

## Book Reviews

ROY S. PORTER, *The earth sciences. An annotated bibliography*, New York and London, Garland Publishing, 1983, 8vo, pp. xix, 192, illus., \$37.00.

This handsome volume offers 808 secondary bibliographical references on the history of the earth sciences. It is the third volume in the series *Bibliographies of the history of science and technology*, edited by Robert Multhauf and Ellen Wells. Porter's bibliography of the history of geology follows hot on the trail of the more comprehensive one by W. A. S. Sarjeant, *Geologists and the history of geology* (5 vols., New York, Arno Press; London, Macmillan, 1980, pp. 4526). The entries are intelligently subdivided into ten categories which range from 'Bibliography and reference works' to 'Geology, culture and the arts'. The two groups 'Specialist histories' and 'Cognate sciences' have each been extensively further subdivided.

This volume has two particularly welcome features. First, each entry has been summarized in the form of a very useful analytical and descriptive comment. Second, an introduction has been added which gives a concise history of geological historiography. Porter argues that the *history* of geology has been revitalized during the past few decades mainly because it has become distanced from the *science* of geology. As a result we have experienced a "decline of canonizing and anathematizing history", and a corresponding rise of a more historical and socially focused approach.

The majority of the titles are from the Anglo-American literature, but titles in French, German, Latin, Italian, and Spanish have been included. The selection of foreign-language titles, however, is somewhat uneven. The Germans, in particular, have done better than would appear from this bibliography. Entries that this reviewer should like to see added range from Wolf von Engelhardt's recent work on Goethe's geology to the classic bibliography by C. C. Leonhard, J. H. Kopp, and C. L. Gaertner, *Propaedeutik der Mineralogie* (Frankfurt am Main, J. C. Hermann, 1817), which contained no fewer than 2740 references on geology and its history.

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SERGIO DIAZ-BRIQUETS, *The health revolution in Cuba*, Austin and London, University of Texas Press, 1983, 8vo, pp. xvii, 227, £15.00.

There is a certain dynamism in the historical relationship between political economy and public health. Understanding the nature of this relationship is an important task of historians and social scientists. Mortality patterns, perhaps, provide the most appropriate starting-point for analysis. In the past, the sanitary reformers René Villermé and Edwin Chadwick used mortality statistics to document the deleterious impact of industrialization on the urban work force in nineteenth-century France and England—the "developing nations" of the 1800s. And among the Third World nations today, data on fluctuations in mortality can help evaluate social consequences of economic development.

Recent Latin American history is especially interesting in this regard because it presents profoundly contrasting situations. At one extreme are nations like Brazil and Mexico, which have pursued extensive industrialization policies as the way to achieve a more equitable share of the world's economic pie. At the other extreme is Cuba, which has pursued political revolution in the hopes of achieving social progress.

Entering the debate over the relative successes of such divergent paths is Sergio Díaz-Briquets, with his demographic study of mortality in Cuba under capitalism and socialism. Using data from seven national censuses (1899–1970), he has constructed life tables that document mortality transitions in the island since Independence from Spain. He also uses death certificates from the municipality of Havana to elucidate the changing profile of fatal diseases in the city between 1902 and 1953.

The numbers are revealing. Life expectancy at birth increased among all Cubans from 36+ years (1905) to 39+ (1925) to 58+ (1953) to over 70 years' expectancy in 1970. The author attributes these changes to different sources. Initially, mortality declined in response to improved sanitation, malaria control, and other public health measures instituted by the United States military government. Economic growth generated by American capital