FOREWORDS, INTRODUCTIONS AND CHAPTERS IN BOOKS
BY DATE OF PUBLICATION


Roy Porter. ‘The history of time’. In John Grant (ed, consultant editor Colin Wilson). The book of time. Westbridge Books, Newton Abbot 1980: 5-44. ‘ ... time as conceived in most world communities (the recent history of our own civilization is the major exception) has had two main characteristics: it has been a measurement of age, duration, and processes by references to a human yardstick ... time as experience is essentially recurrent and repetitive ... Such experiences become distilled in the world’s major religions and philosophies ... Seeing time as a circle destroyed the threat posed by time the destroyer ... our vision of time has been chiefly shaped by the most stunning exception to the view of time as eternal succession: the outlook of the Jews as absorbed and developed within Christianity ... Jewish religion – and, later, Christianity – exceptionally saw God as the Creator of the entire Universe ... Time ceased to be endless, repeated cycles of events, and became linear, sequential, unique, irreversible ... years could be counted forward from the Creation. History was God’s design unfolding over time ... Time was the servant of Mortality ... All societies possess some conception of time past, and of their own ancestry ... to us, the memories and myths of most cultures play fast and
loose with exact chronology … the past does not have a distinct identity … Within Christendom, belief in the pre-ordained course of human destiny from Creation through to the Last Judgement gave special importance to history, for every human act possessed a providential place in the Divine time-table … The roots of the modern concept of history lie in the age of the Renaissance and Reformation … European scholars began to recognise for the first time just how distinct their own times were from former days … This discovery … is the kernel of modern historical inquiry … the understanding of nature was also historicized … the new heliocentric astronomy of Copernicus, Kepler and Galileo … removed the Earth from the centre of Creation … Once the earth had acquired a history, the same arguments were bound to be applied to the organisms which inhabited it … from the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, a new time-perspective on mankind triumphed, which saw history as the history of progress … Charles Darwin hypothesized that the Wealden Greensand formations of South Eastern England might have been formed no less than 300 million years ago … Such a timescale … utterly destroyed the literal reading of Genesis … It transformed expectations for the future … Man could make himself … Thus the Western capitalist world has no time now for what is old-fashioned or past or obsolete … We now live in a society in which our everyday time experience has become less and less that of natural biological rhythms and conforms ever more to the complex, rational ordering of mechanized work, the city, and the clock …'


‘… Enlightenment thought rejected traditional [guilt-ridden] plebeian modes of [sexual] behaviour, but also traditional [libertine] courtly and aristocratic forms as well …If Nature was good, then desire, far from being sinful, became desirable …
Throughout … John Cleland’s aptly titled fiction of Fanny Hill, *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure* (London, 1749) … the “principle of pleasure” was presumed to be the *primum mobile* of human action … This hedonistic liberation of the libido … fitted easily within wider contexts of Enlightenment outlooks … The body became the seat of sensation, of consciousness … Erasmus Darwin, sire of fourteen children himself, recommended marriage (i.e. sexual outlet) as a cure for psychosomatic disorders … the emergence of anthropology familiarised the English with the polygamous societies of the South Seas … sex therapy burst upon the scene. The most famous exponent was James Graham … Amongst other techniques for stimulating eroticism, Graham advocated the use of pornography … pornographic journals began appearing from the 1770s … newspapers advertised sexual services of all kinds … women’s garb was conspicuous by its extremely low décolletage. Prostitution swarmed onto the streets … they advertised in directories such as Jack Harris’s *The Whoremonger’s Guide to London* … Bagnios and serials catered for specialist tastes such as flagellation. Men of pleasure had their own private clubs … There were shows which featured naked dancing and copulation … Sex in public was quite acceptable. Prostitutes and their clients copulated in St James’s Park … Admittedly, other wedges of society were engrainedly straitlaced, not least the Dissenting community. And of course the flaunting of sexuality was much more evident in large towns, above all London. Yet this does not diminish the extraordinary openness of sexuality, in contrast to other ages … David Hume could discuss incest without awkwardness or a sense of taboo … it was commonly admitted that the widespread practice of beating (e.g. in schools) was sexual in nature – an association repressed and buried in Victorian times … the much-bandied freedoms were to apply principally to males … to the “Polite World” … to heterosexuals … the law on buggery remained capital … Some of the more notorious homosexual men of Georgian England, such as William Beckford, found it prudent to live abroad or in seclusion … the late Enlightenment cult of sensibility came to inform notions of decent sexuality … what is often thought of as the “Victorian” obsessional repression of sexuality – seen as fatal both to individual psychic equilibrium and to family and social order – was long pre-Victorian in origins. But it sprang more from the rejection of Enlightenment beliefs than from their culmination …’


‘… It was not as an astronomer that Herschel moved to Bath. He earned his living as a musician … By the early 1770s he could harvest over £400 pa from musical performances and teaching: the income of a respectable gentleman … many provincial towns, and Bath more than most, were transformed during the Georgian century. They mushroomed in size … Bath from its 2,000 to 34,000. More or less the whole of Bath was rebuilt … In the days before the invention of the seaside, Bath was the nation’s leading resort … So William Herschel … made a wise choice in coming to this vast pleasure dome. Yet he also had longstanding mathematical, philosophical and optical interests … he started buying optical equipment and grinding lenses for telescopes, beginning to sweep the skies with the aid of his sister Caroline … Bath and its environs had a good sprinkling of enthusiasts for the natural history sciences [and] the Bath Philosophical Society … came into existence on 28th December 1779 … there were thirteen founding members – amongst whom were William Herschel … and his friend William Watson, Jr, FRS … the Philosophical Society may have been precisely the stimulus needed to launch the obscure William Herschel onto a public stage and career in science … Within a month of its foundation he gave his first paper, on Corallines; over the next two years, he
delivered thirty more … the last was an “Account of a comet” – Herschel’s announcement of the discovery of Uranus read March 1781 …’

‘… Sterne was a consumptive … well versed in contemporary medicine. And the medical details in the novel – not least the obstetrical accounts – mirror, and sometimes parody, the medical knowledge of the day. Satire on the man-midwife was common. Sterne’s strategy in Tristram Shandy is to mine the covered ways, the nervous pathways between mind and body, thought and action, intention, execution and interpretation of words and things, laying bare the ego’s fortifications. His goal is general laughter, his intent comic-serious; but his orientation – playing his attention on that fabric of fibres that constitutes a man, and his paradoxical pretensions to self-knowledge – engages directly with the great issues of the day, in a down-to-earth fashion so typical of the Enlightenment in England … Sterne automatically deployed the concepts and vocabulary of traditional medicine in sketching character and social behaviour. Walter Shandy, for example, was a classic medical “type”, a man of choleric humour … prone to sudden fits of temper; he fumes, splutters and frets, going off “like gunpowder” … Tristram, for his part, behaves as one would expect from a man whose loss of animal spirits is complicated by consumption … He is all fits and starts, prey to sudden sallies, whimsical, prattling … his humours are all jumbled together, his feelings delicate and close to the surface, brimful of sentiment … For Sterne, medicine was not an alien world of incomprehensible theories and dehumanizing scientific models of man (thought that didn’t stop him from poking fun at learned idiocy). Rather, it provided him with the language, the medium, through which he sought to understand his own, and the human, condition. As such it was good therapy indeed, “against the spleen”.’

‘By the beginning of the nineteenth century, England was visibly in the midst of massive industrialization, fast becoming “the workshop of the world”. In what Thomas Carlyle was shortly to call “the mechanical age”, no one denied Britain led the world in a whole range of manufactured goods, from tiny precision watches up to steam-ships, or doubted that high craft skills were indissolubly linked with economic transformation … But not all that long before, England’s record on quality skills had been decidedly patchy. As late as 1700, a high percentage of the most mechanically ingenious people in the country had been born abroad … and the same applied to the fine arts … All that was to change, and change rapidly, during the eighteenth century … if we ask what helped turn England into a land brimful of mechanical excellence, the answer lies in economic opportunity, in market openings … The public grew more product-orientated, first in London and then in the provinces … new wealth helped to bring objects of accuracy, beauty and utility within range of the pockets of thousands.’

knowledge in the eighteenth century: the evidence of the Gentleman’s Magazine’.  

‘… the Gentleman’s Magazine first published in 1731, and running continuously into the present century, attained at its peak a circulation possibly of over 10,000 copies, and far more readers … it offered a middle-of-the-road viewpoint, reflecting a moderate, enlightened common sense [and] shows a high density of medical insertions … the first account of plastic surgery to appear in England, describing the techniques as used in India, can be found in the Magazine’s issue for October 1794 … a close check was kept on the health of public figures and the royal family … night-by-night bulletins in 1789 on the condition of George III in his “madness” … the printing of the London Bills of Mortality … The readership seems to have welcomed items about health [often in verse] … The general tone of Gentleman’s Magazine contributions is one of accepting modern regular physick as part of rational enlightenment … Faith in “holy oil” as a cure-all, for instance, got short shrift as both popish and vulgar … The most prominent [interest] was the request for, and exchange of, practical remedies for specific ills, to relieve personal suffering … how do you cure corns? or get rid of chilblains? or relieve cramp? How do you purge worms? treat viper bites? How do you grow senna? Why is it believed that a good antidote to excessive water retention is to apply a live toad to the region of the kidneys? … remedies taken from medical publications nestle cheek-by-jowl with folk and herbal recipes, letters from the laity alongside prescriptions from practitioners … there are relatively few requests for treatments for the great killer complaints: consumption, malignant fevers, apoplexy, child-bed and infant fevers … cancers … Snake bites are common, as are injuries sustained on the farm … bites by mad dogs … conditions transmitted from livestock and domestic animals … accidental poisonings caused by eating toadstools … gentian roots, or swallowing arsenic poison put down for vermin … Gentleman’s Magazine readers gazed out into the community … swaddling was condemned, breast-feeding advocated … sympathetic attitudes towards suicides … proponents of [provincial] voluntary hospitals made full use of the pages of the Gentleman’s Magazine for publicity … obituaries … in the early years being divided into two sections, “Deaths” and “Casualties” (i.e. death by accident) … “Of convulsions in her bowels, occasioned by the thunder on Monday evening, Miss Hallam of Islington …” … Mr Monro devoured by a tiger … they show little evidence of the medicalization of death … In the Georgian period, lay culture was not in opposition to the physic of the practitioners, nor was it being threatened or suppressed by them … It is not until the nineteenth century that we can properly identify powerful lay-directed movements which deserve to be styled “fringe” or “alternative” medicine, defining themselves in opposition to the orthodoxy of the faculty.’


‘… though not born with the silver key in his mouth which would automatically have opened all the doors leading up to a top hospital appointment, the council of the
Royal College and perhaps even a knighthood, Hunter enjoyed a real success story, becoming the doyen of his profession … as early as the 1760s he was, it seems, pulling in more than £10,000 a year … he drove himself unstintingly, sustaining a lecture course at his anatomy school that ran from October to May, six days a week … performing dissections and making preparations … his extensive and taxing obstetrical practice, to say nothing of his passion for collecting … he knew the power of money – it bought respect and independence - and never squandered it … Hunter studied advancement … and was sidetracked by nothing … When William Hunter opted for obstetrics, it was not a desperate remedy in an overcrowded profession, but testimony to his nose for rich pickings and for access to the boudoirs of the great … Hunter needs to be viewed not in terms of professional elevators, collective mobility and so forth, but rather in the light of entrepreneurship … Who can say he would have wanted it any differently? Never did he hold, seek or express regrets at not having a prestigious hospital appointment … ownership of his pre-eminent anatomy school gave Hunter an immense fiefdom … It created a private medical business, but it also endowed him with public visibility … as a social animal Hunter glided through the fashionable world with never a cross word … It may have been a stroke of luck that the surgeon Hunter's family knew was William Cullen. But thereafter little in his career was not carefully managed by himself and shepherded by contacts. He came to London in 1740 not a wide-eyed provincial lad, but clutching a reference from Cullen to [William] Smellie, the leading obstetrician, and with other letters of introduction to James Douglas …Thus we have the rise to success and gentility of "Goody Hunter", as Horace Walpole dubbed him…'


‘… In the seventeenth century the best students made sure to get their medical education at an Italian or a French university; in the first half of the eighteenth century, scores of English medical students flooded into Boerhaave’s Leiden, and then later in the century, Edinburgh grew pre-eminent … A Cambridge graduate such as Erasmus Darwin would commonly move on to Edinburgh for its top-notch training. During the second half of the century the Scottish universities turned out over ten times as many medical graduates as Oxbridge … the weight of scholarship identifies the early nineteenth century as the turning-point of medical education; it was then that it became “modern” through the invention of the teaching hospital … I aim to indicate how far our heroic image of the transition from Georgian slumbers to Victorian science need to be revised … the emergence in Georgian London of top-quality private medical lecturing, indeed of a clutch of excellent private medical schools [provided] practical professional instruction for students … delivered by the cream of the profession … such as William Cheselden … George Fordyce … and … the brothers William and John Hunter … William Cheselden had started his surgical lectures privately in 1711. On election to the staff of St Thomas’s in 1718, he transferred his lectures to the hospital, delivering four courses of 35 lectures a year. The practice spread … The rapid growth of hospitals in London gave plentiful practical exposure to the keen student. The transition to Victorian medical education was smooth rather than catastrophic. Above all, Unreformed Medicine did not give way to Reformed Medicine simply because it had been insupportably incompetent …’


‘… our dominant image of the history of science is bursting at the seams with revolutions ... while making free with such localized labels as “chemical revolution”, “Darwinian revolution”, “quantum revolution”, and so forth, [historians of science] also write about The Scientific Revolution, in the singular, as a unique phenomenon. It’s hard to imagine an exact parallel in which other historical specialists would speak of The Political Revolution, or The Economic Revolution ... Explorers once believed in the great Southern Continent (nondum cognita), though they couldn’t agree where it was or what it was like. The same goes for The Scientific Revolution ... Take, for instance, the question of its timing. Most historians see it stretching broadly over the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries ... Some, however, would abbreviate it ... Its contents as well as dating also pose interpretative problems. Most scholars argue that the astrophysical sciences form the core of the Revolution ... But should the life-sciences also be included? ... though utterly naturalized into today’s historical idiom, The Scientific Revolution is actually quite a recent coining ... the phrase, it seems, having been minted by [the Russian émigré Alexandre] Koyré in 1939, and first stamped on a book title in Rupert Hall’s The Scientific Revolution (1954) ... it marked a triumph of mind, free and fearless, underscoring the essential link between liberty of thought and intellectual advance, a lesson not to be lost on Western democracies just freeing themselves from Hitler’s and Spain’s brain-washings and from the utopian Marxism that had been the opium of the thirties intelligentsia ...’


‘… Dr Myersbach – his doctorate was purchased from Erfurt – first achieved prominence in London in the mid-1770s, where he set up as a practitioner specialising in the technique of uroscopy … Anecdotal evidence suggests that popular faith in urine-casting outlived the approval of the faculty and [Myersbach] quickly built up a practice [which] included David Garrick … the Duke and Duchess of Richmond, Lord Archer, Lord Hawke, and Lady Harrington … Why did the sick go to Myersbach? … Did they have a positive faith in uroscopy itself? That is possible. But it seems much more likely … that the better class of customer … visited Myersbach as a last resort after their regular doctors had failed to achieve cure or relief … Detractors of course regarded him as a rank fraud … [sending] along their friends as stool-pigeons, carrying with them flasks of cows’ urine … Having made his diagnosis, Myersbach then wrote out a prescription which was made up by his own apothecary … [John Coakley] Lettsom privately investigated Myersbach’s activities … and on the basis of what he discovered, launched into print with a public denunciation in a 42-page pamphlet … he also sent volleys of letters and insertions to the London newspapers … Counter-volleys of articles appeared in the newspapers, taking Myersbach’s part, signed with such pseudonyms as “London Spy” and “Sally Sly” … the affair ceased to be simply the defeat and demise of an arrogant quack, as Lettsom had hoped, and turned into a general debate, in which larger issues were at stake, not least the whole question of medical authority, and the relative standings of the profession and the public in authorising medical procedures. Lettsom had bitten off more than he bargained for …’


‘… even the liberal Pinel thought that the children of the revolution had degenerated into monstrous madmen … In moral and metaphorical terms, the mad were seen as man turned brute … one of the key Renaissance archetypes of insanity was the lycanthrope, the man turned wolf, baying at the moon … Of fundamental importance here was the codification of both the learned and the folk traditions contained in Ambroise Paré’s Des Monstres et Prodiges (1573) … if monsters and madmen could be divinely blessed, so too could they be marks of God’s wrath, or indeed of Satanic possession … not least amongst the causes of monstrosity listed by Paré was imagination … the attribution of monstrous births to so-called maternal impressions …this Imaginationist doctrine … served to link monsters and madmen through a mental aetiology … imagination had the power to produce radical mental disorder … From here it was the shortest of steps to the Terror, reinstating the power of imagination to hold the populace in its thrall … In some ways of course the perception that the sleep of reason produces monsters took its finest artistic expression outside France – in Goya’s Caprichos, of course, but most challengingly in Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein (1818) … Victor Frankenstein produces out of his own disordered mind a monster … which, like the French Revolution itself, could not be satisfied until it had destroyed its own begetter. Yet it was French psychiatry which most capitalized upon the lessons of the psychopathology of the Revolution, in that pedigree of psychiatric reaction from Esquirol, Georget and Falret through to
Moreau, Morel and Broca whose pervasive degenerationism underlined the affinities between psychic and somatic decadence and the unity of the *monstre physique et moral*. Charcot was the child of that tradition, and once Freud had sat at his feet, the grand arch leading forward from the Medieval wild men to the monstrosities of the psychoanalytic unconscious, from the werewolf of lycanthropy to the Wolf Man himself was finally completed.’


‘… it is easy to treat the dilemmas raised by AIDS as if they were something new, as if doctors and governments had never before been faced with agonising problems of having to act to prevent or regulate lethal epidemics … our predecessors debated, with both logic and passion, the essential questions of the status of individual liberties in the face of the threat which a diseased individual poses to society, the issue of the balance of self and society … the high noon of free trade and Smilesean individualism was also, paradoxically, the moment at which the state was beginning to make staggering inroads into the traditional freedom of the individual in the name of safeguarding the national health … Compulsory vaccination was one of two pieces of legislation created during the mid-Victorian period aimed at the prevention of infectious diseases. Statutes against venereal diseases formed the other … What is significant, however, is the collapse of the Acts in the teeth of widespread and varied criticism … No Victorian government was prepared to take its commitment to preventive medicine to the point of risking great unpopularity … the key debates this century upon the propriety and necessity of compulsory powers for the prevention and treatment of disease have centred upon venereal disease … A Royal Commission was set up in 1913 to investigate the possible development of a future VD service … A separate system of VD clinics, for men and for women, was to be established. Attendance would be voluntary. Anonymity and confidentiality would be preserved … Treatment would be free … The argument which eventually won the day in the British context for the non-notification of sexually transmitted diseases had less to do with personal liberty than with the power of the clinical profession to maintain the private, contractual relationship with the individual patient as the jewel in the crown of medical practice …’


‘... Erasmus Darwin ... was above all a provincial physician ... his biomedical outlook ... was informed by the evidence of change, both in degree and in kind, running ubiquitously through Nature. But an equally sharply defined feature of his thinking lay in his eye for continuities ... Living bodies ... were those entities capable of entering into dialectical interplay with their external environment ... The power of the will to advance from isolated acts to chains of settled behaviour, triggered by habitual sensory inputs, was a crucial step forward within Darwin’s vision of organic capacities ... Humans and other animals alike were not born inherently endowed with a fixed repertoire of dispositions, capacities, skills and propensities ... Darwin was thus as fierce an opponent of the assumption of innateness as Locke ... the sanctions of the senses – pleasures and pains – enabled organisms to learn, and to advance through learning ... the power of association figured crucially in Darwin’s concept of progress, and thus in his evolutionism ... in Darwin’s theory of evolution the female did little more than provide a seedbed within which the newly conceived foetus, a male “conception”, could grow ... The male planted the basic “filament” (“part of the father”) that became the next generation ... a man of diseased imagination – a habitual drunkard, for example – was likely to produce a diseased or defective child ... An analysis of the multifarious powers of living beings led Darwin to the conviction that life contained within itself the capacity for repeated, continued, gradual modification, change transmissible to futurity ... His physician’s vision was dominated by the living organisms he saw fighting disease, changing over time, involved in subtle interplay with the personalities they housed. Darwin was concerned to rescue “man” from the aspersions of being just a machine...’

Roy Porter. ‘Foreword’. In William Huddart. *Unpathed waters: account of the life and times of Joseph Huddart, FRS (1741-1816), at one time a captain in the service


‘... Tristram Shandy was the testament of a dying man, whose “leaky bellows” had fallen victim to consumption ... Sterne took refuge in The life and opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gent ... Tristram is himself “the sport of small accidents” ... Mrs Shandy is brought to bed in rural Yorkshire, attended by the local midwife. The labour proving slow, she is displaced by Walter Shandy’s accoucheur-crony, Dr Slop, who, incapacitated by a thumb cut to the bone in a previous mishap, extracts the hero clumsily with his patent forceps, “[my] nose squeezed flat to my face as if the destinies had actually spun me without one” ... Tristram then suffers another physical disaster, losing his foreskin (at least) circumcised – or perhaps castrated – by the guillotine of a falling sash window ... Some of this is gross slapstick ... but most of the farce is, however, intellectual, rooted in the Rabelasian and Swiftian traditions of learned wit and Menippean satire ... Sterne delights in the absurd paradox of man: such a tender piece of flesh ... and he burlesques the delusion of medical prometheanism ... Time and again, he brings the quest for ultimate medical truth into question: ‘The whole secret of health” – Walter is button-holing once more – depends on the equipoise of “radical heat” and “radical moisture” ... only to be punctured by the homespun wisdom of Corporal Trim ... “the radical moisture is nothing in the world but ditch-water – and ... the radical heat, of those who can go to the expence of it, is burnt brandy” ... Sterne’s characters are, no doubt, laughable. But they are not like Swift’s robots, dehumanised Cartesian machines. Rather they ache and agonise with desire and suffering ... Sterne was a great man of feeling ... he was moreover ... in touch with many of the new currents in the biomedical sciences of the day. He was aware of a fresh emphasis upon Nature as living and active, and of the new physiological importance of the nerves, organisation, sensitivity and sexuality ... Sterne’s contemporaries grew preoccupied with the searing enigma of mortality within a secularising culture for which spiritual immortality became a darker and more distant prospect. The presence of disease and pain, but also the prospects of health,
determined the mind of the Georgians, and the broader trajectory of European culture, more than has commonly been recognised.'


‘... The history of the cursed body and of mind triumphant over matter is long and involved, but ultimately clearly defined ... in medieval and early modern Europe – that civilization of faith – the human body had a power and prominence never again to be matched: it was the measure of all things. It was muscle power that tamed the animals, tilled the fields ... Bodies were pregnant with meaning. There were the symbols of the Body Politic, of the King’s Two Bodies, and of the Corpus Christi ... The Royal Touch cured scrofula, and aristocratic lineage spelt out the mystique of blood ... Theories proliferated through the Scientific Revolution and the Enlightenment unraveling the knot of mind and body, what Tristram Shandy termed this “junketting piece of work betwixt [our bodies] and our seven senses” ... three centuries ago ... insanity was, or at least sprang from, a disease of the body ... physical remedies were clearly called for ... Thomas Willis himself advocated a regime of close confinement and whippings ... yet it would be a great mistake to interpret the prevalent somaticism as a sort of doctors’ conspiracy ... abundant evidence suggests it was sufferers at least as much as physicians who opted for organic interpretations ... “This disease, called Vapours in Women, and the Spleen in Men, is what neither Sex are pleased to own ...” [Dr Richard Blackmore] ... it [also] convinced [the sufferer] that his reason or soul wasn’t at risk from rampant imagination or Satanic possession ... identifying melancholy as a disease of the body opened the way to a sociology of illness highly attractive to the polished elite of Georgian England ... under George Cheyne’s designation of “the English malady”, depression became a life-style disorder ... By 1800 [behavioural disorders] had largely become affairs of the mind. Why? ... For one thing ... Mad-doctors wanted to distinguish themselves over and against general medicine. To be able to claim an expertise of the mind was a mark of independence ... The mind that would now accept mental illness was the one that identified civilization’s future with the supremacy of mind, indeed with the march of mind ...’


‘I’ve been looking at the letters and diaries and journals and wills and remains of people in Britain from about the mid-seventeenth century to about the mid-nineteenth ... To some extent it’s a culture which is very death and decay oriented, because of
the sheer fact that life expectancy is low, that medicine can’t actually do very much to
cure many people most of the time ... It’s really within our own lifetime that the
enormous transformation has taken place ... My father, for instance, had rheumatic
fever when he was fourteen and spent a year and a half in bed; nowadays if you get
rheumatic fever it’s nothing ... With the plague, you might well get half the people in a
street dying within a week – the visible impact is enormous ... In a Catholic society
it’s crucially important that you should have the sacraments. But in a Protestant
society ... the clergyman is not an essential part ... it makes it a great deal easier for
death to become secularized ... it’s not the tranquility of death that counts, but a
sense of encountering death, struggling, triumphing over fear ... I think that was
normal in the seventeenth century ... and then what happens during the eighteenth
and nineteenth centuries is the invention of the sedative ... And this becomes the
norm of an easy death ... I think eventually the overcoming of a terribly high rate of
mortality means that in the end death becomes a less frequent and less familiar
event, and so in some sense its terrors get doubled and have to be concealed more
... some people obviously say that it’s the secularization that has actually made us
incapable of coping with death, rather than medical developments ... I feel blank
about it, but that may be because I’ve never actually witnessed the death of anybody
I’ve been really close to ... I think I’d like to be fully conscious of it all ... I think one
would want to be with the people who mattered to one. Being fully conscious and
reasonably free from pain and having everybody there – that would be the best thing,
because that’s as near to what is nice about living as possible ... the thought of dying
doesn’t worry me, but the thought of being senile perturbs me a great deal ...'


‘… from 1704 apothecaries enjoyed the legal right to give medical advice … so long as they charged only for their medicines … recent research has demonstrated how handsomely apothecaries benefited from a medicine boom they had helped to start … William Broderip, the Bristol apothecary, had an annual income around the turn of the eighteenth century of as much as £6,000 … Thomas Macro was five times mayor of Bury St Edmunds … At this point, historians tell us … the apothecary’s monopoly as dispenser of drugs was challenged … by the sudden expansion of the numbers of shopkeeping chemists and druggists … apothecaries lobbied Parliament to outlaw dispensing by druggists … In this, as the Apothecaries’ Act (1815) shows, they were unsuccessful … apothecaries had already waged – and lost – an almost identical campaign against the druggists as early as the 1740s … Many of the early druggists had businesses big by any standards … Thomas Corbyn, a Quaker, born in Worcestershire in 1711, was apprenticed in 1728 to Joseph Clutton, a London apothecary … [In 1754] Corbyn bought out Cluttons’s heirs and took over the business single-handed … although a freeman of the Apothecaries Company, there is no sign that [he] spent any time caring for the sick … he wrote “the drug trade is my proper business … it will pay better than any other merchandize” … [his] business lay in the manufacture and sale of drugs, both wholesale and retail, though the former comprised the heart of the enterprise … in 1747, the business seems to have been worth about £4,000 … by the 1780s it was worth around £20,000 … in
1747 … Corbyn’s operated with a balance of just over £2,114 clear profit on the year, a tidy sum for frugal Quakers … the business received a number of regular, substantial orders annually … from such London hospitals as St George’s, Guy’s, and St Thomas’s … from London apothecaries … from other London manufacturing chemists … from country surgeons and apothecaries … from export, principally in the Americas … it was the moral and business codes of the Quaker International which made long-distance … trade in drugs a viable enterprise … the colonies and even the … United States were slow to develop their own drug industries … it is surely time to acknowledge the key importance of the druggists’ emergence to the whole organization, structure, and enterprise of medicine.


‘… If Vitruvian man became the mascot of the Renaissance, then Palladian man was the patron saint of Augustan England … He does not bestride the world like a Colossus or a young Apollo … He is out of sight. It is he who is doing the looking … He is Mr Spectator … Palladianism was the enviable lifestyle in the early Georgian era. In its strict sense the term relates to a style of building in the manner of Andrea Palladio (1508-80) … Holkham, Houghton, Stourhead, Wanstead, Wilton, Burlington House in Piccadilly, the Horse Guards at Whitehall – all these on a grand scale; and
Chiswick House, Wrotham Park, and dozens of other gentlemen’s seats, run up more modestly … Palladianism was an Olympian vision … the unthinkable happened. People got bored with the classical. By mid-century, self congratulating men of taste such as Horace Walpole … were finding they had a taste for so much more than was dreamt of in Palladio’s philosophy of pillars and pediments. First Gothick battlements and Chinoiserie seduced the fancy; then, Greek temples, and later still belvederes, stareabouts, and even Indian pavilions tickled the palate and stimulated the sensibilities of the nouveaux riches middle classes … Late eighteenth century tastes wanted fun, they wanted excitement, they wanted something different … The age arrived of every man for his own. Chacun à son gout.’

‘… Beddoes was an outspoken, no-nonsense maverick … he principally wanted to improve the politics of health at the contact point of doctor-patient relations and, more broadly, to set health care and medical practice on more fruitful footings … Beddoes’ writings for the intelligent layman presents a uniformly bleak picture of sufferings and setbacks … Worse, Beddoes believed that the medical profession itself had become hopelessly corrupted by the temptations of trade and the lure of lucre, and that, partly as a result, quackery was raging out of control … Beddoes revealed how the manufacturing system destroyed the health of workers, cooped up in cramped, polluted workshops, exposed to noxious fumes and dust, and condemned to sedentariness … Beddoes was the sworn foe to luxury … all the more insidious, because greed had camouflaged itself in the decorous idiom of politeness … sickness had become a status symbol … The problem lay in convincing “the ghastly beauties of the court and city” … that robustness wasn’t irremediably vulgar, even a “curse” … the spread of misguided polite intellectual culture also promoted wrong-headed ideas about maladies and medicine … Blinded by the glamour of medicine, people had almost forgotten the meaning of health, to say nothing of its value: “What is good against the head-ache, Doctor?” “Health, Madam.” … as a radical and populist, Beddoes was eager not to silence the people but to reform them, changing them from would-be Aesculapians into devotees of Hygeia. It is this vision of the future lay role – active, health-conscious as a person, passive, compliant as a patient – which Beddoes’ thinking promotes …’


‘Time has proved [Madness and Civilization] by far the most penetrating work ever written on the history of madness (and, above all, the history of reason) … Central to Foucault’s interpretation … is the idea of a “great confinement” … activated from the mid-seventeenth century, in context of political absolutism and Enlightenment rationality … Those whose lives affronted bourgeois rationality – beggars, petty criminals, layabouts, prostitutes – became liable to sequestration higgledy-piggledy with the sick and the old, the lame and lunatic … their common denominator was idleness … it is a concept which I do not find especially applicable to England (still less, one might add, to Scotland and Ireland) … the vast majority of the poor and the troublesome were not interned within institutions … perhaps not many more than 5,000, and certainly fewer than 10,000, people were confined as mad in England by the early nineteenth century … it would be profoundly misleading to see Bethlem as anything like a London equivalent to the hospital general … another image … became prominent in the Enlightenment, one scarcely acknowledged by Foucault: the madman not as emblematic of the full “animality of madness”, but as he who reasons wrongly – and who may therefore be capable of re-education and reform … John Locke’s contention that madness arose from the (mis)association of ideas was eagerly and explicitly taken up by numerous Georgian writers and mad-house keepers especially William Battie and Thomas Arnold … Foucault implies that the “moral therapy” of the Tukes (kindness, humanity, reason) marks an authentic break in England, much as the reforms of Pinel in France … The research of the last generation has revealed the extent of the preaching and practice of reforms of “moral” treatment, drawing upon Locke’s psychology, in the era preceding the Tukes.’


‘ … Sick people in general … have typically had the right to seek, or the right to refuse, medical treatment; have typically enjoyed the own choice of practitioner; and, insofar as they have been cared for in institutions such as hospitals, they have been legally free to come and go as they please. By contrast, the seriously mentally ill … have been subjected to a transformation in their legal status which has rendered their state more akin to that of criminals than that of the sick … by 1950, approximately half a million people were so confined in the USA and around 150,000 in Britain … There is very little evidence that mad people were confined in specialized institutions … before the end of the Middle Ages … piety seems to have encouraged the setting up of religious receptacles for the mad in certain countries … The emergence of the modern city state and nation state was also an important factor in the spread of confinement for the mad … in England, and in other urbanized parts of Europe … the rise of the lunatic asylum is best seen less as a product of centralized acts of state than an offshoot of the flourishing consumer society … As late as the mid nineteenth century, more than half the confined lunatics in England were still housed in privately owned institutions … Nowhere in Europe before the nineteenth century was there a legal requirement that asylums should be under the control of medically qualified personnel … Asylums were not instituted for the practice of psychiatry; rather psychiatry was the practice which developed once the problem of managing asylum inmates arose … For one thing, it was widely claimed that the well-designed, well-managed asylum would in fact restore to mental health a high percentage of the insane … The first two thirds of the nineteenth century thus constituted a period of intense (and intensely optimistic) thought and action focusing on the asylum as the
site for treating insanity ... Work therapy was widely favoured ... Asylum keepers grouped together to form the nucleus of the psychiatric profession ... To some extent asylum psychiatrists ... proved the victims of their own ideology. In developing categories such as "monomania", "kleptomania", "dipsomania", "moral insanity", etc. they ... argued that many of the kinds of aberrant conduct traditionally labelled vice, sin, and crime were true mental disorders which should be treated in the asylum ... Furthermore, the senile and the demented, along with epileptics, paralytics, sufferers from tertiary syphilis, ataxias and neurological sensory-motor disorders increasingly found their way into the asylum warehouse ... In time, the asylum became a dustbin for hopeless cases...


... Animals are intellectually and emotionally present, precisely because they are physically absent from our profoundly urbanized, concrete civilization ... It never was like that. A hundred years ago, the nation swarmed with animals ... In the pre-industrial world, humans and animals lived cheek-by-jowl ... by 1850, more people lived in towns than in the countryside. And fashionable new urban developments put up "no entry" signs to animals ... Townsfolk increasingly related to animals not through work and play, agriculture and field sports, but through ideas and sentiment ... [However] With the Scientific Revolution and the Enlightenment, educated society saw it as its right, duty and pleasure to investigate the natural world from which it was now increasingly divorced ... from the time of William Harvey and the foundation of the Royal Society (1660), there was a long-term increase in the use of animals for research and teaching purposes ... even as medical scientists made their notable breakthroughs, protests grew against man's inhumanity towards animals ... Cruel sports like bull-running, bear-baiting, and cock-fighting came under attack ... disquiet about vivisection boiled over in the 1870s ... What bothered the anti-cruelty campaigners was that humans who mucked about too much with brutes became brutalized ... The birth of the veterinary college in 1791 is inseparable from radical shifts of attitudes about practical and scientific knowledge, rural and urban environments, and, above all, fundamentally changing perceptions of the boundaries between man and animals in a time of transition from agrarian to urban society ... With the Green Movement and the rise of environmental consciousness, it is time to rethink once again our relations to the animal kingdom. With public scares over factory farming and "mad cow disease", the history of veterinary medicine provides a good starting point.'


‘... Little has been written by insiders about those great public hospitals which, until recently, held in this country over 100,000 patients. Hence everyone interested in recent psychiatry and the role played in it by the psychiatric hospital will be delighted that David Clark has recorded his personal memories of a lifetime spent in running a large, public psychiatric institution. Trained at the Maudsley, Clark joined Fulbourn Hospital, on the outskirts of Cambridge, back in the 1950s; he stayed on and transformed the institution ... The Fulbourn Clark inherited was neither the utopia envisioned by [Dr WAF] Browne nor the hellhole depicted by Foucault and other critics of psychiatry ... Fulbourn was not untypical of the English county asylums set up under legislation of 1845 that required each county to provide sufficient accommodation for its pauper lunatics ... Like all the rest, it had expanded too fast, it
suffered from chronic lack of funds, resources and staff ... Physical neglect was matched by psychological indifference ... Frank, modest and written with a wry sense of humour, David Clark’s account of a career in Fulbourn is a rare document, fascinating to read and invaluable as historical evidence ... One hopes his peers will also be provoked into putting down their experiences for posterity.’


‘…It is Masson’s aim to show that the traditional entrenched telling of the “birth of psychoanalysis” is incorrect, and also to advance a new explication of the motivation prompting Freud’s change of mind. From the late 1880s, Freud grew extraordinarily interested in hysteria. He arrived at the view that the women he treated fell sick because they had suffered childhood sexual abuse, generally at their fathers’ hands. He later abandoned this seduction theory, contending that the women’s “memories” were in truth infantile incestuous fantasies; it was the libidinous desire, followed by its guilty suppression, that triggered the neurosis … Masson counterargues that the earlier seduction theory had been essentially correct – that is to say, based upon clinical evidence. Freud’s abandonment of it was not a discovery of the truth but its betrayal … Freud forsook the seduction theory, Masson contends, partly because it reflected too badly on adult males like himself, and partly because its hostile reception by the Viennese psychiatric community convinced him that the continued espousal of the theory would hamper his career … In reality, things are more complicated and Masson’s case cannot be substantiated; neither, however, should it be dismissed out of hand … It is also worth keeping in mind, against Masson, that Freud never blatantly denied the reality of the seduction or abuse of children by adult figures … it was simply the case that notions of childhood sexuality, fantasy, and repression were to attain prime significance within the structure of his theories … It would be unfortunate, however, if Masson’s work were joked or jeered off the stage. For his work, and the controversy surrounding it, have stimulated a crucial awareness of how far our received “historical” account of Freud is not history at all, but an uncritical mishmash of memoir, memory, myth of origin, and psychoanalytic doctrine, chronologically laid out in convenient legendary mode …’


Roy Porter. ‘Two cheers for psychiatry!: the social history of mental disorders in twentieth century Britain.’ In Hugh Freeman, German E Berrios (eds). *150 years of


‘One of the most exciting recent developments in the humanities has been the interaction between literary criticism and the history of medicine, mediated through studies of the body ... As the merest mention of Cheyne, Smollett, Sterne, or Diderot will show, the era in which Professor Logan’s story starts was especially alert to the relations between writing and health, both physical and mental ... Books and bodies were connected in Enlightenment thinking by influential discourses about the civilizing process ... the spread of literacy and the freedom of the press were believed by many to be crucial to the wider emancipation of mankind ... more broadly, moralists and medical thinkers alike expressed the fears ... that the civilizing process, with its sedentary occupations, its incessant traffic in opinions, and its quest for heightened sensibility might overstimulate the mind and the passions while sapping bodily strength ... The concepts that linked doctors with the literary world were “nerves” and (in [Dr Thomas] Trotter’s phrase) the “nervous temperament” ... its nineteenth-century heirs further developed the exploration of “nervousness” ... It was a malady visible in and on the body, and one of its symptoms was a compulsive tendency to talk about itself ... When talking and writing behaviour becomes a disease symptom, what happens to the authority of the author? ... That is what is explained in this book ...’


‘…Reading is, quite literally, disastrous for your health … every occupation has its maladies: housewife’s knee, athlete’s foot. Authors too have their afflictions. One of course is writer’s block … The diametrically opposite disorder is writer’s itch … the perils of writing were judged but a fleabite compared with those of reading … “Students”, thought [Robert] Burton, are commonly troubled with “gouts, catarrhs, rheums, wasting, indigestion, bad eyes, stone, and colick, crudities, oppilations, vertigo, winds, consumptions …”’ Samuel Johnson’s friend, Mrs Thrale, told the tale of a fourteen-year-old who had been bashed over the head by his Master with a dictionary ”which so affected his health that his powers of Study were strangely impaired, his Memory lost …” “On Tuesday last”, reported the Glasgow Journal on June 21st, 1742, “as an Old Man was lying in the Green reading a Book, he was attack’d by the Town Bull, who tore two of his ribs from the Back Bone, and broke his Back Bone …” The price of learning can be high indeed … Bookishness was recognised as addictive, psychopathological … On visiting Bethlem in 1786, the German novelist Sophie von la Roche … met Margaret Nicholson, George IIII’s would-be assassin, sitting reading Shakespeare … Novel-reading among fashionable young ladies was said to lead to hysteria or the vapours … Occasionally at least the
printed page has been positively therapeutic … When [in *Tristram Shandy*] Phutatorius’ *membrum virile* is frazzled by a roast chestnut which plops off his plate down into his breeches, cure is effected by application of a leaf from a new book, still damp and inky from the press …’


‘If stigma is, in Goffman’s definition, “the situation of the individual who is disqualified from full social acceptance”, historically speaking the mentally ill have borne the brunt of stigma more than most other disadvantaged groups. This paper attempts to show how many subsidiary processes have contributed to this deplorable outcome; including institutionalisation, diagnostic specificity, visualisation and legal penalisation. At the same time it points out that the attribution of mental illness has served, at some times, as a *destigmatizing* device, to obviate what were perceived as worse taints, notably, back in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, possession by the Devil. In more recent times two main circumstances have contributed to lessening the stigmatizing functions of mental illness. On the one hand, the complaint in question can be ascribed to a somatic (rather than a spiritual or psychological) source, as with the diagnosis of a neurological origin. On the other hand, the malady can be argued to be an affliction of a superior set of people. Somatisation and gentrification combined in the eighteenth century in the case of “the English malady” and in the nineteenth in neurasthenia. Thirty years ago, Ida Macalpine and Richard Hunter declared that mad King George had never been mad at all. Rather, the third Hanoverian had been suffering from variegate porphyria, an inherited metabolic condition. Proclaiming the significance of these findings, the mother-and-son psychiatric pair made much of the notion that the monarch had at long last been rescued from what Macalpine called the “taint” of madness … Mental disorder has commonly attracted aspersions of disgrace … How interesting then, that, in the twentieth century, psychiatrists – of all people! – can be still heard calling it a “taint”!...’
FOREWORDS, INTRODUCTIONS AND CHAPTERS IN FORTHCOMING TITLES


Roy Porter. ‘History of disease theory’. In Encyclopaedia Britannica.


