Hitler, Joseph McCarthy, Pol Pot, Idi Amin, Louis Farrakhan. But Robins and Post do not limit their investigation of political paranoia to simply these obvious candidates. They label as paranoid David Koresh, leader of the ill-fated Branch Davidians who died in a fiery blaze in 1993, Jim Jones, whose 912 cult followers committed suicide in 1978, and movie director Oliver Stone whose film *JFK* (1992) has achieved iconic status among the many Americans who believe their government regularly lies to them.

On the whole Robins and Post's book is a sophisticated discussion of the issue. There is no reason to doubt their thesis that paranoid psychology is deeply ingrained in our biological nature. We are tempted all too often to indulge our suspicions that we are dupes and victims of wilier, sinister persons. The authors are also careful not to oversimplify. For instance, they astutely note that though Senator Joseph McCarthy was adept at playing the game of paranoid politics in the early 1950s, he himself was not a paranoid (p. 223). On other occasions, however, they leave this reader shaking his head. What purpose is served by calling the ingeniously paranoid Lyndon LaRouche "a kind of Allan Bloom gone mad"? (p. 198). And describing the militia movement in today's America as "a reaction against feminism" (p. 214) is surely taking liberties their otherwise sensible and informed approach does not warrant. Indeed, one has to question their liberal and uncritical use of Freudian notions like "projection". Plausible some pyschoanalytic ideas may be, but in view of the recent cogent attacks on Freud's theories the authors need to be more careful. The advice of this reviewer would be to leave Freudian speculation aside as it does not really contribute to their overall argument.

Robins and Post actually end their book with a rather optimistic conclusion, at least for American readers. Paranoid politics with its "hyperemotionality" and "shouting of accusations" does not go very far in the American political system (p. 236). For many of the world's other nations, however, Robins and Post predict a rougher future. Paranoia plays well when states are being divided along ethnic, linguistic, or tribal lines. Perhaps it is because of these global tensions as the new millennium approaches that paranoia is receiving increasing attention. *Political paranoia* is only one of several books about paranoia to appear in the last two years. These include John Farrell's *Freud's paranoid quest* (1996) and Daniel Pipes's *Conspiracy: how the paranoid style flourishes and where it comes from* (1997). All of a sudden paranoia is becoming a hot issue. Is this interest in paranoia simply another case of the "disease of the week" syndrome? Or is it tied to the fact that the term paranoia is going out of fashion within psychiatry, if the most recent editions of the American Psychiatric Association's *The diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders* are any indication? Will paranoia begin to enjoy renewed scholarly attention, now that the classical paranoia diagnosis is disappearing from psychiatry? If so, it would be strikingly similar to what Mark Micale has written about the history of the hysteria diagnosis. Ultimately, then, the mere fact of *Political paranoia*'s publication may be as important as what it says

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Matthias Perleth, *Historical aspects of American trypanosomiasis (Chagas' disease)*, Medizin in Entwicklungsländern, Band 43, Frankfurt am Main, Peter Lang, 1997, pp. 171, illus., £22.00 (3-631-31063-3).

Chagas' disease or the trypanosomiasis widely distributed in rural South America has a fascinating and little known story, which is closely entwined with the development of medical science in Brazil during the early twentieth century and with its main discoverer Carlos Chagas (1879–1934). In contrast to the sequence and multiplicity of actors characteristic in other discoveries of the time, Chagas himself identified the blood-sucking insects, the triatomine bugs, that transmitted the disease; discovered the parasitic protozoan, *Trypanosoma cruzi*, that produced the disease; and only later described a distinct clinical entity. Chagas was part of the Institute created by Oswaldo Cruz, the bacteriologist trained in Paris who organized a remarkable research and training centre in Rio de Janeiro. Chagas's prominence made him the successor of Cruz at the Rio Institute and led him to the position of director of the National Department of Public Health in Brazil in 1920. He was also a close associate of the Rockefeller Foundation and an active promoter of a US style of sanitation. For a few decades part of his scientific work on the disease was criticized by some Brazilian, Agentinian and German investigators who challenged his erroneous assumption that endemic goitre was a manifestation of South American trypanosomiasis.

The work by Perleth provides a complete picture of the natural history of the disease and follows carefully the origin, evolution, controversy, correction and final acceptance of Chagas' ideas. There is a fine description of the infectious agent and its mode of transmission, the clinical manifestations, the therapy, the preventive measures such as improvement of housing, and the socioeconomic significance of the disease. In addition, the ecological, epidemiological and social factors, such as migration, contributing to the spread of the disease are taken into account. One of the main novelties of this book is the extraordinary information and insights into the crucial relationship between the Brazilian and German investigators of the early twentieth century. This information is based on the papers of Max Hartmann held in the Archive of the Max-Planck-Gesellschaft of Berlin. The author soundly argues that Germans such as Hartmann, Stanilaus von Prowazek (who spent some time in Rio), and the work in protozoology made by Schauddinn played an important role in the interpretation by Chagas of the life cycle of the protozoan.

However, the title of this work suggests that it is uneven. Some aspects are treated brilliantly, others on a very basic level. The tension comes only in part from the difficulty in combining the natural and the social histories of the disease. The social dimension is based on outdated literature, such as George Basalla, and good but not so recent secondary work. In the author's favour, it must be said that he spent some time in Rio de Janeiro and collected valuable information at the Casa Oswaldo Cruz. Something to criticize is the scant reference to recent socio-historical works in English and Portuguese that present a more elaborate and comprehensive view of the evolution of medical science in twentieth-century Brazil. For example, two important titles that do not appear in the bibliography are: Simon Schartzman, *A space for science, the development of the scientific community in Brazil* (University Park, The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1991) and Jaime Larry Benchimol and Luis Antonio Teixeira, *Cobras, lagartos & outros bichos. Uma história comparada dos institutos Oswaldo Cruz e Butantan* (Rio de Janeiro, Editora UFRJ, 1993). The author deals with the Rockefeller Foundation using the few and scattered papers kept at Rio de Janeiro. I am certain that his book would have gained in detail, accuracy, elaboration and interpretation if he had worked at the Rockefeller Archive Center of North Tarrytown, a major source for Latin American medical science in the early twentieth century.

In spite of some repetition and its rigid format, I enjoyed and learned much reading this book. There is a lot of specialized information on Chagas' disease that will be of great use to any historian of medicine interested in this disease and to those interested in tropical diseases.

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Allan Ingram (ed.), *Voices of madness: four pamphlets, 1683–1796*, Thrupp, Glos., Sutton Publishing, 1997, pp. xxii, 154, £18.99 (0-7509-1210-3).

The four monographs reprinted here provide some fascinating insights into the experience of