

Book Reviews

A LIFE OF SIR FRANCIS GALTON: FROM AFRICAN EXPLORATION TO THE BIRTH OF EUGENICS

By Nicholas Wright Gillham. 416 pp., illustrated.

New York, Oxford University Press, 2001. \$35.

ISBN 0-19-514365-5.

BETWEEN 1914 and 1930, Karl Pearson devoted four volumes to a biography of his mentor, Francis Galton. The result was an unwieldy and deferential look at the man known as the father of eugenics. Duke University geneticist Nicholas Wright Gillham has set out to remedy Pearson's shortcomings, arguing that a new biography of the British polymath is warranted in the light of the "eugenic considerations" raised by "rapid advances in modern human genetics."

Gillham begins by reminding us that Galton was a cousin of Charles Darwin, the giant of evolutionary theory, and he traces the shared "enviable pedigree" of the two cousins. Gillham's emphasis suggests that family background may explain some of Galton's achievements; he is linked, with Darwin, to the "scientific imagination" of their bloodline. In fact, Galton's most critical inheritance was not a scientific mindset, but a financial bequest left by his merchant father. That bounty allowed him to pursue a life of travel, intellectual speculation, and abundant leisure.

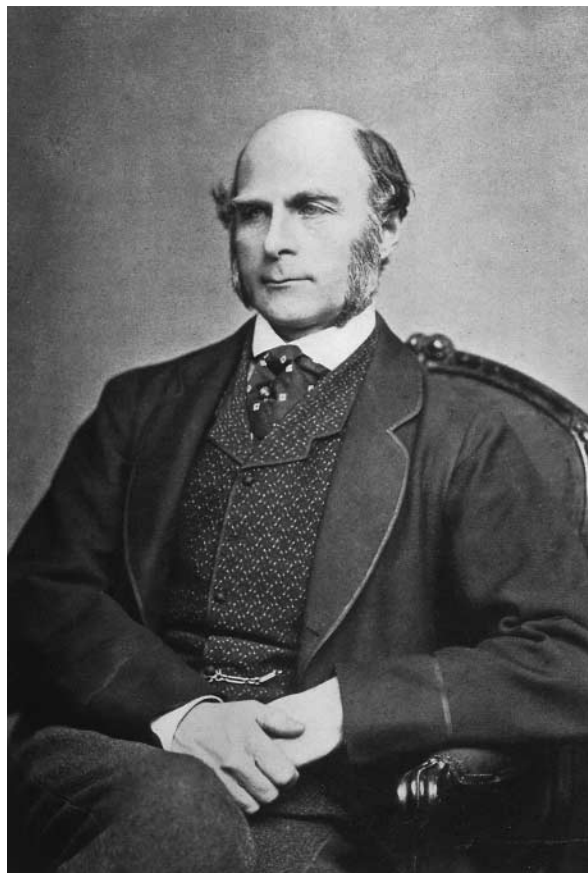
Though less celebrated than his kinsman Darwin, Galton is known for his work in eugenics, the "science of good breeding." Eugenics is widely recalled for the ideological justification it provided for the Nazi Holocaust. Well aware of this toxic association, Gillham sets out to reexamine Galton's other extensive accomplishments. For two sections of the book he proceeds chronologically, first providing a sketch of Galton's ancestry and education. Despite pressure to emulate his grandfather in the study of medicine, Galton left that field to study mathematics at Cambridge University. Struggling in pursuit of honors, he had his first "mental breakdown" and had to settle for the ordinary degree. Galton's early travels are described in several chapters on African expeditions. We read of his contempt toward Africans, while learning how many fleabites he endured on one trip and how many bush ticks bit him on another. There is an excess of detail in these chapters that does not always advance the narrative or give the reader important new insight into how Galton's experiences during his youth influenced his subsequent career.

In the third and largest part of the book, Gillham adopts a more satisfying thematic approach of surveying Galton's major work without rehearsing the minutiae of his daily life. Galton was an early advocate of the use of fingerprints as unique personal identifiers. His statistical analysis of biologic events generated the field of biometry. He systematized the use of pedigrees and twin studies in an attempt to trace hereditary traits. His contributions to geography, weather forecasting, and forensic science provide evidence of his wide-ranging talents. This section provides an accessible ref-

erence to Galton's most important work and will remind the reader of the complex turns his interests took, driven by a fertile curiosity.

The final two chapters cover the 10 years before Galton's death and begin to explain his contribution to the eventual trajectory of the eugenics movement. A short time before he died, Galton wrote a utopian novel entitled *Kantsaywhere*, portraying a fictional society that classified people according to their hereditary worth. The Eugenic College in *Kantsaywhere* granted diplomas for the genetically gifted, who were also rewarded with financial incentives for early and regular procreation. Those considered to be genetic failures were segregated into labor colonies, where celibacy was mandatory; childbirth among the "unfit" was a crime. Although the novel was never published, Gillham declares that *Kantsaywhere* was a clear expression of what Galton "hoped eugenics would achieve."

Yet in the biography's concluding chapter, Gillham claims that Galton would have been "horrified" to see Nazi "eugenic" policies such as coercive sterilization or murder carried out in his name, for "he was not a mean or vindictive man." He believes that those practices led to a "total revulsion against eugenics" after World War II. But Gillham



Sir Francis Galton, 1822–1911.

Courtesy of the Mary Evans Picture Library.

fails to explain why this supposed “revulsion” toward eugenics had no effect on eugenically tinged immigration restrictions or other laws that kept “races” biologically separate and that survived in the United States until the 1960s. Nor does he explain how sterilization of the “unfit,” as foreshadowed in Galton’s fanciful novel, continued in some states until 1979. The horrors of the Holocaust may have led to a rejection of Nazism, but eugenics was both too complex and too hardy an ideology to have disappeared as quickly as Gillham asserts. Just as important, it was precisely the kind of class- and race-based bigotry embodied by Galton that made the worst forms of eugenics so malignant in the United States as well as in Nazi Germany.

Early in his book, Gillham tells us that Galton’s grandfather had two illegitimate children; they found no place in the “enviable” family pedigree. During one of his voyages, Galton himself dallied with a prostitute, contracting a disease that may have led to his own sterility. He twice suffered “nervous breakdowns” related to stress. In the generation after Galton’s death, people with backgrounds like his who did not travel first-class were rejected at Ellis Island as unfit immigrants. If they succeeded in entering the United States, they were prohibited by law from marrying in many states, and their “moral degeneracy” and family history of illegitimacy could be taken as signs of hereditary defect in order to justify surgical sterilization.

Eugenics clearly began with Galton, but only one version of it ended with the Nazis. By obscuring this fact, Gillham fails to make good on his implied promise to situate Galton’s work as a point of reference for modern human genetics.

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FATHER HUNGER: EXPLORATIONS WITH ADULTS AND CHILDREN

By James M. Herzog. 324 pp., illustrated.
Hillsdale, N.J., Analytic Press, 2001. \$49.95.
ISBN 0-88163-259-7.

RIVETING page turners are more the exception than the rule in psychoanalytic explorations, and James Herzog has written a fine one in his *Father Hunger*. Right from the preface, we know that this will be a passionate and revelatory book about the “other” crucial human intimate in the child’s universe, as seen through the eye, ear, mind, and heart of an able clinician. He sets himself the following task: “to accompany, even in terror; to refuse to extract myself, even at a cost; and to try to help so that a person who requests my assistance, and with whom I have forged an alliance, need not do it alone.” Such forceful language, it seems, is well suited to the rigorous exploration of the complex internal domain of children’s longings and appetites for their fathers.

Dr. Herzog knows well that he will have to make his case regarding the universal relevance of the father to healthy

child development from a variety of perspectives. Like a disciplined surveyor suspicious of his measurements, he skillfully fixes his, and subsequently our, understanding of father hunger in time and space from several vantage points: the analytic couch and environs, the medical consulting room (with 103 men who fathered premature infants), the community consulting room (where 40 teenage boys spent 30 weeks participating in small-group discussions of sexuality and intimacy), and the wider perspective of clinical-research settings.

Comfortable and literate in these diverse cultures, the author argues a series of theses throughout the book: all children need their fathers, a thesis that is supported by the majority of clinical evidence (despite the relative frequency with which that need remains unmet); fathers are indispensable in helping children manage their separation from their mothers and their autonomy, as well as their aggressive drives and fantasies; much can be learned about father-child transactions through the study of trauma and repair, play, and intrapsychic development; fatherhood is inexorably related to the conjugal relationship; the meaning of prospective fatherhood is assimilated into the individual man’s life history to a greater degree than the meaning of prospective motherhood is for individual women; and finally — Herzog’s most creative and provocative contribution — all men (and boys) need to participate in relationships with a male parent who is himself loved by a female parent.

The author actively engages the reader’s curiosity and knowledge base with the authenticity and compassion of his own clinical work. One is struck and moved from the outset by the high, nonjudgmental regard in which Herzog holds his coinvestigating adult and child patients and their families. By implication and example, he reiterates that the way one is as an analyst is at least as important as what one does as an analyst. I was reminded frequently of Jeree Pawl’s admonition to “do unto others as you would have others do unto others.” Were the analytic presence considered in terms of optimal dosage, Herzog’s touch could serve as a useful standard.

In his use of an analytic vocabulary, Herzog is respectful of his broader readership, relying only rarely on guild language. Even then, as in his discussion of the “caretaking line of development in boys and men,” he widens the clinical application of the theoretical concept so that it may be easily understood and integrated into the next level of discussion. His ideas, in fact, seem to him to require more than one language in order to be understood, and he uses Romance languages and poetic references throughout the book to freshen the eye, mind, and palate. This touch is aesthetically pleasing without diminishing the warmth, humor, and accessibility of Dr. Herzog’s narrative. He is equally circumspect in his use of clinical concepts and new language. Much analytic writing may be justly criticized for relying on an idiosyncratic use of language, but Herzog is wisely sparing in his dependence on esoterica.

Corroboration of Herzog’s theses is interwoven with other contemporary scholarship on fatherhood and child development. In Chapter 15 (“Expectant Fatherhood”), he organizes his observations of paternal behavior into various stages, from getting ready through conception, the turn toward father and fathering, and delivery. The mosaic of mood and behavioral changes, in which fantasies are nurtured and

aggression is avoided, was recently validated in two Canadian investigations that tracked hormonal changes in men during the period when they are anticipating fatherhood. An increase in estrogen and prolactin levels and a reduction in the level of circulating testosterone may be the biologic mediators of the psychological experience Herzog describes.

Further corroboration of his clinical observations regarding father hunger in boys whose parents are divorcing is also accumulating in the prospective Collaborative Divorce Project in Connecticut that is investigating developmental sequelae in 160 families with divorcing parents and children under six years of age. The project's methodology calls for multiple empirical investigations of the children and their families, including play interviews with experienced clinicians to inquire into the child's experience of and imaginings about divorce. Sleep difficulties and troubled dreams are frequently reported in the preschool children as their time with their father diminishes.

One closes this book reluctantly, feeling inspired, challenged, and enriched by its unflinching exploration of the domain of the father's relationship with his child in the presence of the mother. We are inspired to listen more carefully to our patients, challenged to risk more of ourselves on their behalf in order to understand this unique appetite, and enriched by the time spent with this creative clinician who understands the internal experiences of children and the relationships that humanize them so incredibly well.

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A LIFE IN MEDICINE: A LITERARY ANTHOLOGY

Edited by Robert Coles and Randy Testa, with Joseph O'Donnell, Penny Armstrong, and M. Brownell Anderson. 329 pp.
New York, The New Press, 2002. \$27.95.
ISBN 1-56584-729-6.

IN their introduction to this anthology of short literary works showing facets of life in medical care, Coles and Testa reflect fears that our medical schools are still not adequately preparing students to "understand and connect [with patients in] heart, mind, and soul." The editors and their three collaborators assembled the anthology with the hope that it might offer readers in the health care professions a fresh perspective on their responses to those they care for each day.

The 53 selections are grouped according to four attributes: altruism, knowledge, skill, and duty. These attributes have been specified by the Medical School Objectives Project of the Association of American Medical Colleges as those needed by medical graduates when they enter the world of medicine. Some of the selections are essays; some are poems; and some are very short stories. Some of the authors are widely known — Anton Chekhov, Walt Whitman, and William Carlos Williams, for example. Some are known mainly within medicine — Eric J. Cassell, Lewis Thomas, John

Stone, and Abraham Verghese. Some are probably known only to their immediate colleagues. The short introduction to each selection defines its place in literature and tells us something about its author.

The title of the book, *A Life in Medicine*, suggests that it is a biography or autobiography. It would have been more informatively cast as *Lives in and around Medicine*. The voices from those lives differ widely in their identities. Yes, some are the voices of persons directly involved in medicine: a medical student, a nurse, a physician, a resident. Others are the voices of persons whose lives touch medicine in some way: a patient, the family of a patient, a social observer. All these voices are relevant to medicine and how it is practiced. Most of the selections reflect specific episodes: clinical errors, cultural clashes, or interior reflections on clinical encounters. Several of the essays — notably those by Cassell and Thomas — are detached analyses of practice in contemporary medicine, but they do serve to support Coles's and Testa's central thesis.

Will the works collected here do what the editors hope they will? Will they show health care workers how to see, or see more clearly, the distress, the suffering, and the anguish of patients and their families, even of Ingelfinger's "worried well"? Would other choices have been better? The English-language literature relevant to the editors' aims is enormous. Every reader of this anthology is likely to think of alternatives that might be more effective. For a terse and powerful description of pain I can think of no more relevant work than Emily Dickinson's 1862 poem that opens, "Pain — has an Element of Blank —." And there is Fanny Burney's wrenching account of undergoing breast surgery without anesthesia in an 1811 letter to her sister. But Coles's and Testa's choices do serve their aim.

Some physicians, even if they left medical school poorly educated in seeing patients as persons, come to see the importance of this skill. They will certainly be one of the audiences for this anthology. The other audience members may be readers not working in health care fields but becoming involved in any of them as patients or members of patients' families. For them, the book might simply echo their views of what goes on in doctors' offices and hospitals. Its more valuable effect might be to empower them to ask for, and expect to receive, what seems missing but sorely needed in clinical engagements. A piece such as Anne Fadiman's account of a collision between a Laotian Hmong family and California clinicians is a good example of what may become an increasingly frequent problem in multiethnic America. The "outs" may see in this anthology support for their desire to get better care from the "ins." Such expectations of those who do not feel understood in our health care system can be unnerving to some clinicians who have left medical training with an all-too-common sense of omniscience about all matters medical. This is an aspect of medical education that should change. Patients and their families now search the Internet for clearer answers to their medical questions and what might be done about their concerns. They read accurate medical reporting in the *New York Times*, *Newsweek*, and other popular publications. Then they raise questions: "Doctor, what do you think about such-and-such for my condition?" I do not know whether Coles and Testa hoped that this anthology would empower those who have thought of raising such questions, but I think it might.

Will this anthology and the many persons in and out of medicine who agree with its central thesis be able to influence our medical schools to prepare their graduates more effectively to see patients as persons? I doubt it. Many schools, perhaps most, are now medical universities: assemblies of research institutes and financially profitable units engrossed in producing technically skillful subspecialists, and not schools focused mainly on training students in the skills central to the practice of medicine, whatever their final choice of specialty. Prestige, reputation, and power hinge on eminence in research and on how many dollars can be squeezed out of the National Institutes of Health or from industrial collaborations, not on the skills of their graduates in patient-physician relations.

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NOTICES

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2003 INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE MEDITERRANEAN DIET: CELEBRATING THE PYRAMID'S 10TH ANNIVERSARY

The conference, subtitled "Med-Style Eating for the 21st Century," will be held in Boston, Jan. 12-14. It is jointly presented by Oldways Preservation & Exchange Trust and Harvard School of Public Health.

Contact Oldways Preservation & Exchange Trust, 266 Beacon St., Boston, MA 02116; or see <http://www.oldwayspt.org>; or call (617) 421-5500.

AMERICAN HEADACHE SOCIETY

The following meetings will be held: "Scottsdale Headache Symposium" (Scottsdale, Ariz., Nov. 15-17) and "Headache Now 2003!" (Cancun, Mexico, Jan. 17-19).

Contact American Headache Society, 19 Mantua Rd., Mount Royal, NJ 08061; or call (856) 423-0043; or fax (856) 423-0082.

3RD WORLD CONGRESS ON HEART DISEASE: NEW TRENDS IN RESEARCH, DIAGNOSIS, AND TREATMENT

The congress will be held in Washington, D.C., July 12-15. Deadline for submission of abstracts is Feb. 28.

Contact Dr. Asher Kimchi, International Academy of Cardiology, P.O. Box 17659, Beverly Hills, CA 90209; or call (310) 657-8777; or fax (310) 275-8922; or e-mail klimedco@ucla.edu; or see <http://www.cardiologyonline.com>.

COMPUTER TRAINING FOR PHYSICIANS

The three-day course will be held on weekends in San Diego, Calif., through December. It is sponsored by the University of California, San Diego.

Contact Office of CME, University of California, San Diego, 9500 Gilman Dr. #0617, La Jolla, CA 92093-0617; or call (888) 229-6263 (national) or (858) 534-3940 (California); or e-mail ocme@ucsd.edu; or see <http://cme.ucsd.edu>; or fax (858) 534-7672.

STEM CELL TRANSPLANTATION IN CHILDREN: CURRENT RESULTS AND CONTROVERSIES

The meeting will be held in Hilton Head Island, S.C., March 6-8.
Contact Dr. Michael E. Trigg, Division of Blood and Bone Marrow Transplantation, Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children, P.O. Box 269, Wilmington, DE 19899; or call (302) 651-5565; or fax (302) 651-5575; or e-mail mtrigg@nemours.org.

ALTON D. BRASHEAR POSTGRADUATE COURSE IN HEAD AND NECK ANATOMY

The course will be offered in Richmond, Va., March 10-14.
Contact Dr. Hugo R. Seibel, Sanger Hall, Room 1-002, Virginia Commonwealth University, School of Medicine, Department of Anatomy and Neurobiology, P.O. Box 980709, Richmond, VA 23298-0709; or call (804) 828-9623; or fax (804) 828-9477.

MAYO SCHOOL OF CONTINUING MEDICAL EDUCATION

The following meetings will be held in Rochester, Minn., unless otherwise indicated: "Mayo Clinic Ob/Gyn Clinical Reviews" (Nov. 14 and 15); "Managing Care in Rural Settings" (Nov. 21 and 22); "Mayo Foundation Gastroenterology and Hepatology 2003" (Grand Bahama Island, Feb. 3-7); "Mayo Clinic Hormone Replacement Therapy" (San Diego, Calif., Feb. 13-15); and "Clinical Autonomic Quantitation Workshop" (March 15 and 16).

Contact Mayo School of CME, 200 First St. SW, Rochester, MN 55905; or call (800) 323-2688 (national) or (507) 284-2509 (Minnesota); or fax (507) 284-0532; or e-mail cme@mayo.edu; or see <http://www.mayo.edu>.

JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

The following courses will be offered in Baltimore, unless otherwise indicated: "13th Annual Neurology for the Primary Practitioner" (Dec. 7); "20th Annual Medical and Surgical Gastroenterology: A Multidisciplinary Approach" (Vail, Colo., Feb. 3-7); and "10th Current Concepts in Thyroid Disease: Horizons in Thyroidology" (May 9).

Contact Office of CME, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, Turner 20, 720 Rutland Ave., Baltimore, MD 21205-2195; or call (410) 955-2959; or e-mail cmenet@jhmi.edu; or fax (410) 955-0807; or see <http://www.med.jhu.edu/cme>.

DIET, HEALTH, AGING, AND LONGEVITY: GOOD FAT, BAD FAT

The "2003 Symposium on Biomedical Gerontology" will be held in Tempe, Ariz., Feb. 5-7.

Contact Kronos Longevity Research Institute, 4455 E. Camelback Rd., #B-135, Phoenix, AZ 85018; or call (602) 778-7499.

2002 RESEARCH CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH INTEGRITY

The conference will be held in Potomac, Md., Nov. 16-18. It is jointly sponsored by the Office of Research Integrity of the Department of Health and Human Services, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the Association of American Medical Colleges, the National Institutes of Health, and the National Science Foundation.

Contact Dr. Mary D. Scheetz, Office of Research Integrity, 5515 Security Ln., Suite 700, Rockville, MD 20852; or call (301) 443-5300; or e-mail mscheetz@osophs.dhhs.gov; or see <http://ori.hhs.gov>.

CLEVELAND CLINIC FLORIDA

The following meetings will be held in Naples, Fla.: "Cleveland Clinic Geriatrics Update 2003: Contemporary Geriatrics for the Practicing Physician" (Jan. 18 and 19) and "The Fifth Biannual Difficult Problems in Hand Surgery Course" (May 2 and 3).

Contact Cleveland Clinic, 6101 Pine Ridge Rd., Naples, FL 34119; or call (877) 675-7223, ext. 4180 (national) or (239) 348-4180 (Florida); or fax (239) 348-4287; or e-mail antonut@ccf.org.