

the glimpse it gives is more enlightening than the compiler's modesty suggests.

A little more editing might have been useful: P H Ling appears in various places as Pehr Henrik Ling, Per Henrik Ling and Per Henric Ling. Some dubious bibliography is propagated from other sources, such as the attribution to Mary Wollstonecraft of the English translation of Salzmann's (i.e. Guts Muths') *Gymnastik für die Jugend* (She died three years before publication, and there is no evidence apart from the fact that she had translated an earlier Salzmann work). All the same, this is an excellent book. Not only is it an essential addition to any collection in the field of medical or sports history, it is a good read and an attractive, informative introduction to the subject.

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Michael Hagner (ed.), *Der falsche Körper. Beiträge zu einer Geschichte der Monstrositäten*, Göttingen, Wallstein, 1995, pp. 230, illus., DM 38.00, SFr 37.00 (3-89244-073-5).

Our fascination with the monstrous and freakish is not new. Victorian literature—medical, literary, popular, historical—already had discovered the monstrous as a topic which would fascinate every audience. And this Victorian tradition built on earlier scholarly books on teratology (the study of the monstrous) in medicine and mass culture going back to the beginning of the printed book and beyond. In the past two decades the monstrous has re-emerged as a means of examining the margins that each age employs to define the normal. (To which category most if not all of the investigators in this field imply they belong. Oh! for a history of the marginal written from the margins! Of the monstrous written by the freaks!) From Leslie Fiedler (*Freaks*) to my own work on embryology, sexology and the monsters (*Sexuality: an illustrated history*), recent work has sketched the contours of the western fascination with the

monstrous as part of the universal history of Otherness.

In this present book, Michael Hagner, one of the brightest and most original historians of science now working in Germany, puts forth the claim that the monstrous has its own specific history. Building on the work of Lorraine Daston and Katherine Park, Hagner shows in the brilliant theoretical essay which opens the volume how the monstrous constructs itself and is constructed to fulfil a series of different social, psychological, and critical needs in each age. Each age inherits its monsters, but each age also shapes its monsters.

The rest of the volume provides a series of detailed sketches for this general thesis. Josef N Neumann reads the relationship between birth defects and the monstrous as a seeking after an ideal type. His question is whether birth defects (the real) model the monstrous (the imaginary) or vice-versa? His discussion of classical aesthetic norms is absolutely the space in which to examine this question, as it is the implicit "realism" of these norms which still makes such representations the image of the real world. I went to the Pergamon Altar in Berlin with a friend the other day and we were both struck by how "real" the representations were—they looked "like people". And they did because we had so internalized these aesthetic norms as the real. Neumann's piece is a perfect introduction to the specific problems of how each age uses the norms of the past for its own purposes.

Roberto Zapperi's essay on a "wild man" represented in a work by Agostino Carracci reads the history of "wildness" in the figure of the be-haired man and woman. This reading provides a clear, early modern case of the overlap between "wildness" in a colonial sense (the wild man is supposedly from the Canary Islands) and facial hair. The only problem with this essay is that the painting Zapperi discusses also represents a dwarf and a mad man; he does not relate his notion of a colonial model of the monstrous (Caliban) to either, which he could easily have done. Javier Moscoso discusses the naturalizing of the monstrous in the Enlightenment, and Hagner, himself,

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follows with a wonderful piece on the cataloguing of the monstrous from the cabinet to the collections and representations of embryological monsters. Roy Porter, too, fills in the details for the eighteenth century. His brilliant essay on “monsters and the mad” fills in the conceptual gap which Zapperi leaves between these two categories. He shows how both categories reinforce each other on the margins of the conceptual world of the Enlightenment.

Hans Richard Brittnacher’s essay on Lavater and the visualization of the monstrous would have benefited from a knowledge of the more recent studies of Lavater’s hermeneutics by Richard Gray and Lilliane Weisberg. It is absolutely right to place the monstrous in the world of the physiognomist, but the central role of medical physiognomy for Lavater cannot be easily judged by the major three-volume work which most scholars, including Brittnacher, use, but by the thin little outline Lavater produced prior to this work. There the pathological is revealed as the central shaping force for his physiognomic theories.

The nineteenth century is represented by three amazing essays—Peter Becker on Lombroso and criminal types as monsters, Rudolph Stichweh on the body of the Other, and Andreas Hartmann on Magnus Hirschfeld (*et al.*) writing and imagining about hermaphroditism at the turn of the century. All three of these essays could and do have the problem of anti-Semitism as their shaping force for an understanding of the monstrous body in Europe. Lombroso’s criminals are marginal types (as I showed with the earliest representations of the criminal insane in my *Seeing the insane*) and Lombroso’s role as an Italian Jew is especially evident at the end of his long career. One marginal body displaces another marginal body. The body of the Other reflects Stichweh’s understanding of the construction of the Jewish body quite directly. And the prize “body” in Hartmann’s essay is “N.O. Body”, the German-Jewish transvestite. A comprehensive bibliography closes the volume, which presents a solid handbook for the historical specificity of the monstrous body.

Hagner has added admirably to the literature on the monstrous with this book, which will claim a central space in any bibliography on the world of the monstrous, which is, of course, the world of ourselves.

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Philip W Leon, *Walt Whitman and Sir William Osler: a poet and his physician*, Toronto, ECW Press, 1995, pp. 212, illus., Canada \$42.00, USA \$32.00 (hardback 1-55022-251-1); Canada \$29.95, USA \$21.95 (paperback 1-55022-252-X).

When Dr William Osler left Montreal for Philadelphia, the Canadian psychiatrist Dr Richard Bucke arranged for him to care for the ageing Walt Whitman, who lived across the river in Camden. Bucke admired the brilliant young Osler, and he had long idolized the “grey poet” Whitman, so thought this would be a wonderful relationship.

It was not a patient-doctor relationship made in heaven. Osler indicated that he knew nothing of Whitman, never read a line of his poems, and came to him as “a Scythian visitor at Delphi!”. Whitman on the other hand acknowledged Osler’s brilliance, and was initially buoyed up by his positive assessment, but was eventually annoyed by the doctor’s constant cheerfulness, and his tendency to wave away many of his complaints. Osler was noted for his “gaiety of heart and his friendliness”, and his tendency to create elaborate practical jokes, but Whitman was not amused by Osler’s constant jaunty, lighthearted approach. “I don’t like his pooh-poohs. The professional air of the doctor grates on me”.

Whitman aged sixty-five and in failing health, confined to his messy, paper-strewn rooms, described himself as “an old rat” who always started with a prejudice against doctors, and was not impressed that they felt they knew more about his complaints, attitudes and habits than he did. He was fond of saying that in a conversation between a customer and a shoemaker about whether a shoe fits, “the