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British Medical Association, and that he would not be able to get the NHS off the ground without their co-operation.

The profession was adamant in its opposition to a salaried service and to control by the Local Authorities. The leaders of the hospital side, mainly consultants on the staffs of the voluntary teaching hospitals, did not want their hospitals to be united with the municipal hospitals. As a consequence, Bevan made important concessions to the profession in order to get the service started. Any idea of a salaried service or control by democratically elected Local Authorities was abandoned and the two sorts of hospital were given different governing bodies whose members were appointed by the minister.

Stewart describes how the leaders of the SMA were deeply disappointed at the abandonment of the principles which they had proposed to the Labour Party and which had become party policy, such as democratic control and a unified hospital service, and by the fact that Bevan did not consult them and had conceded so much to the BMA and the Royal Colleges. As Stewart points out, Bevan realized that the BMA and the Royal Colleges were very powerful and the SMA had very little support among doctors.

However, the main aim of the SMA, the creation of a universal comprehensive medical service, free to all at the time of use, had been created and also, after a few years, a united hospital service was finally introduced.

'The battle for health' is an absorbing and scholarly book. It describes in detail, with many references, how one of the most important social advances of twentieth-century Britain came about and how a small group of doctors, with vision and determination, played a significant part in that historical achievement.

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Joseph Melling and Bill Forsythe (eds), *Insanity, institutions and society, 1800–1914: a social history of madness in comparative perspective*, Studies in the Social History of Medicine, London and New York, Routledge, 1999, pp. xii, 328, £55.00 (0-415-18441-X).

Before 1960 the history of mental health policy and psychiatry was but a footnote within the larger field of the history of medicine. In recent years, by contrast, the social history of insanity, institutions, and psychiatry has assumed the characteristics of a growth industry. Conflict rather than consensus has been a distinctive feature; interpretations of data vary in the extreme. The debate over institutional care was first given a sense of urgency following the publication of Michel Foucault's *Madness and civilization* in the mid-1960s, a book notable for its brilliance, ambiguity, and lack (if not misuse) of empirical data. Andrew Scull's *Museums of madness*, which appeared in 1979, represented an effort to provide a more nuanced view of the development of the asylum, which he located in industrializing England. The purpose of the asylum, according to Scull, was to emphasize the importance of bourgeois productivity; those who could not function within the new market economy would be warehoused in asylums and thus serve as a lesson to the larger society.

Many of the early interpretations of insanity and the rise of the asylum tended to be global in nature. The care and treatment of the insane became a mirror image of virtually all of society. The absence of detailed developmental studies facilitated generalizations that often lacked any substantive factual foundation. In the political climate of the 1960s and 1970s, such broad interpretations appealed to critics of capitalist society and a market economy.

In recent years there has been a dramatic transformation in the manner in which historians have approached the subject of

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insanity. The essays in *Insanity, institutions and society* are illustrative of the shift that has taken place. Not only have their authors eschewed overarching generalizations, but they have begun to examine sources that were all but neglected by their predecessors. The result is a far more complex and variegated portrait of the rise of the asylum, its functions, the role of public officials as well as family members, and the relationship between the prevailing welfare system and the care and treatment of the insane.

In a brief review it is difficult to do justice to the essays in this collection, which deal not only with England and Wales, but with Scotland, Ireland, India, and South Africa as well. Overall they demonstrate that tradition as well as modernization shaped the development of the asylum. As in the United States, the forces of centralization encountered demands for local autonomy. Families, moreover, played a role in both commitment and discharge. Nor was asylum care the result of the imposition of medical hegemony; a variety of social and political agents shaped its evolution. Patient populations were far more heterogeneous; they were not only drawn from the lower orders.

In many of these essays the relationship between economic and institutional change becomes far more tenuous, if not untenable. "The issue", Joseph Melling notes in his introductory essay, "is whether we can usefully read the foundation of the Victorian asylum and the practical work of early psychiatry as the product of a peculiarly bourgeois view of the world which underwrote bourgeois hegemony by filling the corridors of these new institutions with the unproductive labouring poor and imposing medical authority on the broader mass of working people who never entered the asylum but feared that they might" (p. 10). Many of the contributors to this volume suggest a far more complex reality. Indeed, some of them demonstrate that the building of asylums was strongly contested

and represented a conservative reaction to the growing commercialization of English society. In short, the editors and contributors to *Insanity, institutions and society* deserve our thanks for significantly expanding our understanding of the rise of the asylum in nineteenth-century Britain. Taken as a group, these essays provide dramatic evidence of the value of deep research in primary sources and the folly of identifying asylums and psychiatry with the larger universe.

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Geoffrey Cocks, *Treating mind and body: essays in the history of science, professions, and society under extreme conditions*, New Brunswick and London, Transaction Publishers, 1998, pp. xvii, 219, £28.95 (1-56000-310-3).

In this volume, Geoffrey Cocks has collected together a series of his essays dealing with psychotherapy, psychoanalysis and medicine in twentieth-century Germany and under the Third Reich in particular. He introduces them with an account of his intellectual trajectory and the specific occasions that gave rise to them. Slightly disconcertingly, Cocks commences his introduction by discussing his enthusiasm for psychobiography and his essays exploring the psychobiography of A A Milne, the creator of Winnie-the-Pooh, which are not reprinted in this volume. After this, however, Cocks presents the themes of his major 1985 work, *Psychotherapy in the Third Reich: the Goering Institute*, recently reprinted in a considerably expanded and improved form (New Brunswick, Transaction, 1997). A number of the essays in this volume can be read as adjuncts and addendas to this book.

According to the legend, the Nazis had