

not represented because there was sufficient coverage at the conference to justify separate future volumes on these topics. Whilst this is an encouraging prospect, it does pose problems for the present volume whose rationale to tease out “the interplay between health and society” (p. 10) lacks the specificity of a thematic orientation and hence creates the expectation of a more comprehensive review. But this limitation is to some extent offset by the substantial introductory overview in which Dr Michael attempts the daunting task of surveying the medical history of Wales from the mythical Physicians of Myddfai to recent health promotion campaigns. At its best when engaging with the broader historiography of medicine, this overview addresses occupational health and hospital services as well as the subjects considered in the twelve chapters—though not mental illness, which is surprising given Dr Michael’s expertise in this field and her important study of the North Wales Lunatic Asylum at Denbigh. The notes that underpin her synthesis are a valuable bibliographical tool in their own right, being based on the most thorough trawl of the literature in English and Welsh. Not all these items meet the criteria for modern historical scholarship and some have a tendency towards the hagiographical. However, bringing this material to the attention of a wider audience, within the context of an interesting edited collection, has extended the foundations for a medical history that will be able “to compare Wales with other nations, and to compare different localities in Wales” (p. 234).

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Alysa Levene, Thomas Nutt and Samantha Williams (eds), *Illegitimacy in Britain, 1700–1920*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005, pp. xv, 249, £50.00 (hardback 1-4039-9065-4).

For a subject as potentially scandalous and intriguing as illegitimacy, of relevance to

historians of the family, health, sexuality, and welfare, amongst others, remarkably little has been made of it in recent decades. What we do have has come largely from the historical demography stable, most substantially from Peter Laslett (1980), Andrew Blaikie (1993), and Richard Adair (1996). Following a 2004 conference held in Cambridge, the editors of *Illegitimacy in Britain, 1700–1920* attempt to update and rejuvenate the historiography by bringing together those currently working in the field, exploring the subject in a variety of geographical locales and through an imaginative variety of sources and methodological approaches. Contributors subject accepted themes to rigorous investigation, including the survival strategies of unmarried mothers, social attitudes towards bastardy, the paternity of illegitimate children, the mortal penalty of illegitimacy, and the existence of the Laslett-coined “bastardy prone sub-society”.

One of the primary aims of the book is to build on the demographic foundations of earlier work by considering the subjective experience of illegitimacy. Contributors are concerned to understand how illegitimacy was experienced by mothers, fathers, and children; and to examine how such individuals were treated by their communities, authorities, and charitable and welfare organizations. Several chapters directly represent the voices of the parents of illegitimate children—utilizing sources such as pauper letters, magistrates’ court testimony, and Foundling Hospital petitions—to offer a window into the lives of unwed parents. More quantitative methodologies have been used to evaluate how the harsh inequalities of bastardy could affect infant health.

Contributors offer insights into the degree to which illegitimacy was stigmatized and controlled in the past, although with little consensus. Steven King’s study of the treatment of unmarried mothers under the Old Poor Law and Thomas Nutt’s examination of magistrates’ proceedings in paternity cases, suggest that illegitimacy did not necessarily attract significant disapprobation; while the

large degree of familial support afforded to unmarried mothers in nineteenth-century Scotland, as described by Andrew Blaikie, Eilidh Garrett and Ros Davies, suggests that illegitimacy was not greatly stigmatized within certain familial groups. Other chapters, however, explore how powerful the effect of stigma could be, and illustrate the crude ways in which social control was manifest. Liam Kennedy and Paul Gray describe a post-Famine Irish community where hardship undermined what little goodwill there could be for struggling unmarried mothers. In analysing why mortality levels were higher in illegitimate than legitimate children, Alys Levene's study of eighteenth-century metropolitan institutions and Alice Reid's of twentieth-century Derbyshire also reveal something about the intangible, but powerful, effect of stigma.

This edited collection begins to rectify the heavily gendered bias towards women within the historiography of illegitimacy by rendering visible the historical experience of illegitimate fathers. Chapters by Nutt and John Black reflect the importance that the welfare system placed upon paternal responsibility; while Reid begins to quantify the effect of paternal absence upon infant survival. Female agency is also examined. Blaikie *et al.* discuss the importance of networks of support in allowing unmarried mothers to return to work; while Tanya Evans uses eighteenth-century popular literature to examine obstacles to the formation and stability of marriage, including the desertion of women during a time of imperial expansion and constant war.

While the majority of the volume focuses upon England, the Celtic fringe is given some consideration, with a chapter each on Ireland and Scotland (Wales is, unfortunately, a notable omission as no appropriate contributor could be found). However, to quibble on the locations not covered would be in some respects to miss the point. Although most of the chapters focus on particular communities, contributors well justify the areas selected and their usually comparative stance, either for the unusual richness of sources, or because it allows an exploration of the peculiarities and importance

of local context upon attitudes and behaviour patterns.

This volume also prides itself on bringing together a wide variety of sources and methodological approaches. Popular literature, census and civil registration data, petty sessions court documents, parochial records, charitable and institutional sources are among those fruitfully exploited. Contributors provide a micro-historical insight into illegitimacy at the level of the individual, whilst at the same time generating interpretative frameworks with broader significance. Hence unusual sources such as health visitors' books have been quarried to reveal the socio-economic, health, and household characteristics of unmarried mothers and their children; whilst more traditionally used sources, such as Poor Law records, census and civil registration data, have been exploited to reassess and problematize many of the assumptions (relating in particular to migration and residency patterns) that underpin earlier research.

While several chapters explicitly discuss the problems of conventional demographic methods of measuring illegitimacy—particularly Kennedy and Gray, and King—it must be said that the more demographically stimulated reader will feel most at ease with the material. Those who crave qualitative sources may be a little disappointed—there is certainly still room for further research into the lived experience of illegitimacy, perhaps drawing on more unusual sources, as Evans has done here with ballads and chapbooks, and as Williams does in comparing samples of London Foundling Hospital petitions over two centuries, during which time the institution evolved from its original single purpose (care of the child) to a dual purpose which included moral reform of the mother. Since most of the sources used for this volume address the labouring classes—as the editors themselves concede—it would be particularly nice to gain some access to the upper echelons of society. On a more pedantic note, the endnotes are not provided at the end of each separate chapter, but left until the end of the

volume—a minor irritation, but an odd convention in an edited volume where separate chapters are likely to be consulted.

None the less, this is a most useful addition to the historiography of illegitimacy, which investigates creatively the prevalence of and responses to illegitimacy in the modern period, subjects some commonly accepted themes to rigorous investigation, and draws out new conclusions on the mobility, strategies, and experiences of parents of illegitimate children.

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Jürgen Schlumbohm and Claudia Wiesemann (eds), *Die Entstehung der Geburtsklinik in Deutschland 1751–1850: Göttingen, Kassel, Braunschweig*, Göttingen, Wallstein Verlag, 2004, pp. 144, illus., €19.00 (paperback 3-89244-711-X).

The first academic lying-in hospital in Europe was opened in Göttingen in 1751. This collection of essays commemorates the event while putting it into a German perspective. Claudia Wiesemann states quite rightly in her introduction that there can be no doubt that the medicalization of birth had its origin in the establishment of lying-in hospitals in the second half of the eighteenth century. The small university town of Göttingen in northern Germany took the lead. The founding of a lying-in hospital there was part of a policy of the kingdom of Hanover, on the one hand, to attract medical students to its new university while competing with Prussian universities, on the other, to provide care for unmarried pregnant women, thus reducing the number of infanticides. Teaching young doctors in obstetrics was just another aspect of bedside teaching which characterized the reform of medical education in the age of Enlightenment, as Isabelle von Bueltzingsloewen shows in her survey of the development of bedside teaching at German universities in the eighteenth century. The only lacuna of this otherwise concise overview by

a French medical historian is that the seminal book by Christian Probst (*Der Weg des ärztlichen Erkennens am Krankenbett: Hermann Boerhaave und die ältere Wiener medizinische Schule*, Stuttgart, 1973) is not mentioned in the bibliography. Jürgen Schlumbohm, who can be considered *the* expert on the social history of the famous lying-in hospital in Göttingen, provides yet another stimulating essay on the teaching practices and the everyday life in this “total” institution. The second director of this lying-in hospital, Friedrich Benjamin Osiander (1759–1822) was one of the leading obstetricians of his time, admired by his colleagues and feared by his female patients because of his strong liking for the forceps. Forceps deliveries amounted to 40 per cent in this clinic. In other contemporary lying-in hospitals the rate was much lower. In Vienna, for example, it was 4 per cent of all births.

Osiander and his successor were also collectors of embryological specimens and obstetrical instruments, as Christine Loytved describes in an essay which gives not only a brief history of this important collection of artefacts but also attempts to find out more about the use of these historical instruments. This includes the interesting question whether it is possible to trace emotions in the history of perinatal history. Christina Vanja provides a comparative view on the history of lying-in hospitals in Germany by shedding light on the history of the *Accouchierhaus* in Kassel founded in 1763. She raises an interesting point claiming that the female patients in such institutions had motives other than just to escape the usual punishment for fornication. The lying-in hospital was particularly attractive to unmarried pregnant women because it had a foundling hospital attached to it. Vanja’s essay is an example of a recent trend in the social history of medicine which pays particular attention to the demand for medical services. Those who have been regarded as victims or objects of medicalization were not totally powerless; they had in fact their own strategies of getting what they wanted