

height of Stalin's repressive policies. The increased persecution of homosexuals following de-Stalinization is also puzzling given the generally more liberal climate that existed in the country under Khrushchev.

As the author himself recognizes, much work still needs to be done to further our understanding of sexual politics and the treatment of sexual dissent in the Soviet Union, as well as their implications for understanding Soviet experience in general. For example, if one can accept, with some reservations, the author's arguments about the reasons for decriminalizing homosexuality under the early Soviet regime (this reader at least was not entirely convinced by the author's use of evidence related to the German Social Democratic Party to illustrate the attitudes towards homosexuality among the Bolsheviks; or by his inferences about Lenin's views on the subject based on his writings), it is harder to accept his argument that the recriminalization of homosexuality under Stalin was motivated by the need for "a marshaling of resources into a narrow range of endeavors" (p. 171). One also wonders why Stalin abandoned modern approaches towards homosexuality while pursuing an aggressive policy of modernization in many other spheres.

However, these and some other reservations do not diminish the overall positive impression of the book. It will be a welcome addition to a variety of graduate and advanced undergraduate courses on the history of gender, sexuality, and, of course, Soviet Russia.

Gennady Shkliarevsky,
Bard College

Arnold I Davidson, *The emergence of sexuality: historical epistemology and the formation of concepts*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 2001, pp. xvi, 254, illus., £27.50 (hardback 0-674-00459-0).

Arnold Davidson's book has been a long time in the making, and much of it has already been seen by historians of psychiatry and students

of Michel Foucault's writings. However, familiarity with many of the essays published in *The emergence of sexuality* should not encourage contempt. Davidson's work is one of the most significant applications of Foucault's (and in part Georges Canguilhem's) "historical epistemology" to the development of psychiatric thinking about sexuality. Not only are the chapters written with style and wit, but they explicate some of the most important problems faced by any historian of medical knowledge, particularly historians of psychiatry. Davidson's essays in *Critical Inquiry* in the late 1980s and his commentaries on Foucault elsewhere are by no means old hat: they can be appreciated fully only when read in conjunction with one another. And, furthermore, the remaining chapters of the book provide the missing elements from an overall system. No historian of sexuality can afford not to pay close attention to Davidson's work. It is for this reason that he has already been lauded by David Halperin, Ian Hacking and others.

In a discipline where historiographical pronouncements are often regarded as the equivalent of After Eight mints, it is easy to dismiss methodological statements as the banging of a hollow drum. Good historical investigation is assumed to stand for itself, and, indeed, this view is often substantiated. But the quality of theory is often strained, or is lost in its own world of post-modern discourse, lacking the significance to justify numerous obscure readings. This criticism is not at all the case with Davidson's work. The first five chapters might be characterized as the application of theory: they are detailed, brilliant, and insightful essays about sex and sexuality, about how new styles of reasoning come into being, and about how we came to be sexual beings. The essays rely on intensive primary research into published documents in numerous languages. Only a historian who was overly obsessed with the context of production of a statement would fault Davidson's investigations into the formation of sexological knowledge, and it should be remembered that he is first and foremost a philosopher, not a social historian. The remaining chapters might be considered a profound exegesis of Foucault's archaeological

Book Reviews

methodology, and indeed a part of their radiance comes from Davidson's reinterpretation of Foucault's works of his "middle period", best contained in *Les mots et les choses* and *L'Archéologie du savoir*. Davidson shows the similarity and difference between Canguilhem's and Foucault's projects better than any other Anglophone commentator, and he relates all these theoretical insights back to the preceding analyses of sexology (which were themselves already theoretically nuanced). To paraphrase Canguilhem, theoretical programmes are many, concrete results few; Davidson's work cannot be criticized in this way. It is a substantial achievement in the application of philosophy to history of science and medicine, and is historical investigation of the first order.

Because Davidson's work is so impressive, a number of specific issues are worthy of further examination. While the Foucaultian project, for example, is very much involved with erasing authorship and agency in preference for descriptions of the conditions necessary for the emergence of *savoir*, there are other, sociological approaches to the history of sexology which are possible, and which also address how the formation of concepts of sexuality, and especially of perversion, proceeded, but at a micro-social rather than an archaeological level. If he had focused on the actors' strategies to adopt dispositions in the field of sexology in this way, Davidson's interpretation of Sigmund Freud's significance in reconceptualizing sexuality, for instance, might have been different. Foucault was interested in the development of discursive fields; some of this development can be thought of as social as well as "structural".

Finally attention should be drawn to the appendix: 'Foucault, psychoanalysis, and pleasure'. These seven short pages are the most profound interpretation of Foucault that I have read. Not only do they perfectly round-off the experience of reading Davidson's book, but they capture succinctly the challenge in writing histories of the present, as Foucault and his acolytes characterize themselves. It is only in the works of Foucault and Friedrich Nietzsche that historicity has had such monumental resonance. Davidson has done historians of

medicine great service by bringing his mind to bear on our territory.

Ivan Crozier,

The Wellcome Trust Centre for the History of Medicine at UCL

Farokh Erach Udwardia, *Man and medicine: a history*, New Delhi, Oxford University Press, 2000, pp. xvi, 496, illus., £31.50 (hardback 0-19-565457-9)

When Michel Foucault, following his earlier works such as *Madness and civilisation* and *The birth of the clinic*, talked in the 1970s about the birth of what he called "Bio-politics", he was in fact defining the theoretical and practical context with which a new age in historiography was associated. An age in which the history of disease and health is increasingly seen in relation to politics and society; in which historians study social and political history through the "body", i.e. its diseases, its health and its ability. History can no longer ignore the ravages wrought by epidemics or the role they played in socio-political changes. As Roy Porter put it, "historians at large, who until recently tended to chronicle world history in blithe ignorance of or indifference to disease, now recognise the difference made by plague, cholera and other epidemics" (*The greatest benefit to mankind*, London, 1997, p. 5). The study of social history without reference to man's physical well-being is outdated, as is medical history considered in isolation from its sociopolitical environment.

Erach Udwardia's *Man and medicine* follows the modern trend. This book, organized in 75 chapters subdivided in sections, will appeal to a wide range of readers from specialist scholars to the general public. Different schools of medicine from antiquity to the present are studied and the emergence and development of new branches of medical knowledge are dealt with. Udwardia provides useful details about different diseases, their development and decline through the centuries. His work is not only a history of medicine, but also a clever and erudite study of world history. It is against the backdrop of social