

Leo withdrew its application for the drug's registration. The story of Gonadex, however, did not end here. As Norlund points out, instead the drug changed identities and was relaunched by the company for the specific treatment of amenorrhoea. Its release on to the market would pave the way for Leo's successful marketing of Homogonal, a drug to treat infertility in 1968.

Interestingly, while Homogonal would be withdrawn from the market in 1979, due to its small uptake, Gonadex, despite being an older drug, would continue until 1986. Norlund argues this could be because, while the quality of Gonadex remained unchanged, techniques for determining its purity had improved and refined, making it seem a more attractive drug than when it first appeared in 1948.

This study of Gonadex is a powerful reminder that history is not just about the celebration of winners. Tracing the ups and downs of Gonadex, Norlund provides a telling tale of how the history of drugs is influenced by the complex medical-academic framework in which they are developed and a powerful reminder that the boundaries between science, technology and society are not fixed.

Lara Marks

King's College London

doi:10.1017/mdh.2012.69

Allan Beveridge, *Portrait of the Psychiatrist as a Young Man: the Early Writing and Work of R. D. Laing, 1927–1960* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 352, \$79.95, hardback, ISBN: 9780199583577.

R.D. Laing has long captured the fascinations of biographers, historians, philosophers, counterculture radicals and a host of others interested in trying to understand the provocative views of this enigmatic psychiatrist. Within medical and psychiatric history, Laing is perhaps remembered chiefly for his unorthodox approaches to explaining psychosis and schizoid personalities, which began partly as a challenge to Freudian psychodynamic theory and eventually catapulted him into the 1960s counterculture as a psychedelic guru. Allan Beveridge contributes to these discussions by offering an extremely detailed and scoping review of Laing's early life and career in the period that culminates with the publication of Laing's first book, *The Divided Self* (1960).

Portrait of the Psychiatrist is divided into two parts and consists of twelve chapters. The first part examines 'Laing and theory' and in it Beveridge takes Laing at his word and considers the wide and diverse range of influences that shaped the young Laing. Beveridge paints a vivid image of a curious boy who already at a young age developed an intensely critical sense of himself, but at the same time had an unquenched appetite for ambition and fame. As a young man these qualities drove Laing to seek out a wide and impressive array of literary, religious, philosophical and existentialist texts that helped orient him in an intellectual space. Beveridge pieces together this journey by scouring Laing's notes, publications and correspondences for indications of literary influences. He then annotates the literary material to produce a thorough overview of the philosophical terrain Laing exposed himself to as a young adult. He shows, for example, how Laing acquired an appreciation for language, as he insisted on reading Heidegger in its original German, and Sartre in French, both of which he claims he did by teaching himself the language

through the use of a dictionary. Beveridge regards Laing's dedication to mastering these and other texts in their original language as further proof of his interest in the way that language embodies ideas, and moreover how it often fails to explicate the subtleties of experience.

In this section Beveridge takes great care to unravel the multitude of sources and personalities that Laing considered as he developed his own views on the world and humanity. Through this process Beveridge also develops a composite image of Laing as a troubled and ambitious man, one who seemed self-conscious about his own place in the world and cognisant of constructing his image in a manner that would emphasise his importance and generate a significant legacy. For example, Beveridge shows how Laing became somewhat obsessed with writing his first book by the age of thirty, and how this goal combined with producing a text that also addressed the limitations of psychoanalysis. While Beveridge convincingly demonstrates Laing's capacity for self-reflection, discipline and ambition, he also indicates that Laing developed a considerable degree of arrogance and self-preservation.

The second part of the book focuses on 'Laing and practice', and here Beveridge brings together the threads of Laing's philosophical, religious, existential and medical views, and explores how these often competing approaches played out in Laing's psychotherapy. Drawing on a careful examination of Laing's case notes and his subsequent publications, Beveridge continues to offer a very detailed account of Laing's experiences and his constant reflection on patients in reference to the broader world of arts, religion and philosophy. Some of his interactions with patients, Beveridge notes, later take on more meaning as they find themselves represented in his books. Here too, though, Beveridge discovers that Laing's personal ambitions at times overwhelmed his desire for an exact replication of a patient encounter. Importantly, these relationships helped Laing refine his views on schizophrenia and ontology in ways that allowed him to later articulate a sophisticated theory on humanity, which included elements of madness. Contrary to his psychiatric predecessors, Laing proposed a spectrum of humanity, along which schizoid personalities veered towards and away from the pole of normalcy.

The book concludes with the publication of *The Divided Self* in 1960, which Beveridge recognises as the culmination of Laing's goals from his first thirty-odd years of his life. With this accomplishment, Laing set himself apart from many of his contemporaries by leaning on the non-medical influences and intentionally avoiding the trappings of pharmaceutical-based psychiatry, but also self-consciously carving out a distinct path from the Freudian psychoanalysts. Beveridge is careful to show how Laing subsequently cherished the praise he received for the book that in many ways set the stage for his future publications and contributions to the field of mental health.

Beveridge provides an extremely detailed and thorough account of Laing's early life and career. For Laing disciples the book will undoubtedly offer a more fulsome description of his wide-ranging interests and will help situate Laing's early cynicism about madness alongside his personal literary influences within a broader philosophical context. For historians of psychiatry, Beveridge's meticulous explication of Laing's psychotherapeutic approach will be of value, particularly for those interested in positioning Laing at the crossroads of institutional, pharmaceutical and even anti-psychiatric mental health reforms in the mid-twentieth century.

Erika Dyck

University of Saskatchewan, Canada