

of these biographers is a science writer. Perutz made a wise choice when he chose to invite her to write his life. The result is an engaging, beautifully written book deserving a place on the shelf of everyone who likes to read about science and scientists. It is a full biography that details his early life in Vienna, his move to England in 1936, his life in Cambridge, war experiences, the trials, tribulations and the successes of the post-war years leading to the first low-resolution structure of haemoglobin in 1959 – twenty-two years after he had begun work on the molecule. Ferry takes Perutz's career through to the end of his life with his work on the amyloid associated with Alzheimer's disease. Whether dealing with personal matters or explaining the science, Ferry handles the subject matter with ease and clarity.

Why should this book be of particular value to the historian? Because Perutz was the 'anchor-person' of molecular biology at Cambridge. The famous lab had begun modestly as an MRC Unit, its *raison d'être* being Perutz's research on haemoglobin. He headed the Unit and saw it through difficult times. He handled the *prima donnas* around him with tact, protecting Francis Crick from the anger of the Cavendish Professor, Sir Lawrence Bragg. Perutz oversaw the relocation of the Unit and its transformation into the Laboratory of Molecular Biology in 1962 where he continued as Chairman until 1979.

Equally valuable to the historian is Ferry's account of Perutz's success in revealing the three dimensional structure of the haemoglobin molecule and his researches into the mechanism for its action in oxygen transport. As a result hemoglobin came to serve as a model for mechanisms of enzyme action, with the result that it has become an 'honorary enzyme'.

For the historian of medicine, Perutz's health problems offer a challenging topic for discussion. But the most interesting feature of the biography concerns Perutz's early years in Austria and subsequently as an Austrian émigré in Cambridge, followed by internment and deportation to Canada in 1940. Ferry has

been able to present his early years in some detail thanks to the miraculous preservation by the recipients of the letters he wrote to friends and relatives before and during the Second World War. Some have a journalistic quality as if written by a foreign reporter for the press back home. There lay the germ of the ambition to become a writer that he later achieved, becoming known for his forthright critiques. They form the subject of the chapter 'Truth always wins', where Ferry documents Perutz's attacks on the misrepresentation of science and scientists. Karl Popper, Erwin Schrödinger and Gerald Geison all got a drubbing – rightly or wrongly – by this passionate seeker after truth. As the official biographer, Ferry has handled Perutz's mix of vanity and self-deprecation, vicious critique and devoted admiration, diplomatically, reporting but not judging.

The early part of the book should be read in conjunction with *What a Time I am Having*, the selected letters of Max Perutz (Cold Spring Harbor, 2009), edited by Vivien Perutz, a jewel of a book to be sure. Many of Perutz's essays mentioned in the biography can be consulted in Perutz's *I Wish I Had Made You Angry Earlier* (New York: Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Press, 2002).

Robert Olby,
University of Pittsburgh.

Imogen Goold and Catherine Kelly (eds), *Lawyers' Medicine: The Legislature, the Courts and medical Practice, 1760–2000* (Oxford: Hart Publishing, 2009), pp. xiv + 224, £30.00, paperback, ISBN: 978-1-84113-849-7.

Several decades ago, a British television series entitled *The Expert* was one of the first to offer forensic medicine as a suitable subject for popular entertainment. Nowadays, autopsies are prime-time viewing on several channels, together with detective dramas where the forensic 'expert's' judgement is rarely questioned. This collection of essays is a useful corrective to one-sided interpretations of the ever-changing relations between

medicine and the law. The medical expert's role has always been problematic, and this collection considers not only the criminal law but also the growing importance of medical expertise in the civil courts, public health, and current social debates. The editors explain that their subject falls into two broad categories: attempts by medical professionals to influence legislation, particularly in regulating medical practice; and the tensions between the medical and legal professions in pursuing sometimes incompatible aims. Although its chronology runs from the late eighteenth century, with Catherine Kelly's account of the growth of government interest in medical matters, the collection is weighted towards the more modern period, with three essays on the nineteenth century and five on the twentieth. James Hanley carries forward the theme of lay participation in health policy through the complex process of by-law making before the major public health acts. Although local authorities are often seen as the problem rather than the solution, Hanley argues that by-laws laid the foundation for central legislation, and indeed made it inevitable, even though councillors usually bypassed medical views and relied on 'the common judgment of the propertied citizenry' (p. 55).

The editors note that when the medical profession was divided, the law could marginalise medical opinion, as Katherine Watson demonstrates in her essay on vitriol throwing. Under English criminal law, Ellenborough's Act (1803) included 'malicious wounding' in its title, but specified only poisons, cutting and stabbing. Vitriol burns did not feature, leading to acquittals on this technicality. The medical profession was not helpful, A.S. Taylor noting in his medico-legal textbook, that there was no consensus over the meaning of 'wound'. English legislators finally settled on an all-encompassing notion of 'grievous bodily harm' that neatly by-passed medical uncertainties. Joel Eigen's analysis of the Old Bailey Session papers reveals the changing language of medical witnesses in criminal trials involving an insanity defence, and the

sometimes-testy reaction of judges to changes in medical opinion. Angus Ferguson produces even more extreme examples of a conflict between law and medicine in the early twentieth century, with the very forcible reassertion by the Lord Chancellor of the doctor's duty to give evidence in court, even if this negated professional secrecy. One example was the division between the Ministry of Health and the divorce courts: the former offering free public clinics for VD with confidentiality guaranteed, the latter demanding that clinicians disclose their patients' venereal record as evidence of infidelity. In these cases, lawyers were inevitably the winners.

The twentieth-century themes addressed by Goold, Roger Davidson, Gayle Davis and Duncan Wilson relate to questions where medicine and the law were sometimes at odds, but subject to powerful currents of public opinion; namely, *in-vitro* fertilisation, homosexuality, abortion and the use of human tissue in medical research. Davidson and Davis use Scottish examples, benefited by an easier scholarly access to sensitive case materials north of the border, and emphasise that medical 'experts' are heavily conditioned by their social background and personal beliefs. Davidson's description of the collusion between doctors and judges in attempting to 'cure' the more 'amenable' homosexual offenders of their perversion strikes with depressing force.

Collections of this kind sometimes suffer from failure to cohere around a theme, or from inequality of substance between the individual contributions. This very interesting collection does neither. The main themes are well sustained, and all essays reflect mature and well-presented research, revealing how often medicine bends to legal pressure and wider social forces.

Anne Crowther,
University of Glasgow

Linda Bryder, *Women's Bodies and Medical Science: An Inquiry into Cervical*