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**Melissa Graboyes.** *The Experiment Must Continue: Medical Research and Ethics in East Africa, 1940–2014.* (Perspectives on Global Health.) xxvii + 307 pp., illus., tables. Athens: Ohio University Press, 2015. \$27.50 (cloth).

The history of medical research in East Africa has received scant attention within modern historiography, and, in this context, Melissa Graboyes's recent monograph sheds a welcome ray of light over a relatively neglected area. Between 1945 and 1960, Graboyes estimates that more than 200,000 East Africans—sometimes unwittingly, sometimes coercively, and often unwillingly—were involved in medical research as human subjects (p. 8). Through a series of case studies this work provides important insights into many of the on-the-ground practices of medical researchers. After reading this book, one cannot fail to see that this sort of scientific fieldwork, usually unquestioningly accepted as being undertaken for universal good and for the advancement of the boundaries of medical knowledge, in reality often had a more sinister side. In one of her powerful historical stories, Graboyes highlights, for example, the way some Africans were co-opted, without clear explanation or consent, in tuberculosis drug trials in Nairobi in 1961. In the case of Julius Mwangi, it becomes clear, from his detailed letter to the director of medical services (p. 91), that his conception of consent was rather different from that presumed by the hospital authorities. Using case studies such as this one, this research makes us consider several important questions: what were the core objectives of medical research? Who were research projects actually trying to help? To what extent were participants involved in this research against their will, or at least without a shared understanding of its objectives?

Graboyes traces, in elegantly crafted and highly self-aware prose, several important medical research projects in East Africa undertaken between 1940 and 2014. She structures her core chapters around the medical research encounter, examining via her chosen cases the research processes from the formation of the project, to the selection of participants, the weighing up of risks, and the obligations remaining once an assignment was formally concluded. The result is a meticulously researched and highly enjoyable ethnographic history (a particularly joyous surprise given the book's dismal and unpromising cover image) that constitutes an important contribution for both historians looking over their shoulder to East Africa's medical past and modern policy makers keen to avoid some of the persistent pitfalls present when conducting medical research in the developing world.

One of the monograph's greatest strengths lies in Graboyes's mature and engaging use of prose. Graboyes has the gift of drawing the reader into small stories and then showing how these relate to wider practical and ethical dilemmas. She is also admirably aware of the need to redress the sort of history that relies too singularly on official accounts and the documentation of those "in charge." *The Experiment Must Continue* seeks to center African experiences—carefully dissecting what "research" and "ethics" means (or has meant) to African individuals and communities and sympathetically contextualizing reasons for hesitation, resistance, or misunderstanding. Africans here are active participants and shapers of the way any research encounter played out. These insights, gleaned from numerous oral interviews, are refreshingly open-minded and progressive and provide vital contextual richness in terms of explaining why many Africans still today regard visiting researchers with suspicion, if not overt fear.

Although importantly redressing imbalances in customary understandings, at times Graboyes's story seems a touch too one-sided, however. The author would be the first to admit that researcher-subject relationships were not always characterized by exploitation and could be positively collaborative and progressive, yet the balance of the book is definitely skewed against those conducting the medical research. Few European researchers fare well within its pages and those that do are presented as exceptional voices fighting against a system that did not share their values. This "heroes and villains" binary became a bit jarring, not least because Graboyes is so adept at understanding context when it comes to explaining African

behaviors and conceptions. Applying an equally sensitive contextual understanding to European motives would have given the book more balance and indeed made her central message even more powerful. Were not the objectives and rationales of the researchers equally culturally embedded? Were their motives explicable given the worldview of their profession and its intrinsic expectations? What external pressures were these researchers under in terms of providing results and claiming successes? To what extent did they understand, or not, the harm they were doing?

This relatively small critique notwithstanding, this is an excellent book. It has a strong central message and is beautifully crafted: a model of how to make the local stories come alive in a way that contributes to the painting of a much broader picture.

Anna Greenwood

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**Rebecca Lemov.** *Database of Dreams: The Lost Quest to Catalog Humanity.* xii + 368 pp. bibl., index. New Haven, Conn./London: Yale University Press, 2015. \$35 (cloth).

In fascinating and immensely readable prose, Rebecca Lemov, a historian of science at Harvard University, provides a detailed historical account of an extraordinary, long-lost, secret archival collection of socio-psychological mass data collected in the mid-twentieth century. *Database of Dreams: The Lost Quest to Catalog Humanity* tells the story of a forgotten scientific effort to collect and store documents on dreams and life histories from across the globe. The “database of dreams” project was conducted by Bert Kaplan, a young psychologist, along with his colleagues on the Committee on Primary Records in Culture and Personality of the National Research Council. These human scientists hoped not only to collect records across cultures but also to make sure they would be “forever preserved.” To do so, they chose the most advanced technology of the time, using the data storage technique of the Microcard. Yet despite their best efforts, this quickly obsolescent technology made their vision of preservation and easy accessibility unattainable. When Lemov began her research, she even found it hard to locate the records in physical form as the data and the technology that sustained it had entered into a state of technological limbo. The exploration of this unique archive therefore raises important theoretical and technological questions that Lemov innovatively and imaginatively explores in the book.

Built in 1956, the archive’s dream material dates back to earlier decades of the twentieth century. The last records were installed in 1963. This unique American social science grand mission of collecting subjective data can be seen as a project of its time. In the 1950s, experts’ work gained unprecedented prestige after World War II. Over sixty researchers pored over dream data to capture people’s inner lives in order to create an extensive database. In 1955, the Microcard was the latest in micropublishing technologies, capable of reducing a normal size page to one-twenty-fourth of its original size and storing it on opaque cards for approximately half a cent per page. Microcard also offered protection against dust, dampness, or dislocation due to war, as copies could be quickly prepared from negatives. This database of dreams was therefore a combination of techniques and tools assembled by researchers who were pioneers of total data management.

Kaplan, a graduate of Brooklyn College who became an army psychologist dealing in part with soldiers suffering from traumatic neurosis, first received an invitation to join Harvard’s Ph.D. program in social relations while he was still on the Pacific front. He began studying different groups in New Mexico by testing them with the Rorschach inkblot test, the Thematic Apperception Test (a picture-based test), and