

Book Reviews

erosion of Catholic opposition made politicians less reluctant to contemplate decriminalizing contraception. This was accomplished in the 1969 revision of the Criminal Code but, the book convincingly argues, it did not end state interference in the bedrooms of the nation. Abortion remains a contentious issue and the provision of contraceptives has more to do with the male-dominated interests of government and business than with meeting women's needs.

The authors make no claim to be comprehensive. The bulk of their material relates to the interwar years and concerns particular regions of the country. An in-depth study remains to be written and this useful survey, which says little about the shifts in family structure that the demographic changes entailed, should prompt further enquiry.

Barbara Brookes
University of Otago

HILARY BOURDILLON, *Women as healers: a history of women and medicine*, Women in History, Cambridge University Press, 1988, 8vo, pp. 48, illus., £3.50, (paperback).

Intended for use in schools, this copiously illustrated (if carelessly proof-read) book discusses women in medicine from Ancient Egypt to the present in 48 pages, including suggestions for projects and further reading, without pretending to analyse the subtler issues. Hilary Bourdillon must be praised for avoiding the obvious pitfalls inherent in the subject. Instead of the tunnel vision which sees the female contribution to medicine as defined by their relationship to formal medical structures, there is an emphasis on the importance of home care and the role of women as community healers, although more could have been made of women's philanthropic activity and their involvement in the world of entrepreneurial, rather than folk, "alternative medicine". Her description of Hannah Wolley as "upper-class" could be argued with, literacy not being coterminous with elevated social status, as well as her statement that the involvement of upper-class women in health care had declined by the eighteenth century. Incidentally, "Lady Montagu" is not the correct way of referring to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu! The treatment of witchcraft is commendably moderate, avoiding the excesses often perpetrated when dealing with this subject. This is a useful if elementary introduction to the female contribution to health care.

Lesley Hall
Wellcome Institute

LAWRENCE K. ALTMAN, *Who goes first? The story of self-experimentation in medicine*, Wellingborough, Northants, Equation, 1988, 8vo, pp. x, 430, £8.99 (paperback).

Lawrence Altman thinks that most doctors are unjustly dubious about the value of self-experimentation. He aims to rectify this impression by cataloguing the numerous contributions such experiments have made to medicine. It is dramatic stuff. Werner Forssmann wrote himself into the history books by pushing a catheter into his own heart (and struggling with a friend who feared for his safety in the process). Frederick Prescott and Scott Smith paralysed themselves with curare, and lay helpless and frightened, unable even to blink. Thomas Brittingham transfused leukaemia cells into himself—despite the danger that the disease might be transmissible—at a time when no cure existed for the disease.

There is more than a hint of hagiography here. While self-experimenters are elevated to medical sainthood, those who fail to come up to the standard are cast out of the elect. Altman is keen to denounce Walter Reed, the man who—contrary to medical mythology—did not expose himself to infection with yellow fever. Reed, with two other members of the US Yellow Fever Commission sent to Cuba, pledged to allow themselves to be bitten by mosquitoes to see if they carried yellow fever. Only Reed reneged, mysteriously leaving for the States after making his promise. One of the others, Jesse Lazear, died after succumbing to the fever.

In his foreword, Lewis Thomas sees self-experimenters as models for future generations of doctors. The book, he suggests, should be required reading for all medical students. This paperback edition may indicate that some publishers hope that Thomas's wish will come true; some medical ethicists may not.

David Cantor
ARC Epidemiology Research Unit, University of Manchester

Guest host Philippa Tolley interviews Barbara Brookes, Professor of History at the University of Otago, about her new book *A History of New Zealand Women*. Comments. Post comment. See All. More from RNZ: Saturday Morning. Photographer Bruce Connew: NZ's colonial memorials added 1 week ago. The 'singing vegan': animal welfare activist Sandra Kyle added 1 week ago. Barbara Brookes (born 1955) is a New Zealand historian and academic.[1][2] She specializes in women's history and medical history. Brookes completed a bachelor's degree at the University of Otago in 1976, then won scholarships to the women's college Bryn Mawr College in Pennsylvania, where she completed a master's degree (1978) and a doctorate (1982).[1][3] Her PhD thesis topic was abortion in England during the inter-war period.[3]. Brookes was offered a post-doctoral scholarship at Otago and a permanent position in the Department of History in 1983. In 1986 Brookes and he Barbara Brookes is Professor of History at the University of Otago whose research, writing and teaching have contributed significantly to new perspectives on women's history. Her first book, from her PhD thesis undertaken at Bryn Mawr College, *Abortion in England, 1900-1967*, (1988, reissued by Routledge in 2013) explored the issue of illegal abortion from the perspective of women, the legal and the medical professions, and the movement towards reform of the law. Since her publication, Barbara has published extensively; both internationally and in New Zealand, particularly on areas where the hi University of Otago. ©Jonathan Pfeiffer / Wikimedia.org. Comparison winner. The university has its own halls of residence available for students. These can provide an exciting social life, and sometimes work out cheaper than private accommodation. 4.Has a museum. University of California, Santa Barbara. University of Otago. Source: university's official website, 2021. 5.campus size.