

The rest of the book deals with the long Enlightenment from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century, and grapples with the effects of Cartesian mechanics and Kantian vitalism. The relationship between religion and science is a difficult area at best, and here in the more complex modern era the underlying limitations of Bergdolt's literary approach are exposed. The religious and scientific history of these later periods is underwritten, and (in the case of British history at least) rather ill-informed. The lack of any underlying structural analysis derived from politics, economics, demography, religion or science, means that his commentary throughout is relentlessly "linear" and repetitive. Despite all the biographical details the central concept of health is not rigorously unpacked, nor organized, to help the reader. The hygienic non-naturals, in particular, are a constant in this literature for over two thousand years. Lumping them together as "dietetics" is not enough—this notably fails to capture the changing therapeutic balances within the regimen genre. Thus there is no clear interpretation of the interlinked currents of German, English, and American Protestant health radicalism that fundamentally altered the politics of hygiene from the seventeenth century onwards. If there had been, Bergdolt would surely not have been satisfied at stopping with Nietzsche (as he does) just before the late-nineteenth- and twentieth-century hygienic Life Reform movements.

It would be unfair to criticize Bergdolt for not recognizing the Anglo-Saxon "model" of health history when one of the pleasures of this book is being introduced to the German sources, and seeing health history from the German perspective. Bergdolt has achieved an heroic internal synthesis of the health genre, loosely linked with elements of social history. But modern cultural history it is not.

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Teresa Ortiz Gómez, *Medicina, historia y género: 130 años de investigación feminista*, Colección Alternativas, 23, Oviedo, KRK Ediciones, 2006, pp. 362, €23.95 (paperback 978-84-96476-52-3).

As the title, 'Medicine, History, and Gender: 130 years of Feminist Research', suggests, this book presents a wide-ranging overview of the history of medicine written from a feminist perspective since the late nineteenth century. Opening the book with quotations by the medical historian Henry Sigerist and the feminist historian Gerda Lerner, Teresa Ortiz Gómez, a well-known feminist historian of medicine herself who has contributed extensively to the development of the sub-discipline in Spain, presents an in-depth reflection on the confluence of the history of medicine and feminist history. While there is some discussion of nineteenth-century writings, most of the book focuses on the late twentieth and the early twenty-first centuries, and thus constitutes a welcome addition to the growing number of studies that reflect on the developments, conceptual frameworks, and debates in women's and gender history, in this case with a particular focus on the history of medicine.

Structured in three parts, the first part provides an introductory overview of the institutional context in which women's history is undertaken in Spain and the theoretical concepts that have informed feminist studies in the last three decades, giving special attention to the introduction of gender as a category of analysis, feminist debates on the body, and "feminine authority", a concept employed in Italian and French feminist theory. The second part explores historiographical issues in the history of women, gender, and medicine in chronological order from the nineteenth century to the beginning of the twenty-first. The last part reflects on the role of the history of medicine in higher education in Spain, including a chapter that has a revealing discussion about the percentage of female professors in this discipline in comparison to others, and a

break-down of the percentages of publications in the field by women. A chapter which calls for the greater use of visual and oral sources in the history of medicine is followed by a final chapter discussing how the history of medicine is taught in Spain, reflecting on the importance of teaching it in ways that are not androcentric.

Ortiz Gómez's knowledge of feminist historiography, which she discusses in the first and second part of her book, is vast and illuminating. She integrates her analysis of this historiography in Spain with wide knowledge of the trends in feminist writing in Anglo-American, and to an extent, Italian and French historiography. The book thus provides a very interesting new dimension to readers more familiar with the Anglo-American context of debate. However, for those readers it might have been interesting to see a greater exploration of any differences in trends. Did, for instance, the introduction of gender as a category of analysis generate similarly heated controversies amongst feminist historians as it did in the US and Britain, and for comparable reasons? What about the linguistic turn? Furthermore, does the fact that in Spain, unlike in the UK or the US, most historians of medicine, like the author herself, are first trained in medicine and then specialize in medical history have any impact on the themes and theoretical approaches favoured by medical historians? Ortiz Gómez does not give answers to these questions, but her book is none the less a fascinating and highly instructive read for anyone who wants to find out more about the confluence of women's, gender, and medical history in Spain.

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Sayantani DasGupta and **Marsha Hurst** (eds), *Stories of illness and healing: women write their bodies*, Literature and Medicine, No. 10, Kent, OH, Kent State University Press, 2007, pp. xiv, 329, \$37.95 (paperback 978-0-87338-916-7).

Checking into the American hospital the evening before her elective hysterectomy (for benign fibroids), Lynne Schwartz is invited by her gynaecologist "for a chat". The topic of oophorectomy is raised, not for the first time, despite pre-menopausal Schwartz's reluctance to part with her ovaries. "Ovarian cancer strikes one in a hundred women in your age group," begins the surgeon, and then, on cue, in shuffles a pregnant woman in a hospital gown and paper slippers—beautiful olive-skinned face with high cheekbones and bony arms and legs. To Schwartz, the woman "seems somewhat old to be pregnant, around forty-five." After she shuffles away, the surgeon tells Schwartz that the woman has ovarian cancer. Scared witless, Schwartz relinquishes her ovaries. This is one of the most sickening medical narratives I have ever read but it also rang bells because at the age of thirty-five I was offered a similar "prophylactic" procedure in a London hospital.

Stories of illness and healing is both a textbook—the editors teach health advocacy to masters students working in health care disciplines—and a literary anthology of illness experiences from over fifty women of varying backgrounds including academics, carers, novelists, nurses, midwives, musicians, parents, physicians, poets, prisoners, psychoanalysts and students. The formats are equally heterogeneous, encompassing poetry, essays, performance scripts, transcriptions of oral testimonies and short stories. The writing is extremely compelling. Whilst most authors are from the US and Canada, there are notable contributions from Europe, Asia and Australia. It is divided into seven sections: Body and self—the experience of illness; Diagnosis and treatment—relationships to the medical community; Womanhood—social constructions of body, sexuality and reproduction; Family life and caregiving; Professional life and illness; Advocacy—from the personal to the political; Advocacy—activism, education and political change. As a collective voice, this book is very powerful and reinforces my long-held belief