

At the start of the book, Callahan and Wasunna emphasize the fact that, since one of them is a philosopher and the other a lawyer, they are both “outsiders” in relation to many of the debates with which the book engages, and this is a source of both strength and weakness. One of the strengths is that they have clearly made a substantial effort to master a very wide range of technical material and make it accessible to other non-experts, and this has enabled them to provide a highly-accessible introduction to issues which are both complex and important. However, they sometimes advertise their outsider status a little too loudly, and their information is not always entirely accurate. It is somewhat surprising, for example, to learn that the National Health Service was introduced in Britain in 1947 (pp. 32 and 59), and that the World Health Organisation’s famous declaration that “health is . . . a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being” was also issued in the same year (p. 90). The book is also marred—unnecessarily—by some apparent inconsistencies. On p. 31, the authors seem to suggest that in the United Kingdom, the government “runs the entire [health care] system”, before going on to observe six pages later that “no country has a purely-government run system”.

Despite these criticisms, this is undoubtedly a useful book for anyone who requires an introduction to the relationship between government and the market in the provision of health care on an international basis, and the authors have also raised some important questions of their own. Although they would like the United States to move much closer to a western European model of health care, they recognize that this is unlikely to happen in the near future, and they also think that many European countries are likely to continue to experiment with market-based reforms in the hope of controlling medical costs. However, in the long run they believe that costs can be contained only if there is a change in values—a greater emphasis on disease prevention as opposed to treatment, and a recognition that perfect health is unattainable.

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Michael Hunter (ed.), *Robert Boyle’s ‘Heads’ and ‘Inquiries’*, Robert Boyle Project Occasional Papers No. 1, London, Robert Boyle Project, Birkbeck, University of London, 2005, pp. xvi, 37 (0-9551608-0-4; 978-0-9551608-0-6).

Michael Hunter and **Harriet Knight** (eds), *Unpublished material relating to Robert Boyle’s Memoirs for the natural history of human blood*, Robert Boyle Project Occasional Papers No. 2, London, Robert Boyle Project, Birkbeck, University of London, 2005, pp. xv, 50 (0-9551608-1-2; 978-0-9551608-1-3). Copies of both books may be downloaded as PDF files from the Robert Boyle website at www.bbk.ac.uk/boyle.

Michael Hunter has not only published important studies on various aspects of Robert Boyle’s life and works, he also took on the task of cataloguing the vast and notoriously jumbled collection of the Boyle Papers and Letters housed at the Royal Society of London. Now, he and Harriet Knight, through the ongoing Robert Boyle Project, are publishing short cohesive collections of related material from the archive and other manuscript collections, which will be even more helpful to those working in Boyle studies and in the history of early science and medicine more generally.

Robert Boyle’s ‘Heads’ and ‘Inquiries’ illustrates well the usefulness of these and future collections. The papers, comprised of lists of things that Boyle desired to know either by direct observation or experimentation, have been collected from the scattered loose sheets that were incorporated into volumes 10, 18, 22, 25, 26, 27, and 36 of the Boyle Papers as well as manuscripts in the British and Bodleian libraries. In addition to his well-known interests in chemistry and mechanics, Boyle’s rich research agenda is displayed through his queries on a wide range of topics including electrical bodies, magnetic phenomena, elasticity, water, light, insects, tastes, odours, copper, and gems. Of particular interest to readers of *Medical History* would be Boyle’s list of ‘Anatomical Experiments to be try’d’ and ‘Praeliminary Topicks or Articles of Inquiry in order to The History of Diseases’. The latter, previously and erroneously attributed to John Locke, includes questions about how diseases may differ by climate and time of year, or

by a person's age, sex, diet, occupation, and constitution. The anatomical experiments concern those to be performed on the nerves and eyes.

The second collection of papers includes unpublished manuscript material for Boyle's planned second edition of *The natural history of human blood* (first edition, 1684). Although most of the material for this volume is contained in volume 18 of Boyle's papers, Hunter and Knight have brought together and put in order the material that is scattered throughout that volume. In addition, they have included a list of experiments to be done with blood in John Locke's hand that dates from the time he and Boyle collaborated on this work in the 1660s. In this collection, one can see Boyle's ongoing interest in the chemical analysis of the blood as well as investigations into its specific weight and gravity, its possible inflammability, the nature of its aerial particles, and the effects that would occur when mixed with various substances. The volume ends with a detailed table that collates the main versions of the heads for the *History of human blood* compiled by Boyle in the 1660s and 1680s, the two periods in which he was most active in this study. In this issue of *Medical History* Hunter and Knight discuss the pre- and post-publication history of Boyle's studies on blood in 'Robert Boyle's *Memoirs for the natural history of human blood* (1684): print, manuscript and the impact of Baconianism in seventeenth-century medical science'.

These first two volumes show great promise for the overall project. Hunter and Knight are restoring order to the loose sheets that Boyle used to organize his work and that were scattered among the collection of his papers after his death. The order that they have given to the material may not be Boyle's original order but it allows one to see an eclectic yet coherent and methodical programme of experimental research based on the Baconian model. The convenient access of these collections via the Boyle Project web page is a welcome contribution to the work of Boyle scholars everywhere.

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Albrecht Burkardt, *Les clients des saints: maladie et quête du miracle à travers les procès de canonisation de la première moitié du XVIII^e siècle en France*. Collection de l'Ecole Française de Rome, Rome, Ecole Française de Rome, 2004, pp. viii, 623, €66.00 (paperback 2-7283-0681-8).

This fine study of miracle cures recounted in selected canonization procedures of early seventeenth-century France is a model of its type, the French doctoral *thèse*. The work is a slightly revised version of the thesis completed by the author at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales in 1998 under the direction of Dominique Julia, but it also reflects his years of association with scholars in Berlin and, in Italy, at the Institut Européen de Florence and the Ecole Française de Rome. Thus the work is a genuinely European rather than strictly French product. These circumstances may account for a notable feature of the book: its quiet but sustained challenge to any view that religiosity of the kind investigated here can be readily explained by reference to the *longue durée* of popular "mentalities". Burkardt explicitly rejects the view that the phenomena he considers form part of an unchanging "*religion sans âge*" (p. 9). Rather, he focuses on the particularities of the period selected and declares that the subsequent history of related phenomena, even if extended only into the period 1700–1750, is marked by clear "ruptures" (p. 542) rather than by continuities.

As the title indicates, this book is focused on the experience of the miraculous, as undergone by the *miraculés* themselves or observed by witnesses. With due reserve and caveats, the author asserts that this lived experience is accessible through the unique source that forms the basis for his study: the records of canonization proceedings held (chiefly) in the Archivio di Segreto Vaticano. For his study, Burkardt chose to concentrate on France, whose history in this regard, he says, has been under-studied in comparison to that of Italy and Spain. He also decided to concentrate on the first half of the seventeenth century, which witnessed what he calls the "*première vague*" of canonizations accompanying the all-important movement of