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052142397X - Health, Race and German Politics Between National Unification and
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Cambridge History of Medicine

EDITORS: CHARLES WEBSTER AND CHARLES ROSENBERG

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Cambridge History of Medicine

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'Volunteers to the fore' by Olaf Gulbransson, from *Simplicissimus*, vol. 18 no. 31 (1913).
 'Who wishes to join the family of a minor official as the sixth child? The father is an alcoholic and the mother suffers from high-grade hysteria.'

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of Medicine*



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PREFACE

During the writing of this book, public interest in the politics and funding of health has steadily increased. The same is true for the record of the German medical profession under Nazism. Although my study was originally conceived as a more modest account of state public health administration between 1900 and 1933, it became impossible to ignore broader questions of the interaction with professional organizations and concerned public groups. Today's debates on the costs of services resonate with echoes from a past age when the German welfare state, often referred to as pioneering, began its rapid but ramshackle pattern of growth. Ironically, it achieved its most complete and coherent development in the midst of terror and mass killing. The state and the people were brought into ever closer contact, as the rise of eugenics led to the invasion of the home and control over personal behaviour.

There have been many reasons why the completion of this book has surprised no one more than its author. The following list of thanks is no perfunctory courtesy but testifies to a combination of great personal kindness and generous support on the part of others. My first expression of thanks is owed to Charles Webster. For the past ten years I have been fortunate to be a member of the Wellcome Unit for the History of Medicine, University of Oxford, and under his direction, the Unit has been a continuously lively and challenging place to develop new approaches to the social history of health care. I also owe especial thanks to Margaret Pelling, who has been immensely supportive in all aspects of research and writing. I have benefited from contacts with German researchers that go far beyond the strictly academic, for I have received much generous help and hospitality when visiting archives. A seminal event was a conference on the social history of medicine held in 1981 at the Centre for Inter-Disciplinary Research, Bielefeld, and organized by Alfons Labisch (Kassel) and Reinhard Spree (Konstanz), both of whom have published highly innovative studies on health and social change. Many of the papers presented to the first and subsequent meetings have been published as substantial monographs, and I am all too aware that this book comes at the end of a long line of pioneering academic initiatives. I have also enjoyed fruitful relations with Florian

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Preface

Tennstedt (Kassel), who not only sent me his fundamental publications on the German welfare state but also encouraged me with advice and source materials. Similar encouragement and help has been received from Stephan Leibfried, Dietrich Milles and Rainer Müller of the University of Bremen. Georg Lilienthal (Mainz) has provided a link between social history and the history of medicine. I consulted an important collection of printed sources at the Medizinhistorisches Institut (Mainz), when under the directorship of Gunter Mann, who has initiated a series of dissertations on *Biologismus*, and has published a number of valuable articles on themes dealt with in this book. The Institut für Geschichte und Theorie der Medizin, Münster, allowed me generous access to their library. Manfred Stürzbecher, the historian of public health in Berlin, has been a valued source of advice. I have had lively discussions with Peter Weingart and his group of researchers at Bielefeld, and with Sheila Weiss (Potsdam, New York) who have parallel projects on the history of eugenics. I have exchanged ideas with medical historians in the German Democratic Republic in connection with the major project on medicine under fascism, directed by Achim Thom (Leipzig). British colleagues who have provided crucial help are Richard Evans (Norwich), Elizabeth Harvey (Salford), Jon Harwood (Manchester), and Jeremy Noakes (Exeter), and I also wish to thank Volker Berghahn (Brown University). Gunnar Broberg (Uppsala) and Ann Harrington (Harvard) kindly sent copies of archival material, and during the final stages of writing I was sent a manuscript on German genetics by Adela Baer (Oregon).

The families of leading figures in this study have generously shared their memories, and provided documentation, often in considerable quantities. I wish to thank Hermann Blaschko (Oxford), Iring Fetscher (Frankfurt-on-Main), Widukind Lenz (Münster), Kurt Nemitz (Bremen), Wilfrid Ploetz (Herrsching), Otto Spatz (Munich), and Edith Zerbin-Rüdin (Munich). Professor Lenz commented at length on a draft of my manuscript. I am also indebted to archivists and librarians at institutions mentioned in the list of archives.

As regards financial support, I wish to thank the Wellcome Trust for funding my posts as Research Assistant and Research Officer at the Wellcome Unit. The research expenses associated with foreign travel have been largely financed by the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst, the Economic and Social Research Council/Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft scheme for visiting social scientists, the British Council exchange scheme with the German Democratic Republic, the Royal Society, and the Rockefeller Archive Center.

Perhaps it is appropriate to dedicate a book that makes much of family allegiances and the birth rate to Julia Taplin and Silvia.

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ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---------------|--|
| ARGB | Archiv für Rassen- und Gesellschaftsbiologie |
| BA | Bundesarchiv |
| BAK | Bundesarchiv Koblenz |
| DMW | Deutsche Medizinische Wochenschrift |
| GSTA | Geheimes Staatsarchiv |
| HSTA | Hauptstaatsarchiv |
| MMW | Münchener Medizinische Wochenschrift |
| MPG | Max Planck Gesellschaft |
| RAC | Rockefeller Archive Center |
| STA | Staatsarchiv |
| VGB | Veröffentlichungen aus dem Gebiet der Medizinalverwaltung |
| ZSTA M | Zentrales Staatsarchiv Dienststelle Merseburg (now Bundesarchiv) |
| ZSTA P | Zentrales Staatsarchiv Dienststelle Potsdam (now Bundesarchiv) |