

## Book Notices

**William C Moloney and Sharon Johnson**, *Pioneering hematology. The research and treatment of malignant blood disorders—reflections on a life's work*, Boston, The Francis A Conway Library of Medicine, 1997, pp. xv, 196, illus., \$24.95 (0-88135-195-4). Sole commercial distributor: Watson Publishing International, Box 493, Canton, MA 02021-0493, USA.

William Moloney was born in 1907—just as blood transfusion began to enter American medical practice in earnest. His career spanned, and contributed to, the rise of haematology as a recognized medical speciality, and came to a (tentative) close with haematology's eclipse by oncology.

This memoir provides an insider's view to the establishment of blood studies in twentieth-century America. References to the political interactions of Boston hospitals in the 1930s help to fill out a more general story of the standardization of American medical practice in hospitals. Second World War reminiscences illustrate British-American medical collaboration, with particular reference to blood banking and testing, and to (unofficial) penicillin distribution. A growing post-war interest in leukemia and participation in the Atomic Bomb Casualty Commission, and a critical stance on hospital policies in the wake of Affirmative Action, bring the reader into Moloney's postmodern world (if from an unapologetically modernist perspective). The book's recurrent theme is the problems faced by those trying to create and sustain laboratory research in the context of hospital practice.

While Moloney touches upon these and other topics of historical interest, he does so, for the most part, lightly. Then again, such detail may be more to the taste of historians than to the general audience of friends, colleagues and students for whom he was writing.

**Wolfgang U Eckart and Klaus Volkert** (eds), *Hermann von Helmholtz. Vorträge eines Heidelberger Symposiums anlässlich des einhundertsten Todestages*, Neuere Medizin- und Wissenschaftsgeschichte Quellen und Studien, vol. 2, Pfaffenweiler, Centaurus-Verlagsgesellschaft, 1996, pp. ix, 336, DM 49.80 (3-8255-0023-3).

According to the editors, this volume on Helmholtz does not intend to compete with David Cahan's magisterial collection on *Hermann von Helmholtz and the foundations of nineteenth-century science*. True, but nevertheless it contains some interesting material. For example, Christoph Gradmann argues convincingly that Helmholtz's apolitical position is by no means a consequence of the failed 1848 revolution (as Timothy Lenoir had suggested); his pragmatic and science-oriented position is rather to be understood as a consequence of new orientations within Prussian "Bildungsbürgertum" in the 1840s. Helmholtz's political restraint and bourgeois distinction was perfectly compatible with a remarkable talent in getting at personal advantages. Franz Werner can show in a carefully researched paper that Helmholtz was admirably clever in the negotiations leading to his appointment to the University of Heidelberg. In the 1860s he was by far the best paid professor in Baden.

Other papers deal with Helmholtz's scientific contributions, such as his physiology of vision, his contributions to geometry and to theoretical physics. None of them are very satisfying historiographically, but they give reliable introductions to Helmholtz's scientific work. In short, this volume does not transform or challenge the world of Helmholtz scholarship, but it is a welcome addition to the more ambitious projects by Cahan, R Steven Turner and Lorenz Krüger.

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**Paola Migliorini**, *Scienza e terminologia medica nella letteratura latina di età neroniana. Seneca, Lucano, Persio, Petronio*, Studien zur klassischen Philologie, Band 104, Frankfurt am Main and Berlin, Peter Lang, 1997, pp. 229, DM 28.00 (3-631-31229-6).

This is a careful study of medicine as revealed in four authors writing in the 50s and 60s AD. Seneca and his nephew Lucan, Persius, and Petronius. It shows how all four were familiar with medical ideas and integrated them in different ways into their works, whether moralizing tracts, satires or epic poetry. Seneca in particular was widely acquainted with all aspects of medicine, although his amusing vignette of life above a gymnasium here loses much in the telling. But, while one can admire the author's detailed exposition, none of her findings are really new, and a two-page conclusion to a work of two hundred pages suggests that the book's contribution to anything wider is limited.

## BOOKS ALSO RECEIVED

(The inclusion of a title does not preclude the possibility of subsequent review. Items received, other than those assigned for review, are ultimately incorporated into the collection of the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine.)

**Otto F Apel, Jr, and Pat Apel**, *MASH: an army surgeon in Korea*, Lexington, University Press of Kentucky, 1998, pp. xviii, 222, illus., \$25.00 (0-8131-2070-5).

**Virginia Berridge**, *Opium and the people: opiate use and drug control policy in nineteenth and early twentieth century England*, revised edition, London and New York, Free Association Books, 1999, pp. xxxiii, 419, £16.95 (1-85343-413-2).

**Adrian Desmond**, *Huxley: from devil's disciple to evolution's high priest*, London, Penguin Books, 1998, pp. xxii, 820, illus., £10.99 (0-14-017309-9). Nicolaas Rupke reviewed each of the two hardback volumes in *Med. Hist.*, 1995, **39**: 503–4, and 1998, **42**: 115–16.