DIETER KUNTZ and SUSAN BACHRACH (eds.), *Deadly Medicine: Creating the Master Race*, exhibition catalogue, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 240 pp., 270 illus. ISBN 0 8078 2916 1. $45.00 (hardcover)

*Deadly Medicine* was conceived as a catalogue to an exhibition of the same name, held at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington from 2004 to 2006. It tells the story of German medicine, focusing on the dissemination and radicalization of ideas of racial hygiene. This is a legitimate and fruitful perspective because biological interpretations of the social and the doctrine of biologically defined inequality were the main elements of the Nazis’ racist health and social policies. However, this approach means that other ideas which also exerted a considerable influence on the conception of Nazi health policy take a back seat, such as the attempt to establish a ‘new German art of healing’ (Neue Deutsche Heilkunde) based on alternative rather than scientific medicine. Similarly, the Deutsche Arbeitsfront’s attempts to push industrial medicine in a direction which combined physiological and psychological approaches to work with an exaggerated ideology of achievement are also somewhat overshadowed. In recompense, however, the contribution made by anthropologists, geneticists, and medical doctors to the drawing up and implementation of Nazi race and social policy emerge all the more clearly, as do the connections between the Nazi’s scientifically based racism and the murder of the European Jews. This is no mean achievement of this in many respects excellent catalogue.

The curators of the exhibition have resisted the temptation to simplify the history of racial hygiene by presenting it as part of a German Sonderweg. They describe the increasingly significant ideas of racial hygiene as belonging to an international movement which saw itself as the cutting edge of contemporary science, and found many areas of common concern with other disciplines. Against this background peculiarities of the German situation stand out, such as the central significance of the First World War for the radicalization of eugenic ideas.

Three of the seven essays (Sheila Faith Weiss, ‘German Eugenics 1890–1933’; Daniel J. Kevles, ‘International Eugenics’; and Benoit Massin, ‘The “Science of Race”’) tell the story of the establishment of
racial hygiene as the leading human science from a history of ideas and history of science perspective. Three further essays (Gisela Bock, ‘Nazi Sterilization and Reproductive Policies’; Michael Burleigh, ‘Nazi “Euthanasia” Programs’; and Henry Friedlander, ‘From “Euthanasia” to the “Final Solution”’) stress the cooperation of medical doctors in mass crimes committed by the Nazis. The concluding essay by the geneticist Benno Müller-Hill, ‘Reflections of a German Scientist’, spans the period from the close cooperation of leading geneticists with the Nazis in power to the culture of remembrance of the post-war period, in which acknowledgement of this situation was largely repressed until the 1980s.

The essays in this catalogue are by established specialists, and are mostly based on previously published monographs. Experts will find little in it that is new, but the essays provide concise summaries of the state of research which will be useful in adult education as much as for academic teaching. Only the contribution by Michael Burleigh does not quite match the high standard of the others. According to the estimates of Werner Faulstich, the total number of euthanasia victims can be stated more precisely than ‘more than 200,000’ (p. 153). The claim that the murder of patients by mass gassing was halted in the summer of 1941 because, among other things, 70,000 deaths fulfilled the targets of those responsible for T-4 (p. 150) has been relegated to the realm of myth at least since the publication of the Goebbels’ diaries. First, the diary entry of 31 January 1941 suggests that the programme of planned murders was much more extensive; and secondly, with the aid among other things of the diary entries of August 1941, it is possible to reconstruct a chain of command which makes a causal connection between the stopping of T-4 and the sermons of the bishop of Münster, August Graf von Galen, seem conclusive. It is also questionable whether Burleigh was well advised to concentrate his survey on the centralized murders of patients for the T-4 programme, because this means that his essay deals only in pass-

1 Faulstich’s estimate, which for the first time provides reliable information about death rates during the phase of decentralized euthanasia, puts the total number of German euthanasia victims at c.212,000 plus at least 80,000 French, Polish, and Soviet Russian victims in psychiatric institutions in the areas under German occupation. Werner Faulstich, Hungersterben in der Psychiatrie 1914–1949: Mit einer Topographie der NS-Psychiatrie (Freiburg, 1998), p. 582.
ing with the second, decentralized phase of euthanasia which claimed more than 100,000 further victims from the summer of 1942.

The numerous and carefully selected illustrations are a genuine strength of this catalogue. The quality of their reproduction and their educational value exceed those of comparable publications. It is especially to be welcomed that the images are not mere illustration; text and image supplement each other in a way that advances knowledge. In this respect the exhibition curators have done a magnificent job. Instead of relying on a handful of constantly reprinted photographs and propaganda material, they have taken considerable trouble to research new and in some cases hitherto unknown material. The objects illustrated range from instruments used to measure and classify the human body to sources from the lives of the persecuted (such as pictures of psychiatric patients from the Prinzhorn collection) and perpetrator documents, such as the originals, long believed lost, of the infamous Hartheim balance sheet of murders for the T-4 programme, which Henry Friedlander tracked down to a branch of the Washington National Archives. This is why everybody teaching courses on the history of National Socialism or the history of the biosciences in the first half of the twentieth century will find the material in this catalogue extremely useful.

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