

of its argumentative reconstruction of Freud's writings, in the form of a set of well-defined scientific hypotheses. Grünbaum provides a useful précis of his book at the outset, and his verdict on psychoanalysis' claim to scientific truth is negative. Hopkins and Cioffi take issue with Grünbaum, but for opposing reasons. Hopkins argues carefully and in detail that psychoanalytic thought stands as an extension of common-sense psychology and not on the kinds of inductive foundations that Grünbaum supposes required for it. This, if correct, would make the absence of inductive support irrelevant, since Freudian interpretations would then be no more in need of special scientific corroboration than are ordinary explanations of why people do what they do. Dilman, later in the collection, argues for such a view, with reference to the concept of intention. Cioffi, by contrast, defends the view, promulgated by Popper and by now quite familiar, that psychoanalytic theory, like astrology, illegitimately makes itself invulnerable to refutation. The attitude one takes on this fundamental issue—whether one sees psychoanalytic theory as scientific but false, non-scientific and true, or pseudo-scientific and incapable of truth—is crucial for how one reacts to the later discussions in the collection, and the editors perhaps disappoint in not giving us Grünbaum's replies to the criticisms. (Even if, to this reviewer at least, it seems that Hopkins's arguments would be exceedingly hard to controvert.)

The various tasks to which later papers are devoted include the co-ordination of psychoanalytic theory with topics in philosophical psychology, such as the postulation of homunculi, the "functional" characterization of mental states, and the possibilities of explanation offered by cognitive psychology (Eagle, Haldane, Moore); the evaluation of extra-clinical experimental evidence for psychoanalytic theory (Erwin, Kline); a reassessment of Sulloway's study of the influence of biology on Freud's thought (Crews); and the interconnections of psychoanalytic and literary theory (Sharpe, Lamarque). Of particular interest is the final section devoted to Hobson's "activation-synthesis" model of dream (elaborated in his subsequently published *The dreaming brain*). Squires's acute commentary leaves doubtful the degree to which Hobson's theory does in fact contradict psychoanalytic claims.

There is an irony in the fact that, at a time when many practising psychotherapists and psychoanalysts have been hurrying to declare themselves rid of theoretical commitments, a volume should appear which does so much to demonstrate that the discussion of Freudian theory is, for the very best of reasons, still a live issue.

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KENNETH F. KIPLE (editor), *The African exchange: toward a biological history of black people*, Durham, NC, and London, Duke University Press, 1988, 8vo, pp. vi, 280, £28.45.

The work of historians such as Kenneth F. Kiple in the field of black biological history over the past ten years has shown that the ability of Blacks to withstand certain diseases virtually guaranteed that they would be the chief instruments in the white colonization of Plantation America. We now know, too, that as well as immunities, Blacks carried to the New World a package of susceptibilities which meant that they were especially vulnerable to a range of illnesses of which they had no experience. Much of this work has been done within the context of slavery studies. In this varied and stimulating collection, the scope of investigation is widened from an examination of conditions within slave societies to an elucidation of the details of the "African exchange", by which Plantation America became an extension of the disease- and nutritional environment of Africa.

A characteristically fluent introductory article by Kiple reviewing recent research, complete with exhaustive bibliography, is followed by two studies focusing on disease conditions in Africa. Dauril Alden and Joseph Miller argue that there was a close temporal relationship between outbreaks of smallpox in Africa, upsurges in slave-trading, and the transmission of the disease to Brazil. Philip Curtin, employing newly uncovered data on morbidity and mortality, continues with the epidemiological approach in his consideration of comparative black immunities and susceptibilities in Africa and the West Indies.

## Book Reviews

The focus of the volume then shifts fully to the disease environments of the New World. Thorough and persuasive articles examine the previously unexplained ailment of dry belly ache, interpreted here as the result of lead poisoning; consider the effect of improved nutrition on a normally malnourished West Indian slave population; and Donald Cooper confirms that the susceptibility to cholera previously identified in American Blacks extended to Brazilian Blacks. Richard Steckel contributes an enterprising interdisciplinary study of slave childhood, reminding us that the common perception of good material treatment did not necessarily extend to the most vulnerable in slave societies. Finally, Thomas Wilson turns to a current medical problem, hypertension, and presents a convincing historical hypothesis for its continued high prevalence amongst Blacks.

In a concluding chapter on future avenues of research, Kiple argues that with the boundaries between the physical and social sciences now broken down, black biological history has an exciting future. This volume is evidence of both the vitality and the quality of the work presently being undertaken, and of the enormous opportunities an interdisciplinary approach offers historians in this field.

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ALFRED JAY BOLLET, *Plagues & poxes: the rise and fall of epidemic disease*, New York, Demos Publications, 1987, 8vo, pp. xii, 196, \$29.95.

One of the things that evidently irritate professional historians is the delight laymen take in parlour games—the effects on history if Cleopatra's nose had been a different shape, say, or if a later Greek king had not died from a monkey bite. But such pastimes are harmless and players will rejoice that Dr Alfred Jay Bollet's book gives them a new hand. His collection of essays, originally published in *Resident and Staff Physician* and *Medical Times*, deals elegantly and excitingly with a wide range of topics. In fact, his title *Plagues and poxes* does less than justice to the much wider scope of the book; to be sure, Bollet discusses syphilis and smallpox, malaria and yellow fever, diphtheria, tuberculosis, and the Spanish influenza, but he also spends much of the book on such other topics as the discovery of the vitamin deficiencies, advances in surgical care, and the rise of myocardial infarction. There are also excellent accounts of the illnesses of various presidents of the USA, including the secret operation on Cleveland, done on a yacht to remove a cancer of the hard palate.

As is often the case these days, however, Dr Bollet has not been well served by his publishers: some illustrations would have been an attractive feature, there is no index, and irritating errors such as Lemelian for Lumleian, Keil for Kiel, and Ronald Hart for Hare should have been put right. A more cogent criticism of the book is that the strait-jacket of the essay does not always make for a rounded discussion of a difficult subject: you would never guess, for instance, at the serious difficulties encountered by Sir Morell Mackenzie in treating the German Crown Prince or by Howard Florey in developing penicillin. And Bollet has a tendency to swallow one side of the story. On the basis of one article (admittedly by the President's physician) he seems to refute the orthodoxy that Roosevelt was a sick man at Yalta and hence failed to stand up to Stalin. In Bollet's view, Roosevelt's appearance was due to dieting and excessive digitalis and there was little evidence of cardiovascular disease. Yet such shrewd observers as Sir Alexander Cadogan had little doubt that Roosevelt's lack of interest and torpor at the conference reflected serious illness, a view they thought confirmed when he died of a sudden stroke two months after Yalta. Nevertheless, these are not major criticisms and it is good to have such readable and adequate documentation of so many important medical advances in a single book.

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*British Medical Journal*

F. FENNER and A. GIBBS (editors), *Portraits of viruses: a history of virology*, Basle, Karger, 1988, 8vo, pp. viii, 344, illus., S.Fr. 147.00/DM 176.00/\$98.00/£66.90.