

including a paper devoted solely to this aspect, giving consideration among other things to the period of National Socialism (which is treated in the introduction at some length) and the history of post-1945 Germany.

Notwithstanding these two points, this is a very good work, which fulfils the editors' aim of promoting research on the topic and providing an overview of nineteenth-century German psychiatry. Also, even if this is not the editors' primary intention, the volume provides a basis for future comparative investigations on western psychiatry. Every institution with an interest in the history of the field should have this book.

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**Carolyn Malone,** *Women's bodies and dangerous trades in England, 1880–1914*, Studies in History, Woodbridge, The Royal Historical Society and The Boydell Press, 2003, pp. xi, 169, £45.00, US\$75.00 (hardback 0-86193-264-1).

The occupational health of women workers in Britain has attracted considerable attention in recent years, including Barbara Harrison's *Not only the 'dangerous trades'* (1996), and Peter Bartrip's, *The Home Office and the dangerous trades* (2002), both of which examine a similar period to that surveyed in Carolyn Malone's new study. In contrast to most accounts undertaken by economic and medical historians, Malone is concerned to understand the ways in which concerns about the industrial health of working women were framed within a larger discourse of gender, race and citizenship at a time when the British empire reached the zenith of its power and prestige. The case studies selected for analysis are the well-known examples of nail-making, white lead manufacture, and the making of pottery products (which again used lead in the glazing processes), which attracted considerable contemporary interest in regard to the reproductive health of the female workforce.

This discussion of nails and lead is coherent and intelligent, drawing primarily on newspapers and contemporary published sources as well as a selection of Home Office archives for the 1890s and the pre-War years.

More original is the discussion of the impact of the new mass-circulation journalism and "scandal sheets" on perceptions of industrial health problems and there is an illuminating chapter on the battles between "social feminists" and "liberal feminists" on the virtues and limits of state intervention to protect females in the labour market and the workplace. The interpretation developed in *Women's bodies and dangerous trades* is that a fresh discourse of danger, and more particularly the hazards of female work to the unborn child, provided the setting within which the British state moved to enact fresh legislation which specified some occupations as particularly dangerous. Moral as well as physical hazard clearly informed the debate on proposals to regulate, among other occupations, the work of the bar-maid within the polluted atmosphere of the public house. Medical men contributed to this climate of anxiety about female and infant health. In an interesting discussion of medical science and the lead problem, the author shows that leading authorities such as Thomas Oliver remained convinced of the peculiar susceptibility of women to lead poisoning with disastrous consequences for maternal health as well as the well-being of the domestic household, regardless of contemporary evidence to the contrary. It is fair to note that the evidence provided by Malone also indicates the extent to which such gendered assumptions were contested before the outbreak of war in 1914 as medical specialists began to address the question of men's reproductive and general well-being, since they were more likely to be the victims of toxic poisoning than were working women.

One advantage of the analysis provided in this succinct text is that it draws the discussion of women's industrial health away from the confines of occupational medicine and illustrates the pertinence of imperial concerns with race and the relevance of the politics of labour and gender to an understanding of protective legislation. Malone draws on older as well as recent feminist

interpretations of empire, motherhood and eugenics to develop an argument in a brief 'Epilogue' that the struggle for imperial dominance and national efficiency affected not only England (the author's exclusion of the other peoples of the United Kingdom is perplexing), but also informed population debates in France and Germany during the closing decades of the nineteenth century and in the era which culminated in the rise of National Socialism. In discussing the divisions within the ranks of British feminists on the question of state regulation, the author suggests that campaigners divided along class versus gender lines, organizations such as the Women's Labour League being more sympathetic to legislative regulation than franchise-oriented bodies.

Illuminating the role of various feminist organizations in these debates, the study frequently obscures the influence of other agents and discursive engagements which were arguably more important to the progress of reform and regulation. Among these were industrial employers, insurance companies and Medical Officers of Health who served in the different districts, frequently collecting key statistics. The vital importance of the professional as well as the popular press lay in drawing attention to the scandal of industrial poisoning and not merely the rise of the "sensation" of workplace and social problems. This concern was mirrored in the new journalism serving the urban centres of the United States as well as Europe, suggesting a connection between the worlds of production and consumption, between workers' health and the welfare of the community.

Such an actual or imagined alliance of interests was critical to such innovations as the prohibition of the suction-shuttle in New England before 1914 and the absence of similar controls in Britain until the 1950s. Whereas American legislators were persuaded of the connections between sucking cotton threads and tuberculosis, their British counterparts refused to take such risks seriously. This comparison also illustrates some of the complexities of industrial politics in areas such as the Lancashire textile towns. The opposition of the employers to further regulation

appears to have been reinforced by the scepticism of their factory operatives whose piece-work rewards depended on rapid dexterity rather than the replacement of older shuttles by new automatic technology. While the discourse of danger highlighted in this book certainly figured in the debates on legislation and state enactments before 1914, there was a much wider discussion of costs and benefits in regard to work and employment which extended from the debating rooms of the Labour Party to the ranks of libertarian feminists in these years.

This is a useful text which recasts some familiar evidence and established themes in a fresh light by engaging with a wider literature on gender politics. The narratives outlined here also suggest the need for a much more detailed and extensive consideration of the ways in which masculinity and parenthood as well as femininity were constituted in relation to the industrial body, diseased and healthy. For the many meanings of productive life were revealed as new ideas and emergent social forces struggled to extend the range of choices available to the efficient state as well as its labour force.

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**Carol Thomas Neely, *Distracted subjects: madness and gender in Shakespeare and early modern culture*, Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 2004, pp. xv, 244, illus., £12.50, US\$21.95 (paperback 0-8014-8924-5).**

Michel Foucault has a lot to answer for. His *Madness and civilization: a history of insanity in the age of reason* (1976) famously proposed that until the epistemic change denoted by the "Great Confinement" of the mid-seventeenth-century, the notion that madness might have anything to do with "difference"—either between the mad and the sane, or between individual manifestations of madness itself—was simply not entertained. Carol Thomas Neely is the latest scholar to take issue with Foucault's conclusions, and, by paying attention to the literary, medical and cultural history of madness between