he classified them on the grounds of their symptoms." (pp. 60–61). In accordance with these assumptions Dr. Potter devotes much of his commentary to suggesting objective counterparts for the author's description of symptoms. I believe that this is an unprofitable undertaking, and that the assumptions are false. No-one would want to deny that there is some correspondence between the author's descriptions and nosological realities, but the theory-laden language, the high degree of selectivity, and above all the close parallels in both respects with other texts, show that the relation must be very indirect. Dr Potter's comments, although interesting in themselves and potentially valuable, do not enlighten us about the nature of this relation nor about the kind of medicine which the author was writing.

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JEAN-LOUIS FLANDRIN, *Families in former times. Kinship, household, and sexuality*, translated by Richard Southern, Cambridge University Press, 1979, 8vo, pp. xi, 265, £14.50 (£4.50 paperback).

Professor Flandrin's book is an excellent foil to the writings of Peter Laslett and the Cambridge Group which constitute the approach to family history and historical demography best known in the English-speaking world. Whereas the Cambridge group relies almost exclusively on what can be wrung out of historical vital statistics (registers of baptisms, marriages, and burials) for understanding demographic patterns, Flandrin casts his net more widely, making deft use of legal evidence, religious and moral advice books, proverbs, and even the evolutionary history of family names, alongside a solid core of statistics. Whereas the crusading Laslett has tended to dogmatize about *the typical* European, or, slightly more narrowly, North-West European family and household structure, Flandrin is more interested in the great diversity of living habits, systems of kinship support and patronage, family size, and moral prohibitions from area to area even within France (from which most of his examples are taken). Not least, where Laslett stamped on an evolutionary approach (seeing it as some kind of vestige of conjectural history), and stressed that in essential matters such as the primacy of the nuclear family, things were already much the same in 1300 as they were to be in 1900, Flandrin suggests that certain key shifts can be traced. One is the irresistible surge of *love* as the motor of marriage and family life, from the eighteenth century onwards. Before then, bonding was seen much more within a pattern of wider family and community responsibilities; and moral and ecclesiastical advice placed greatest stress upon the *duties* of spouses, and upon the distinction between the honourable estate of matrimony and, on the other hand, giddy romance or foul lust. Once the theme of *love* united family, emotion, and sexual desire, the family became a more private affair, and wider kinship and community ties were attenuated.

Another important line of inquiry pursued by Flandrin highlights a crucial divergence between English and French family-forming patterns. From the mid-eighteenth century in England, population galloped ahead because of earlier marriage and because a rising percentage of the population got married. Almost the reverse

happened in France, where the peasant economy encouraged the retention of cautious and restrictive attitudes to establishing new economic units. Flandrin speculates interestingly to what extent this atmosphere led to extensive use of contraception (i.e. *coitus interruptus*) in France long before it became common in England.

Flandrin makes extensive use of Counter-Reformation conduct books to highlight how family behaviour was suffused with notions of hierarchy, control, and moral discipline (though he is well aware of the pitfalls of extrapolating from such books to actual behaviour). This provokes the important speculation that women in Catholic countries may have made use of priests and religious taboos to exercise some leverage against the dominion of their husbands, rather in the way in which Victorian ladies commandeered their physicians. Many other similar suggestions flow out of this livelily written and well-translated book.

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JUDITH R. WALKOWITZ, *Prostitution and Victorian society: women, class, and state*, Cambridge University Press, 1980, 8vo, pp. ix, 347, £15.00.

Hard on the heels of Paul McHugh's monograph on the Contagious Diseases Acts (reviewed *Med. Hist.*, 1981, **25**: 98–99) comes Judith Walkowitz's own study of these same Acts. Do we really need two books on the same subject? The answer is Yes, for these books are genuinely complementary rather than repetitious. McHugh's primary focus was the organized Repeal Campaign, whereas Walkowitz concentrates on prostitution and its place in Victorian Society.

This monograph is divided into three parts. The first looks at prostitution before the Acts. Drawing on social surveys such as Mayhew's, on Parliamentary investigations, and on medical and philanthropic writings on the "Great Evil", Walkowitz pieces together a portrait of the common Victorian prostitute, relating her career to the class, economic, and emotional burdens carried by nineteenth-century women. She shows how prostitution was often a temporary alternative to employment as a domestic servant or factory worker, sandwiched between leaving home and the establishment of a more or less permanent relationship with a man. An interesting chapter summarizes medical knowledge of venereal diseases and provides a good deal of new material on lock hospitals and venereal disease wards.

Part II looks at the rationale, passage, and operation of the Acts, and at the development of the Repeal Campaign. Here, Walkowitz is less concerned with the wider political issues which became attached to Repeal than with the mentality of the Repealers and the variety of gender and class conflicts embodied in the Campaign. Part III elaborates many of the book's earlier themes through case studies of the Acts in operation in Portsmouth and Southampton. In particular, the author persuasively argues that the hospitals and wards financed under the Acts served both moral and medical functions, and that one consequence of the Acts was the further social isolation of the prostitute from mainstream Victorian society, making prostitution more of a "profession" than a temporary life stage for lower-class women. The success of the Repealers left the way open for the Moral Purity Movement of the late Victorian period.