NEW BIBLIOGRAPHY ON “WOMEN AND MEDICINE”
CONTRIBUTED BY MONICA GREEN

This bibliography on Women and Medicine builds on earlier contributions to MFN: no. 10 (Fall 1990), pp. 23-24; no. 11 (Spring 1991), pp. 25-26; no. 13 (Spring 1992), pp. 32-34; no. 15 (Spring 1993), pp. 42-43; and no. 19 (Spring 1995), pp. 39-42.


Green, Monica. “Estraendo Trota dal ‘Trotula: Ricerche su testi medievali di medicina salernitana” (trans. Valeria Gibertoni & Pina Boggi Cavallo), Rassegna Storica Salernitana 24 (1995), 31-53. Argues that the central text of the so-called Trotula ensemble, the De curis mulierum (“On Treatments for Women”), does in fact derive from the historic Salernitan woman healer, Trota. This article is a summary of more fully-documented studies that will be coming out (in English) later this year.


Harding, Wendy. “Medieval Women’s Unwritten Discourse on Motherhood: A Reading of Two Fifteenth-Century Texts,” Women’s Studies 21, no. 2 (1992), 197-209. Examines the ways in which Margaret Paston and Margery Kempe discuss—or don’t discuss—motherhood.


Jansen-Sieben, Ria. “De vrouw in de medische Literatur,” Acta Belgica Historiae
Medicinae 7, no. 4 (Dec. 1994), 218-229. Presents excerpts from several later medieval Dutch texts on women’s medicine and generation.


Kruse, Britta-Juliane. Verborgene Heilkünste: Geschichte der Frauenmedizin im Spätmittelalter, Quellen und Forschungen zur Literatur- und Kulturgeschichte, 5 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1996). A revision of Kruse’s 1994 Berlin, Freie-Universität dissertation. In the first half of the volume, Kruse surveys German gynecological literature generally, offering suggestions about the importance of these texts for the history of late medieval medical practice, sexuality, and scientific theory. In the second half, Kruse transcribes several brief, hitherto unpublished German gynecological texts and recipe collections.


Rawcliffe, Carole. Medicine and Society in Later Medieval England (Phoenix Mill: Alan Sutton, 1995). This handsomely produced survey for the general reader includes two chapters on women as patients and practitioners, though given its richness this book should be read in its entirety. The 64 B&W illustrations and 20 color plates are aptly chosen, and excellent use is made of literary as well as historical sources.

Schilt, Lys Dorin Ritzmann. Hildegarde von Bingen: Pflanzliche Heilmittel mit gynäkologisch-geburtshilflicher Indikation, Zürcher medizingeschichtliche
Abhandlungen, 259 (Zurich: Juris Druck & Verlag Dietikon, 1994). An examination in modern botanical/chemical terms of the physiological properties of 25 plants which Hildegard (1098-1179) recommended for gynecological and obstetrical conditions.


Weston, L. M. C. "Women’s Medicine, Women’s Magic: The Old English Metrical Childbirth Charms," Modern Philology 92.3 (1995), 279-93. Argues that three Anglo-Saxon charms for assisting, respectively, pregnancy, childbirth and lactation show signs of coming directly from women’s oral tradition.

BOOK REVIEWS


The premise of this collection is that much about masculinity is becoming visible only in the wake of feminist studies. The claim of feminism that women’s cultural positioning has differed from men’s in order to consolidate men’s authority has undone the universalizing tendency of traditional histories and revealed the effortful construction of what had seemed a natural masculine superiority. The authors of this collection turn from the feminist position to focus on “medieval masculinities” with fruitful results. The volume is more engaged in documenting men’s plight than in theorizing masculinity’s psycho-social construction. And with the exception of a couple of paragraphs, masculinity is heterosexual for this collection. The two tendencies may be related, in that gay theory is currently the groundbreaking site for analyses of masculinity that are derived from psychoanalytic traditions. Medieval Masculinities draws on the work of David Cilmore, Clifford Geertz, R. W. Connell, and Thomas Laqueur rather than on work of postfreudians and gay theorists. Most of the resulting essays succeed in documenting specific practices around normative masculinity in substantial and fascinating detail.

Four essays emphasize that heavy demands are placed on men in consequence of their cultural dominance. Vern Bullough’s “On Being a Male in the Middle Ages” reviews anatomical and physiological writing that held men responsible for the woman’s orgasm, which was believed to be necessary for conception, and for the sex of offspring, since male progeny were believed to indicate more efficacious sperm than female ones. Two essays on marriage practices, Susan Mosher Stuard’s “Burdens of Matrimony: Husbanding and Gender in Medieval Italy” and Stanley Chojnacki’s “Subaltern Patriarchs: Patrician Bachelors in Renaissance Venice,” reveal the constraints that poem