

Book Reviews

VERA RUBIN (editor), *Cannabis and culture*, The Hague and Paris, Mouton, 1975, 8vo, pp. xiv, 598, illus., \$24.95.

TIMOTHY H. H. THORESEN (editor), *Toward a science of man. Essays in the history of anthropology*, The Hague and Paris, Mouton, 1975, 8vo, pp. xiv, 232, \$14.95.

The Ninth International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences was held in Chicago in 1973 and these books contain papers presented there; several others are planned.

The first provides probably the most comprehensive survey ever published of a single drug. There are thirty-six papers, including an introduction, and they are in five groups: 'Ethnobotany and diffusion'; 'Sociocultural aspects of the traditional complex'; 'Medical, pharmacological and ethnometabolic studies'; 'Traditional usage of other psychoactive plants' such as tobacco; 'The modern complex in North America'. Throughout, there is a great deal on the history of cannabis and the book will prove to be a remarkable source of information on account of its wide range of topics, excellent index, ample documentation, and relatively modest price. It can be strongly recommended.

There are only twelve papers in Thoresen's accumulation, and they deal with different approaches to the history of anthropology. Again, although of uneven quality they are mostly useful contributions, especially as some of them deal with cultures less frequently discussed: Croatia, Hungary, and India. They are, on the whole, based on historical and literary criticism so that there is a considerable amount of material that will be of interest to the historian of medicine and which contributes to medical anthropology, a subject in need of much more attention. Topics covered include historical periods, historical processes, and the work of individuals.

GERALD HOLTON and WILLIAM BLANPIED (editors), *Science and its public: the changing relationship*, Dordrecht and Boston, D. Reidel, 1976, 8vo, pp. xxv, 289 [no price stated].

In 1974 a number of essays in *Daedalus* discussed the central topic of this book and now represent the core of it. The purpose was to examine certain problems relating to the public's understanding and appreciation of science in contemporary society. The situation was and remains a complex one because of the number of variables on each side. However, to encourage communication between scientist and policy-maker the original essays tackled one facet, yet relating it to the overall problem. Three more have now been added.

There are now seventeen articles, each being a scholarly contribution and covering a wide range of topics within the problem area: 'Science, knowledge and gnosis', social science, agriculture, links of science to social policy, science policy, academic scientists in Wilhelman Germany, the nineteenth-century amateur tradition, science or scripture, public appreciation of science, science and the mass media, and pop science.

Most of this book relates to present-day science but there is some historical material. Perhaps it will inspire someone to look more closely at this problem entirely from a historical point of view, with consequent benefits to those coping with today's problems.