently (historians of medical science have been shining exceptions here, perhaps as a result of their training in a set of pervasively visual practices). It would be good to be able to report that this volume contributed to the belated recognition that texts are not the only sources that historians can draw on; but in fact most of the papers are purely scientific, and there are few on historical themes.

The volume opens with brief but well-illustrated essays on the significance of the *mappae mundi* of the twelfth century and the great world atlases of the early modern period. The first of the biological papers describes the design of an exhibit at the science museum at La Villette, in which scientific images from the Revolutionary period are used to convey a historical sense of what “natural history” meant at that time. Otherwise there are few truly historical papers, though some of those on modern imaging techniques could provide suggestive material for a historical treatment of recent biomedical practice.

Of the three papers on medical topics, the first, by Michel Lemire, is most likely to interest readers of this journal. It describes the astonishingly “realistic” coloured wax models of anatomical dissections, the making of which flourished briefly from the late eighteenth century into the early nineteenth. Those made by Felice Fontana at Florence from the 1770s seem to have inspired patrons elsewhere in Europe. One important set was commissioned by the Duc d’Orléans from the surgeon André-Pierre Pinson; at the Revolution it passed to the new Muséum d’Histoire Naturelle in Paris, where it was later supplemented by models ordered by Georges Cuvier to embellish his new gallery of *comparative* anatomy. Miraculously, many of these wax models have survived the vicissitudes of war and well-meaning modernization. It would have been good to have more illustrations of them; and their changing function, from being objects of contemplation (in a “cabinet of curiosities”) to a new role as visual aids for teaching, deserved closer analysis.

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MAREK KOHN, *Dope girls: the birth of the British drug underground*, London, Lawrence & Wishart, 1992, pp. vii, 198, illus., £11.99 (paperback 0–85315–772–3).

Dope girls has a good marketable subject; the series of drug-taking *causes célèbres* involving West End actresses and their drug suppliers which occupied many press column inches before, during, and after the First World War.

Marek Kohn starts with the suicide in 1901 of two out-of-work actresses, Edith and Ida Yeoland. The fact that they had used cocaine excited press comment. But it was not until the Great War that fears of an epidemic of drug-taking reached fever pitch. A cocaine trade in the West End of London, where prostitutes acted as go-betweens for sales to Canadian troops, fuelled concerns that the efficiency of fighting men might be undermined. War has always been a stimulant of social change. DORA Regulation 40B which restricted access to cocaine and smoking opium was the drug-taking equivalent of nationalization of the drink trade and the restriction of pub opening.

The uncertainties of the immediate post-war era were expressed through reactions to drug-taking. The death of Billie Carleton, a popular actress, in 1919, brought revelations of cocaine and veronal use, of opium-smoking parties in pyjamas, of a West End *demi-monde* of film actors, dress designers, and the occasional army officer. The Carleton case helped set the tone for the passing of the 1920 Dangerous Drugs Act, which extended and made permanent the wartime restrictions. The Freda Kempton case of 1923 fulfilled a similar function at the time of the Dangerous Drugs (Amendment) Act, which stiffened penalties.

Kohn rightly draws attention to the connection between the attack on drug-taking and fears of social dislocation during and after the war. The “new woman” was said to be peculiarly at risk—“The queer, bizarre, rather brilliant bachelor girl is a frequent victim to the insidious advances of the female dope fiend”. Dealers and others involved in the trade were typically either gay, black or oriental. The press had a field day with the “weakness and effeminacy” of Reggie De Veulle,

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Billie's costumier, with Brilliant Chang, the Chinese restaurateur involved with Freda Kempton; and with Edgar Manning, a black drug dealer. Deviance, whether racial or sexual, figured largely.

The bulk of this book is a high-level journalistic presentation of the details of cases which both Terry Parssinen and I have presented in academic publications elsewhere. Kohn acknowledges his debt to both of us, although he could have used different quotes from some sources—many of them were very familiar. This is not a full-scale analysis of the birth of the British drugs underground. To write that would require more historical material and a greater degree of theoretical sophistication. But the book is an enjoyable introduction. The brief final excursion into the post-World War Two cannabis underworld wets the appetite. And Kohn's discovery that the mysterious Don Kimfull of the Billie Carleton case, a Notting Hill Egyptian, was probably one and the same as Dean of Dean's Bar in Tangier (the original of Rick in *Casablanca*) is a fascinating piece of detective work.

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HARRIS B. SCHUMACKER, JR, MD, *The evolution of cardiac surgery*, Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana University Press, 1992, pp. xv, 476, illus., £42 (0-253-35221-5). Distributed in the UK and Ireland by Open University Press, Celtic Court, 22-26 Ballmoor, Buckingham, MK18 1XW.

The blurb on the jacket of this book claims that it is "an important resource for the medical professional and the medical historian". Certainly some medical professionals, especially those with experience in cardiac surgery or cardiology, will find it useful—and comprehensible. It is, however, a rare medical historian who will feel comfortable with statements, in a description of a heart-lung machine, such as "The pump was driven by a magnetically latched, spring-decoupled, highly efficient, balanced pulsed-solenoid energy converter with two symmetric pivoting armatures". Similar technicalities abound in the descriptions of operative procedures and there can be no doubt that this is a book for the specialist.

Separate chapters deal with the surgical treatment of most of the operable cardiac lesions although there is surprisingly little about transposition of the great arteries and nothing about Ake Senning's and William Mustard's pioneering operations for that condition. The various approaches to open-heart surgery—cross circulation, hypothermia, cardiopulmonary bypass and so on—are also dealt with at length. It is difficult to fault the book in its coverage of these topics and it is a valuable factual account, as its title claims, of how cardiac surgery has evolved over the past half-century or so. The account of the years preceding the modern era, however, is less satisfactory although this period is certainly not totally ignored. What is lacking is any discussion of the reasons for the apparently slow progress in the first few decades of the present century beyond expressions of surprise that suggestions such as those of Lauder Brunton on mitral valve surgery and John Munro on ligation of the ductus arteriosus were not followed up sooner. There is, also, little discussion of the effect of developments in anaesthetic practice and blood transfusion on surgery in general and thoracic surgery in particular.

Throughout the book the emphasis is on the achievements of individuals and the author has been at pains to establish priorities although, in one respect at least, incorrectly. This is in his attribution of the first ligation of an infected ductus arteriosus to Arthur Touroff of Mount Sinai Hospital rather than to Oswald Tubbs of St Bartholomew's. The index is comprehensive as far as persons are concerned but is less reliable on topics—neither pulmonary stenosis nor ventricular septal defect appears. The references, however, are admirably full and for this reason, at least, the book deserves to be called "an important resource".

Peter Fleming, London