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is also brutalizing). The book's crucial defect, however, is that it nowhere offers a self-critical and rigorous analysis explaining why the psychiatrization of society has occurred. Is the cancer inherent in psychiatry itself, the ultimate intrusion? (The authors don't come clean as to how far they accept the Szaszian view that mental illness is a myth.) Or does the evil lie in its Circean promise to make the American Dream come true, the myth of personal optimization, where each man is an island, intire of himself? Or does it lie in the logic of modernization or capitalism, the requirement of soft-sell, victim-blaming social control? Or in an imperialist conspiracy amongst the "psy" professionals, championing consumers' rights to ever more treatment, monopolizing the soul sector? "Anti-psychiatrists" such as the authors of this book do not apparently think our doom of psychiatrization so inevitable that it is not worth challenging it (*vide* the chapter heading, 'A Resistible Rise'). But if they want to change it, or even devise a non-invasive, non-suborning psychiatry (as for instance Laing and Sedgwick have called for), it is up to them first to understand it.

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J. M. TANNER, *A history of the study of human growth*, Cambridge University Press, 1981, 8vo, pp. xi, 499, £30.00.

It is hard to visualize anyone better equipped to write a history of the study of human growth than James Mourilyan Tanner. His own contribution to the field of human auxology has been so outstanding and his influence so widespread that it seems entirely natural to find a work of great authority and scholarship, tracing the study of growth from earliest references in Ancient Greek literature to the reports of the great national growth surveys of the present day, emanating from his experienced hand.

As he explains in the preface, the purpose of the book is two-fold: first, to describe the studies of human growth that have been made and the climates of scientific and philosophical theory that gave rise to them; second, to chart the actual changes in growth and development of children which have taken place throughout recorded history. It is the skilful manner in which the author has combined these two aspects that gives this book such a broad appeal. There is no doubt that historians and human biologists will be equally satisfied with this work.

The volume is organized into fifteen chapters and contains a bibliography of over 1,300 references. There are also extensive and informative endnotes, some to give additional bibliographic or biographical details, others to elaborate on points of interest, often in a most amusing manner.

The first three chapters are remarkable in that they include a period of about sixteen hundred years (second to eighteenth centuries) during which growth was hardly investigated at all. Undaunted by the prospect of writing with so little hard data to hand, Professor Tanner incorporates the meagre references to physical growth, theories of growth, menarche, pubertal changes, health, and hygiene into a rich tapestry of biographical notes on the ancient, medieval, and renaissance writers. The splendid illustrations and immensely readable text (which is characteristic of the whole book) give a remarkable insight into the sanctity of the numbers which expressed the bodily proportions of the ideal human figure.

From this point the author leads the reader through the theories of growth promulgated by the Iatromathematical School to the first person ever to publish a proper table of growth measurements, C. F. Jampert (1754). This is one of the many "firsts" chronicled in this book, which make fascinating reading.

One of the many interesting themes to run through the text is the confusion over the changes in velocity of growth at adolescence and the failure to appreciate the so-called time-spreading effect of averaging cross-sectional data. Even Quetelet, who relied so much on growth data to develop the foundations of modern statistics, obliterated the adolescent spurt from his published tables of growth and confused many later workers.

The practice of measuring was stimulated by the need to assess the size of potential military recruits and to identify them in cases of desertion. It was not until the eighteenth century that

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growth studies were conducted for humanitarian purposes. Heights and weights of children were measured to provide evidence of poverty, malnutrition, disease, and labour abuse in an attempt to bring about social reforms. The emphasis on social comment is a great strength of this book. The author not only explains what was done and how it was done (details of the methodology are always given where these are known) but also why it was done. The growth studies are all reviewed against the background of social conditions prevailing at the time. They are described in considerable detail with vivid biographical sketches of key personalities. Professor Tanner's personal knowledge of the main instigators and innovators of modern growth studies and techniques, together with his deep personal involvement in human auxology make the final chapters particularly absorbing and informative.

In short, this scholarly work will be regarded as the definitive history of the study of human growth to the 1980s, an indispensable source of reference to human biologists, paediatricians, physical anthropologists, and medical and social historians. Authors planning to write histories of the study of the physiology of growth, many years hence when the topic has reached a suitable state of maturity, could not do better than to emulate Professor Tanner's style, penetration, and method of construction which have been used so effectively in this volume.

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PETA ALLAN and MOYA JOLLEY (editors), *Nursing, midwifery and health visiting since 1900*, London, Faber & Faber, 1982, 8vo, pp. 316, £7.95 (£4.95 paperback).

The title of this book is a misnomer. It is not about the overall development of nursing, but rather nineteen separate essays by twenty-one authors – one chapter of thirteen pages is written by three people – about various aspects of nursing. Some authors take 1900 as a starting-point, others begin earlier, most later. There has been no attempt to integrate the material, and therefore there are gaps and overlaps. For example, many essays refer *en passant* to the Committee on Nursing, but not until the end had the reader any idea of its terms of reference. Nor is the material balanced; thirty-four pages are devoted to nursing in the United States, but there is nothing on nursing in the countries of the European Community or Scandinavia.

Some authors look at the past, but they tend to use the old, well-worn, and sometimes inaccurate, secondary sources. The chapter on pre-1900 is particularly disturbing and the information on Edwin Chadwick and the Morpeth Public Health Act misleading; even the title of Chadwick's report is wrong, and the General Board of Health certainly did not "control local authorities". The old myth is repeated that most nurses were drunken and immoral until 1860, with Sarah Gamp called up as proof, regardless of the fact that Dickens wrote *Martin Chuzzlewit* in 1843 and it is a caricature of London nurses before that time. Abel Smith's work and the fact that some of the first Nightingale pupils were drawn from the existing hospital nurses and were taught by them is ignored. There was no great watershed. Although the Nightingale Fund helped to educate the public on the need for nurses to be trained, it was some years before the first pupils who survived the system made much impact on the nursing scene. Unfortunately the authors seem to have ignored recent historiography, and the chapter on the nineteenth century seems to be based on the Nightingale biography by Cook (1914) to whom some of the material now available was not accessible, and on Lucy Seymer (1932), who based her rather sentimental assessment on Cook and the reformer's own statements.

However, some essays will prove useful sources for nurses seeking information about the present day: C. M. Chapman takes the reader through the intricacies of degrees in nursing; and Professor Hayward through research studies, with masterly clarity. Margaret Green charts the way through the labyrinth of courses for nursing tutors, and Sheila Quinn sets out clearly the international aspects of nursing; particularly commendable is the essay by the late Brian Watkin on 'Nursing and the National Health Service'.

At the end, these remain disparate essays and the reader gets no overall picture of the growth of nursing in the last eighty years; how the different grades grew in terms of numbers; to what