

Jackson, Mark. *Allergy : The History of a Modern Malady* (London : Reaktion Books, 2006). ISBN: 1861892713. 288 p. \$39.95. The Library has 2 copies on WA 500.111 J324.

This book is about the emergence of allergy in the modern world. It stretches from the first tentative formulations of the concept of allergy at the dawn of the twentieth century through to the exuberant flowering of allergy as a plague of global proportions at the turn of the millennium. Prof. Mark Jackson has done an exceptional job. He uses his own family to demonstrate that his grandparents exhibited very little allergy, his parents generation a little more, and it became more prominent in his generation and the one after him.

Dr. Theron G. Randolph played a prominent role in the emergence and development of the field of Allergy. From Randolph's post doctorate fellowship with Rackemann at Harvard in the 1930's until the end of his career in the 1980's, he fought for a sensible evaluation of allergy in the field of medicine. Prof. Jackson does an excellent job of tracking Randolph's career along with the misconceptions of mainstream medicine during the 20th Century.

Prof. Jackson clearly evaluates the environmental factors in the field of medicine as a newly recognized phenomena during the 20th Century. He tells about the influence of Rachel Carson, whose life paralleled Randolph's, from the beginning of the century until their deaths in 1964 and 1995, respectfully.

There were many references to Richard Mackarness, who came to study with Randolph and took back to England a new field of medicine called Clinical Ecology which still exists today in the UK. Mackarness had gone to Australia to practice medicine. When Dr. Randolph died in 1995, I called Dr. Mackarness. He, himself, died a year later. and I included an obituary in the *Human Ecology Study Group Newsletter*. It was like missing a couple of stones in Stonehenge, and the aspiration of a true field of Allergy was missing some of the Truths.

After scanning this book, I felt that Dr. Theron Randolph had finally found his place in history. He now belongs to the Ages (like A. Lincoln). But he is not alone the strife and struggle of 20th Century medicine. Coca, Rowe, Rinkel, Francis Hare, Vaughn, Selye all had a part of bringing truth to the surface.

The Human Ecology Study Group is very appreciative of the work of Prof. Mark Jackson. I emailed him and told him of the Randolph Archives now housed at the Francis Countway Library of Medicine at Harvard University in Boston. He is anxious to visit there and will recommend it to others interested in the work of Theron Randolph.

-- Vilma Valentine Kinney, Editor

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Mark Jackson, BSc, MB, BS, PhD is professor of History and Director of Centre for Medical History at the University of Exeter. After qualifying in both immunology in 1982 and medicine in 1985, he pursued research on the social history of infanticide and the history of 'feeble-mindedness' at the Universities of Leeds and Manchester. More recently he has been researching and writing on the history of allergic diseases, such as asthma, hay fever and eczema, in the modern world, and on the history of stress. He has written many books before *Allergy: The History of a Modern Malady* (2006) He has a strong interest in developing and expanding the undergraduate medical curriculum

and in creating opportunities for wider public engagement activities in radio, television, newspapers, schools, and so on.