

secure crucial feminist allies, Walsh insists that women doctors need not imbibe the conservatism of the medical profession. Instead they provide a logical base for its reformation and thus benefit all women.

Walsh's reminders of the entrenched sexism of the medical establishment and women's ability to employ professionalism on their own behalf are useful. So too is her dismissal of a 'golden age' in Colonial America. Nevertheless there remain problems with her analysis. The focus on Massachusetts, especially Boston, takes a relatively small New England elite as the national standard in feminism, anti-feminism and female physicians. While this group was undoubtedly influential, it is no longer sufficient merely to assert this; the lines of influence must be delineated precisely. The book also suffers in its cursory treatment of the period after 1900. Although Walsh suggests that the dominant themes are set by that date, the assertion is again not a satisfactory substitute for that detailed examination of the twentieth century which her title promises. A less ambitious title would have been appropriate. The remarks on the twentieth century could have been included as a closing statement.

Walsh's sympathies for these heroic pioneers also obscure questions of class and class attitudes which legitimately bother feminists who examine doctors today. Some quantitative material on the early female physicians would have helped here. We need to know a great deal more about the relationship of female physicians to the prevailing middle-class concerns of the nineteenth century, to reform not only in its 'liberal' guise but also in its less attractive variations such as nativism, eugenics and social darwinism. What is the complex relationship between sex and class on such issues? Class interests divided women. They provide one explanation for the failure of nineteenth century feminism and of a few middle-class females to reform the medical profession. A more critical analysis of the early women doctors and more attention to modern feminist critics would have helped Walsh appreciate why the cause of professional women did and could again lose popularity. Nevertheless, "*Doctors Wanted: No Women Need Apply*" should be required reading for anyone who seeks to understand either feminism or professionalization in nineteenth-century America.

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LINDA GORDON. — *Woman's Body, Woman's Right, A Social History of Birth Control in America*. Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1976. Pp. xviii, 479.

JAMES REED. — *From Private Vice to Public Virtue, The Birth Control Movement and American Society since 1830*. Toronto: Fitzhenry and Whiteside, 1978.

It might be assumed that the publication of the lengthy books on the history of birth control in the United States would exhaust the subject and effectively close the field to further research. What these volumes reveal instead is the enormous scope of the topic and the need for further study of it, connected as it is with the questions of sexuality, population, the role of women, the nature of the family, the eugenics movement and class structure. They also dramatically demonstrate the impact of ideology on treatments of the subject, as reflected in both the selection of material considered and the value judgments implied or expressed.

For Linda Gordon, "birth control and sexual activity" should be viewed "only in the context of the over-all power relations of the society, especially sex and class relations" (p. 415). Accordingly she argues that the technology of birth control should be of secondary concern to the historian, since what really mattered was the class structure and the social attitudes it helped to form; at any rate there was, she claims, little technological advance in birth control until the middle of the twentieth century.

The principal focus of the book is on the history of ideas, which she attempts — with varying degrees of success — to link to economic and social changes. Consistent with her emphasis on the importance of the social context within which birth control operated, she maintains that contraception is not inherently good, but is a tool which can be used to liberate or oppress women.

Gordon perceives three, possibly four, stages in the history of birth control. The first, the "voluntary motherhood" movement of the second half of the nineteenth century sought to achieve that objective through abstinence rather than artificial techniques. This was followed by the radical phase of the movement for contraception, approximately from 1910-1920, when birth control was linked with demands for the revolutionary transformation of society and of the status of women. The third phase followed World War I and was marked by the "professionalization" of birth control, which saw its links with the Left severed as it increasingly became a liberal reform.

During this period birth control came to be viewed primarily as a technique of social control rather than as an instrument for women's liberation. She sees the creation of the Planned Parenthood Federation of America (organized in 1938, it assumed its present name in 1942) as the culmination of these trends, and claims that "it functioned to preserve and strengthen the existing view of the success of U.S. capitalism" (p. 341). She sees this third phase as one of decline: "Planned Parenthood in fact represented the suppression of birth control as a bottom-up social movement, replacing it with a project of health, economic and social planning by experts" (p. 391). The merger of the population control movement — which Gordon sees as part of "an imperialist foreign policy" (p. 395) — with the birth control movement during the 1950s and 1960s represents, in her eyes, the logical continuation of these trends.

She tentatively suggests that birth control in the 1970s entered into a fourth phase, during which a feminist perspective was rediscovered, although she does not develop this area and the reader learns little about recent developments.

The book has several strengths. One is its insightful and extensive treatment of nineteenth-century theories of "voluntary motherhood". Another, perhaps its greatest virtue, is the avoidance of the temptation to treat the history of birth control as the progressive unfolding of an unequivocally Good Thing. Because of her recognition of the importance of the social context within which birth control operates, she is sensitive to some of its ironies and ambiguities.

Despite these strengths, the book is not a satisfactory history of the subject. The author foreswears "the poses of neutrality and relativism" (p. xviii) and the reader quickly finds that this means not only a strong sense of commitment and a distinct ideological focus, but also a willingness to make sweeping and unsubstantiated judgments. The historian should be able to understand, even if he or she does not accept, the views of those who hold contrary opinions. At several points — for example in her treatment of the views of anti-abortionists — Gordon caricatures and distorts such beliefs, and reveals a deficiency as an historian.

The reader is also struck by the limited attention given to the birth control movement since the 1930s, in contrast to the extended treatment given to the nineteenth century; so selective is the coverage that the development of anovulant contraceptives — the Pill — is entirely ignored. Her treatment of earlier periods, though fuller, is not entirely satisfactory. For one thing, she does not adequately demonstrate the transmission of ideas and attitudes from one group to another, asserting rather than showing the flow of thought from neo-Malthusians to utopian socialists to anti-bellum reformers to feminists. Moreover, her treatment of the radical phase of the birth control movement — 1910-1920 — does not succeed in placing it in the context of preceding movements and ideas, nor does she adequately account for its demise and replacement by the more elitist and manipulative movements of the post 1920 period.

Finally, one is disappointed by the fact that a book which sets out to stress the class background of birth control never gives a very clear definition of social class. On balance, although her work is provocative and at points insightful, it is simply not an adequate survey of the topic.

James Reed's *From Private Vice to Public Virtue* is markedly different from Linda Gordon's book. On one thing, however, they are in agreement: the technology of birth control was less significant than the social context within which it operated, and thus its history should be mainly concerned with "social values and human motives" (p. xiii). Their ideology, however, is quite different, and Reed makes clear his rejection of and disdain for her approach. In a comment on her book in his Bibliographic Essay he argues that Gordon "ignores or denigrates the work for birth control of liberals and conservatives" and allows "her own ideology to compensate for inadequate research" (p. 429).

Reed pays far more attention to people like Robert L. Dickinson and Clarence Gamble, and gives a lengthy and fascinating account of the development of oral contraceptives. Indeed, one advantage of the book is that it fills in our knowledge of precisely those areas where Gordon is weakest. An example of the extreme difference in approach is their treatment of Gamble, heir to the Ivory soap fortune and an important figure in the modern movement. Reed devotes fifty pages to him, while he appears in passing on only two in Gordon's book. Again, Alvin Kaufman, the Canadian birth control pioneer, is given five pages by Reed and does not appear at all in the other work. Conversely, Reed's treatment of the nineteenth century is far briefer than Gordon's and he almost entirely ignores the "voluntary motherhood" movement to which she devotes so much attention.

Reed argues that the growth of the birth control movement should be seen in the larger context of changes in sexual relations and society. He maintains that "the essential cultural prerequisites" for the success of the movement were "the secularization of society or the celebration of material well-being and pleasure exemplified by the advertising industry" and sees them as connected with "the progressive rationalization of relationships in an industrial society" (p. 62). Because this transformation was only partially accepted in the early decades of the century, the case for birth control had to be made "in mixed metaphors and twisted analogies" rather than by straight-forward arguments (p. 63).

While Reed, like Gordon, is aware of the importance of social forces leading to the acceptance of birth control, she is far more concerned than he with its social consequences. She is also far more aware of the way in which the various movements which advanced birth control — such as the eugenics movement, the woman's movement and the population control movement — had different effects on its purposes and impact.

Despite the publisher's claim that Reed's work is "comprehensive" and "definitive," it is neither. As Reed admits, he has focused "on those individuals who at any given time represented innovation or change in the birth control movement" (p. ix) and the book thus has a markedly episodic character. It is nevertheless more nearly complete than Gordon's work and the more useful of the two for students of the field, particularly those interested in the more recent period. The usefulness of his book is further strengthened by a good bibliographic essay; unfortunately Gordon's book does not have a bibliography.

While both of these books add to our knowledge of the subject, they do not wholly supercede earlier works, in particular David Kennedy's *Birth Control In America, The Career of Margaret Sanger*, which won the Bancroft Prize in 1971. Nor should these books end further work in the field, since enormous masses of documentary material remain to be explored, and as Reed himself admits, both the internal history of Planned Parenthood and the history of local groups have yet to be written. Moreover, a number of questions about the nineteenth century need more thorough analysis. These two books provide help for those interested in the topic, but they hardly exhaust it.

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JEAN-PIERRE HARDY et DAVID-THIERY RUDDÉL. — *Les Apprentis artisans à Québec, 1660-1815*. Montréal, Les Presses de l'Université du Québec, 1977. Pp. xviii, 220.

Hardy and Ruddel's work is made up of two studies on apprentice-artisans. As they note in their introduction the period 1760-1793 is sketched out; the periods considered in depth are 1660-1760 and 1793-1815. Their essays are published as part of the growing *Collection histoire des travailleurs québécois* directed by Stanley-Bréhaut Ryerson of UQUAM.

The first page, even the first line of the introduction establishes the ideological basis of their inquiry: many chroniclers and historians have had an elitist concept of history. They believe that human history was produced not merely by great men but others as well who fulfilled humbler but nonetheless as useful and admirable tasks. Hardy and Ruddel set themselves the task of describing those "who worked in the shadows" (p. 3).

The two parts of the work use basically the same frame: three chapters in each section devoted to the evolution of apprenticeship, the conditions of work and the organisation of work. In the second part of their work, the third chapter is devoted to the social characteristics of the apprentices, such as ethnicity, religion and education.

The 624 apprenticeships of the French Régime were all analysed and divided into six large occupations: woodworking, metal, leather, clothing, foodstuff and miscellaneous. The average age, we are told, for 63.1% was between 14 and 18 with ten years being the youngest and twenty five the oldest. Three years was the most common duration and in 49.2% of the cases, the apprentices were paid a salary while in 8.6% the masters were given a stipend. The average workday was between 13½ and 14½ hours. The salaries varied between 35 to 50 *livres per annum*, and often the apprentices received room and board and sometimes their laundry was done.