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The Doctor in Colonial America (review)

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demand and commercial considerations. Traditional and evolving regulatory concerns are reflected in the substances proscribed to the general trade or allowed to be sold only in wholesale quantities (including emetics, laxatives, emmenagogues, and sleep-inducing drugs).

While Beisswanger's sources can offer only indirect evidence of consumer preferences, they form a solid basis for comparative studies of eighteenth-century regulatory reforms and pharmaceutical practice in transition. This is not a Whiggish account, however, and neither physicians nor apothecaries as a class appear to have served the public better or worse than before this short-lived attempt to combine quality and profit.

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Zachary B. Friedenberg, *The Doctor in Colonial America*. Danbury, Conn.: Rutledge Books, 1998. xv + 259 pp. Ill. \$17.95 (paperbound).

The title of this book is misleading: it is not a study of the colonial physician, but rather the observations and reflections of a distinguished surgeon on American medical practice in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Although well intended, Dr. Friedenberg greatly underestimated the scope and difficulty of the task he undertook. His reading has been too limited and too unsystematic; apparently, he did not seek the assistance or advice of experts in this area.

In order to give his observations and reflections the credibility he intended, Friedenberg needed to give more time and effort to such basic questions as (1) What were the differences between medical practice in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and between urban, developed rural, and frontier areas? (2) What distinguished the "doctor" from other health-care givers of this period? (3) Was he a more effective healer than they? (4) Given its limitations and dangers, why did both the physician and his patients have so much faith in contemporary therapeutics? (5) To what degree were colonial physicians cooperative, and to what degree competitive? (6) To what degree were they professionalized?

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