

Book Reviews

Matthew Hilton, *Smoking in British popular culture 1800–2000: perfect pleasures*, Studies in Popular Culture, Manchester and New York, Manchester University Press, 2000, pp. xii, 284, illus., £15.99 (paperback 0-7190-5257-2).

Smoke from cigars, pipes and cigarettes has curled its way through all levels of society in the last two hundred years. Matthew Hilton peels away the multifaceted images evoked by smoking in British literature, advertising and the cinema, as well as by more recent medical and political responses.

The virtues attributed to tobacco, pleasure and relaxation, were primarily for the leisured classes, embodied in the cover illustration of Frederick Burnaby, the Victorian adventurer, Household Cavalry officer, boxer, magazine founder and special correspondent. Conan Doyle, Byron, and J M Barrie were smokers who praised its effects, with equally devoted critics from the Anti-Tobacco Society, mixing medical evidence (nausea, dyspepsia, blindness, lip and throat cancer, hysteria, paralysis, insanity) with a twist of moral and religious dogma. Later the protection of childhood by universal education coincided with concerns about the evils of juvenile smoking. The poor condition of the nation's recruits to the Boer War led to welfare reforms including the prohibition of tobacco sales to those under sixteen by the 1908 Children's Act.

Cigarettes were brought within the reach of the working classes with the introduction of a machine that could produce 300 cigarettes per minute in 1883, new technology that put the cigarette girls out of work, and the lowering of tobacco duty. By the end of the First World War, cigarette sales had overtaken those of pipe tobacco. Total tobacco use rose more than three-fold over the period from two pounds for every adult over fifteen to seven pounds after the Second World War, while the population in

Britain increased by more than four times between 1801 and 1951.

The mass market required new images to accompany a wide variety of products. Advertising developed from cartoons with punchy captions to more sophisticated brand names, selling masculinity and femininity along with group identity. Increased advertising budgets (Imperial Tobacco Company spent £60 million in 1937) led to advertising inspectors and new dedicated retail outlets. Mass Observation described the place of smoking in daily lives as the cinema endorsed its glamorous image or defined its class affiliations.

Within two years after the Second World War, the medical community began to look at the effects of smoking. Government funds were committed to investigate whether the incidence of lung cancer was related to smoking or to atmospheric pollution. The MRC-supported study by Austin Bradford Hill and Richard Doll, published in 1950, and the follow-up two years later, demonstrated a statistical link between tobacco smoking and cancers. Further evidence gained from Bradford Hill and Doll's questionnaire survey of doctors' smoking habits led to a declaration of "cause and effect" in 1957, followed by the Royal College of Physicians' Report in 1962. Health warnings were required on cigarette packets in 1971 with a campaigning organization, Action on Smoking and Health (ASH), established with government funding.

The two faces of tobacco—exposed by health professionals as a killer, embraced by the government as a contributor to the exchequer—have continued to attract new recruits in spite of bans on smoking in public places, particularly among girls (15 per cent of the eleven- to fifteen-year-olds compared with 11 per cent of boys were regular smokers in 1996). By the close of the twentieth century a different image is being portrayed—no longer a greying down-and-out determined to withstand public

pressure to give up his habit, but a young man taking up a precious bed and increasing the drain on the National Health Service.

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Andrew Hodgkiss, *From lesion to metaphor: chronic pain in British, French and German medical writings, 1800–1914*, *Clio Medica* 58, Wellcome Institute Series in the History of Medicine, Amsterdam and Atlanta, Rodopi, 2000, pp. iii, 218, €55.00, £36.00, \$51.00 (hardback 90-420-0831-8), €18.00, £12.00, \$17.00 (paperback 90-420-0821-0).

During the past decade and a half, the clinical and diagnostic category—and to some extent, the cultural concept—of “psychogenic pain” has proliferated in Anglo-American medicine. “Pain clinics”, which specialize in the handling of cases of non-organic pain, now dot the medical landscapes of Britain and North America. In response to the working belief that psychogenic pain is a recent—or, at any rate, comparatively modern—experience and diagnosis, Andrew Hodgkiss has provided a detailed and intelligent account of the idea in British and European medical texts across the nineteenth century.

The clinical and intellectual history of a disease concept à la Temkin can be a highly scholarly and informative exercise, and Hodgkiss provides an outstanding example of the genre. Hodgkiss’s subject is of high intrinsic interest. He has researched the topic extensively in the major, medical-historical sources of Britain, France, and the German-speaking lands. And he has done a remarkable job of ferreting out from scores of little-known clinical commentaries

a great many relevant passages, which he explicates knowledgeably. In addition to discussions of predictable figures, like Benjamin Brodie, John Russell Reynolds, and William R Gowers, he helpfully brings to light numerous less familiar authors, foremostly Joseph Swan (pp. 61–4) and Charles Blondel (pp. 176–9). Other pages, such as those devoted to Otto Binswanger and even Sigmund Freud, explore previously unknown or under-appreciated aspects of the writings of well-known physicians.

Likewise, Hodgkiss does a splendid job of showing the many intricate ways in which the three major national-medical traditions of observing and theorizing “pain without lesion” interacted across the 1800s. He also shows a fine sensitivity to the shifting disciplinary bases of his subject by consulting in turns medical, surgical, neurological, psychiatric, and psychoanalytic texts. In a parallel fashion, one reason many doctors previously believed that this idea lacked a deep history was because the relevant textual observations were scattered so widely and presented under a great diversity of diagnostic labels: the cases Hodgkiss examines, all of which seem easily to fall under the current rubric of psychogenic pain, were published in their own times under the various labels of “hypochondria”, “neuralgia”, “neurosis”, “pain without lesion”, “spinal irritation”, “surgical hysteria”, “cenesthesia”, “mental depression”, “functional nervous disorder”, and “conversion disorder”. There is an important lesson in this fact for reconstructing “the history of a disease”.

Interpretatively, Hodgkiss’s monograph presents a significant revisionist statement. Conventional scholarship, Hodgkiss points out, typically conjures up a historical picture in which the doggedly and dogmatically materialist neurosciences of the nineteenth century, centred invariably on Germany and Austria, systematically ignored the reported phenomenon of pain