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The catalogue is very usable. On the one hand, should a particular image catch the eye, the identifying information can be immediately consulted. On the other hand, researchers may consult the medical condition subject index. These indexes and captions are essential to an understanding of the content of the images, since these are reproduced in so small a format (22 × 34 mm) that the screening obscures detailed and, at times, even a general "reading" of the image. For instance, not even the billboard, let alone its advertisement, is visible in no. 2364. Students of medical procedures would also be frustrated if they had to rely only on the illustration for no. 1806, "Brain surgery in progress, Fitzsimmons Hospital, Denver, Colorado", to give them information. Of course, one receives an impression from the image, substantiated by the catalogue entries. The image could be further probed by subsequently ordering a slide from the archive. Such technical problems could have been alleviated had the publishers decided to use microfiche or microfilm to reproduce the images, as have other picture archives; while these methods pose problems for "at home" researchers, microfiche and microfilm readers are now standard in US libraries, and are gaining in favour in Europe.

Despite these limitations, the catalogue is extremely valuable because it gives preliminary access to a host of images held in scattered archives, which were previously inaccessible or unknown, except to the few enthusiasts. A guide to these collections is given in the volume, with reference to the contents, hours of opening, and reproduction policies. The very identification and classification of these diverse photographs represents a significant step in the documentation of visual resources relating to medical subjects.

Beyond this "documentary value", the catalogue stimulates inquiry into the purposes for which such images were taken and the nature of the "reality" which was selected for recording. Further, the poor quality of the reproductions serves to dethrone the icon status of some of the photographs, shifting emphasis to their content and social significance. For instance, the work of Ben Shahn, T.H. O'Sullivan, and Lewis Hine, which is frequently featured in exhibitions and texts by photo-historians, takes on a new dimension when seen alongside work taken by anonymous photographers, hitherto hidden in hospital archives. The *Illustrated catalogue*, while it "completes" the work of the Center for Photographic Images of Medicine and Health Care, represents only a prelude to future studies which its accumulated resources will encourage.

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RODERICK E. MCGREW, *Encyclopaedia of medical history*, London, Macmillan, 1985, 4to, pp. xiv, 400, £25.00.

Very deftly, by incorporating an entry 'Medical history' in his *Encyclopaedia of medical history*, Roderick McGrew both situates and exculpates his approach. He writes: "The main subject matter for medical history has traditionally been the ideas shaping medical practice, the evolution of specialized medical disciplines, and the diseases with which mankind have been afflicted . . ." Using this approach, he continues: "Ancient writings were scanned for ideas foreshadowing modern truths, and the history of medical science came to be conceived in terms of progress toward a modern ideal. These tendencies remain a significant influence on modern medical historiography and are particularly strong in amateur and popularized accounts" (p. 176).

In organization and style, McGrew is faithful to his analysis of the nature of popular exposition, for example, ten consecutive entries in this encyclopaedia read: Allergy, Anatomy, Anaesthesia, Antibiotics, Antiseptic, Arthritis, Bacteriology, Barber Surgeons, Beriberi, Bloodletting, Blood Transfusion. Almost every one of these concepts is first given its modern definition, and then the historically similar antecedents are described: "Antiseptics are substances which prevent the spread of bacteria . . . The history of wound care and surgery shows that a variety of substances was used to control infection" (p. 20–21); "Bacteriology, the systematic study of micro-organisms, . . . The Roman author Varro in the first century BC speculated on the possibility that disease was caused by "tiny animals" invisible to the naked

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eye" (p. 25); "Neurology is a modern medical discipline . . . Hippocratic writings . . . revealed only a rudimentary understanding of anatomy and physiology" (p. 208).

McGrew may well be right, recently published biographical and conceptual dictionaries on the history of science and philosophy are all, however distinguished their editors and contributors, "Whiggish". Perhaps popularization, which is not the same thing as popular history, is a project fundamentally at variance with the historian's craft. Perhaps, however, it simply brings into focus the selective principles that the historian favours anyhow. Within the limits he has defined, McGrew has produced a useful work of reference. It contains comfortable summaries of the topics listed above and others of a similar sort. Although the subjects are limited in number, the large index makes access easy. In compiling a reference work, no two writers would ever come up with the same headings, but the choice of diseases seems unusual, for example, trypanosomiasis gets six pages, fever gets nothing. Those with interests in particular fields will no doubt have their own grievances; I did not recognize the description of Cullen's physiology. There are also the inevitable discrepancies which such a venture produces; oxygen was discovered by Priestley and Scheele in 1771 (p. 14), by Scheele in 1774 (p. 225) and again by Priestley in 1775 (p. 132). The real worry about these statements, however, is the way that they point back to the popularization problem. It is not simply the errors over dates or persons, but the fact that Priestley did not discover oxygen at all, Priestley isolated dephlogisticated air.

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D. T. BIRD (compiler), *Catalogue of the printed books and manuscripts (1491–1900) in the library of St Thomas's Hospital Medical School*, London, St Thomas's Hospital Medical School, 1984, 8vo, pp. 424, illus., £9.80.

The medical school library at St Thomas's has a significant collection of pre-twentieth-century printed and unpublished works, much of it formerly hidden away in cupboards. The contents of these cupboards have now been restored, catalogued, and properly housed. A list of the library's pre-1900 holdings has been published. It begins with a brief history of the hospital, the medical school, and its library; there is evidence that the library was in existence by the mid-eighteenth century, but purchases for it were infrequent until a librarian was appointed in 1842. The catalogue consists of three thousand entries of printed works on medicine and science, about a hundred series or individual copies of journals, and a list of pre-1901 manuscripts and autographed letters.

There is a series of exceptional anatomical atlases, chemistry and pharmacology are well represented, the collections in surgery and clinical medicine are strong, and there are interesting sections on military medicine, diseases of the eye and skin, midwifery, and vaccination. Among the journal series are the reports of the London Fever Hospital 1833–1862, and those of the Ophthalmic Hospital 1833–1862. The manuscript collection is small but it is unique. Of particular interest are the case books of Samuel Solly (1805–71), John Flint South (1797–1882), and Charles Murchison (1830–79). Other casebooks date back as far as 1725. Murchison left a significant collection to the medical school, including some of his school essays and notes he took while a student in Edinburgh. There are other students' lecture notes, from Guy's as well as St Thomas's, largely from the period 1765–1830. These include notes on lectures by Henry Cline and John Hunter. There are a number of prize essays from St Thomas's and accounts of debates before the Medical and Physical Society. Another source of interest is the material relating to rabies investigations at the Brown Animal Sanatory Institute. The library also possesses a significant collection of vaccination tracts by Edward Jenner which had been presented to Cline.

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