

existed even within the category of store-bought medicines – a fact that challenges a simple dichotomy between ‘popular’ homemade remedies and those manufactured by professionals. Rounding out the volume is a brief epilogue that sketches the Giglio’s evolution in the sixteenth century, along with a useful glossary of terms.

This detailed study of a single Florentine apothecary shop offers valuable insight into the extent to which commercial culture conditioned the everyday management of health and illness in a vibrant Renaissance city.

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Gordon M. Shepherd, *Creating Modern Neuroscience: The Revolutionary 1950s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 291, £40.00, hardback, ISBN: 978-0-1953-9150-3

The thesis of this book is that it was during the 1950s that the multiplicity of disciplines that constitute modern neuroscience first came together to achieve a measure of coherence. This is not an especially original or contentious claim. However, few, if any, have spelt out the case as clearly and coherently as Shepherd. He lists the key concepts and fields that were established during this decade, including the action potential, neurotransmitter systems, neuroendocrinology, and membrane physiology. The 1950s were also when the foundations of modern brain imaging – with all its implications both for clinical neurology and for basic science – were laid. Moreover, the growing knowledge of brain chemistry acquired at this time made possible the first attempts to devise pharmacological remedies for a range of psychiatric conditions.

The origins of this book lie in a course on ‘History of Modern Neuroscience’. This source is especially evident in the first chapter, which reads very much like a set of lecture notes. Overall, Shepherd adopts a broadly biographical approach to the subject. He is not embarrassed to embrace a ‘great man’ – along with the occasional great woman – view of the history of science. He is writing of an epoch in which, in his view, ‘giants walked the earth’ (p. 219). Shepherd was acquainted with many of the leading figures discussed in the book, and the text is sprinkled with personal anecdotes and reminiscences. Shepherd admits that the institutional context within which these individuals operated is, on the other hand, largely overlooked in his account.

This all makes for a readable and engaging narrative. The technical details are carefully explained with little background knowledge assumed of the reader. Some explanatory figures embedded in the text might in places have added further clarity. There is a clear bias in Shepherd’s survey toward the cellular and molecular aspects of neuroscience, with less attention to ethology and psychology.

Shepherd’s account of some of the fields he discusses would have benefited by reference to the existing secondary literature. For instance, Kenton Kroger’s *The Sleep of Others* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007) is clearly relevant to the section on Eugene Aserinsky’s research; while any discussion of twentieth-century cognitive science needs to engage with Margaret Boden’s monumental *Mind as Machine* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006). Shepherd seems to be aware of the limitations of what his book offers.

He modestly expresses the hope that it will, nonetheless: 'serve as a stimulus to interest professional historians of science in a deeper analysis of this period' (p. 237).

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Elizabeth Stephens, *Anatomy as Spectacle: Public Exhibitions of the Body from 1700 to the Present* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2011), pp. 166, \$35, hardback, ISBN: 978-1-8463-1644-9.

Standing at eight feet two inches, Charles Byrne first arrived in London in 1782 and quickly captured the imagination of a city eager to part with its money in order to glimpse the man who became known as the Irish Giant. Over two hundred years later, Byrne's skeleton is still fascinating onlookers, boasting pride of place in the Hunterian Museum at the Royal College of Surgeons. It is this longstanding fascination with looking at anatomy, whether alive or dead, normal or pathological, fake or flesh, that occupies Elizabeth Stephens' book. Organised into four chapters on, respectively, eighteenth-century anatomical wax Venuses, nineteenth-century museums of 'lost manhood', twentieth-century freak shows, and Gunther von Hagens' current exhibitions of plastinated bodies, *Anatomy as Spectacle*, it is an ambitious investigation into the coalescence of medical and spectacular discourses that such anatomical exhibitions present, asserting that they are a key element in producing an emphatically modern idea of the body as one that requires continuous and careful self-management.

Stephens' case studies allow her to go into some historical depth when investigating each exhibition. This works particularly well in the chapter 'The Docile Subject of Anatomy', focusing on wax Venuses exhibited in Europe from the eighteenth century. Here Stephens first introduces such exhibitions as legitimising enterprises for the newly emergent discipline of anatomy, demonstrating how medical practitioners employed earlier artistic traditions such as portraying female nudes as Venus, and the use of wax models as votive offerings, in order to gain a rapid public acceptance for their anatomised bodies. This chapter also explores changing attitudes to femininity and motherhood during the heyday of these Venuses, situating the exhibitions as crucial sites for new cultural conceptualisations of these roles, as well as crucial factors in a bourgeois self-fashioning that emphasised the importance of individuals paying careful attention to their own bodies.

However, in parts, the long chronology covered by the book undermines the compact focus of the case studies, leaving historical context feeling underexplored. In chapter three 'From the Freak to the Disabled Person', Stephens devotes the majority of the study to debunking the idea that the nineteenth and twentieth centuries saw an increasingly medicalised and less spectacularised way of viewing the body by highlighting the shared theatricality of promotional photographs of professional freaks and ostensibly medical photographs of the insane. Following this, the final section of the chapter, which Stephens devotes to focusing on the modern day freak show and its performers, feels disconnected from the earlier argument.

Likewise, in the final chapter on Gunther von Hagens' *Bodyworlds* exhibitions it is the contemporary discussion that takes centre stage with Stephens dissecting the notion that plastinated bodies are, as von Hagens claims, 'real' bodies that reveal the truth of our anatomy. Though fascinating this leaves the historical aspect feeling superficial. For instance Stephens asserts that the late seventeenth century saw a shift in understanding of the