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depressed marionette in the medical advertisement discussed by Dr Jordanova is brought back to life by a daily dose of Ludiomil.

For the most part the analyses are compelling, even if at times the reader might want rather more evidence and slightly less speculation. The gendered nature of anatomizing crops up several times in the book, culminating in a section in the final chapter in which Dr Jordanova quotes surgeons describing the pleasure of their work in terms of sexual intercourse. Such sentiments, she argues, and to some extent shows, cannot be dismissed as whimsy. They have deep roots in western culture. There is, of course, the problem of reading too much into such identifications. Sexual intercourse is regularly drawn on in our culture as a comparative standard of hedonistic excellence. The operatic singer Leontyne Price likened it to applause, and only slightly inferior. Dr Jordanova's challenging and, I think, convincing interpretation of the history of anatomy provokes further questions. If, in recent Western society, gendered assumptions have been a prerequisite of anatomizing, the argument might have been made more descriptively thick by a reconsideration of hostility to dissection. After all, dissection is an acceptable practice now but it was not always so, especially for certain groups in society. What, in other words, is the relation between the structuring assumptions and local custom and belief? Did the eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century opponents of dissection have to learn to see it as gendered in order to accept it, or was it already gendered for them (because of the universality of the category) but responses to it determined by local factors, say, kinship or religion? This is simply part of the broader question which is not addressed by the author, possibly because of the temporal constraints of the volume. It would have been intriguing to have had Dr Jordanova tell us how far she sees the history of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century culture in terms of the creation of new assumptions and how far was it simply the redeployment of very ancient ones. Like all good books this one pushes us on to ask the second order question by correctly framing those of the first.

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JOHN CHRISTIE and SALLY SHUTTLEWORTH (eds.), *Nature transfigured: science and literature, 1700–1900*, Manchester University Press, 1989, 8vo, pp. 225, £29.95.

The editors of this collection of essays on aspects of the relations between science and literature, argue in their polemical Introduction that “What we take as ‘creative imagination’, ‘rationality’, ‘method’, ‘objectivity’, located as internal human faculties, are historical artefacts produced by institutionally located practices and their communicative forms” (p. 3). Yet their wish is less to throw down the barriers between the different intellectual faculties, thereby laying open the land of knowledge, than to secure a firm ground for what they call “the transgressive practice of literature and science study” (p. 12) within the faculties of academic institutions. Many of their contributors have already distinguished themselves in this field; Simon Schaffer, Roy Porter and Gillian Beer, for example, are hardly marginal figures, and all of the contributors acknowledge eminent predecessors in what is a growing discipline.

Most of these essays focus on prose fiction, and in particular on the influence of science on the portrayal of character. Porter on embodied experience in *Tristram Shandy*, David Van Leer on matter and spirit in *The scarlet letter*, and Shuttleworth on phrenology in the novels of Charlotte Brontë confirm that character is still the spoilt child of art, even in its deconstructed guise as subjectivity, what Christie with his characteristic inelegance terms “the spirit-body set” (p. 7). Other essays explore different areas: Trevor H. Levere argues that Samuel Taylor Coleridge conflated science and poetry because he believed that both stood in the same relation to nature; Greg Myers discusses how traditional stereotypes were reinforced in the literature that brought science to the unscientific (women and children). Beer broadens the discussion by examining the cross-fertilization of Darwinian and linguistic theories, an area she has brought into the domain of literary criticism and has made her own.

Different critical styles are represented here, though the underlying assumption is that ideology informs all writing. It is noteworthy that the essays are less concerned with the “hard”

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sciences, maths and physics, than with the “human” aspects of the sciences which directly concern daily experience and the quality of life. Furthermore, the contributors are literary critics and historians, not scientists proper. Though this book is essentially a project initiated by the Humanities Faculty, it should be of wider interest. Its strength is its diversity; while the editors hanker after a “full and coherent theorization” of the study of literature and science, the evidence of the essays proves that science and literature, individually and in conjunction, generate a profusion of forms.

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MARY COWLING, *The artist as anthropologist: the representation of type and character in Victorian art*, Cambridge University Press, 1989, 4to, pp. xxii, 391, illus., £50.00, \$69.50.

The role of the study of physiognomy in the history of art has been known but not appreciated. Clearly, any study of the “types” represented in Leonardo’s sketchbook needs to refer back to the omnipresent tradition of physiognomy, which makes up a rich heritage of Western culture from the first written records. (Indeed physiognomic treatises are to be found in Babylonian cuneiform.) Mary Cowling looks at a period when the theories of physiognomy had a most specific location in Western thought, the age following its reestablishment as a “science” in the writings of the Swiss pastor Johann Gaspar Lavater. This “Storm and Stress” (i.e., anti-Enlightenment) view of the relationship between mind and body was in no way new, nor was it scientific by any use of the term in the eighteenth century, but it was so understood by Lavater’s contemporaries. Cowling picks up the story at the height of the Victorian era (70 years after Lavater) and presents us with a reading of two major works of art, W. P. Frith’s panoramas *Derby Day* (1858) and *Railway Station* (1862), which were considered to be the major works of art of the day (at least by Queen Victoria, who was amused . . .).

This is an intricate and well-done study. But it remains only part of the story. Using the Frith paintings, Cowling shows us how the theories of physiognomy became part of the visual commonplaces (icons) of Victorian culture, so much so that one could use a “flat nose” or a “high brow” to represent class as well as character. Her opening chapters, which cover the discussion of physiognomy (type and character) from Camper through the phrenologists are richly illustrated and form a composite handbook. The guidelines which she evolves are then applied to the Frith paintings, in order to show us how they were read by his contemporaries. This approach results in a very detailed set of readings of the major figures in the paintings.

Cowling’s readings, however, are “anthropological”, and this is indeed the tone of her study. She understands the role of physiognomy as a means of social and physical classification, of the study of “man” in the sense that the Anthropological Society, that great Victorian creation, used the term “anthropology”. I have two major questions about Cowling’s work: the first is a methodological or theoretical one; the second, one of coverage. Neither question undermines her book—this is a first-rate study which, given its parameters, does precisely what it sets out to do. But rather, I would like to ask whether what Cowling wants to do is necessary as well as sufficient for such a study.

My primary objection to Cowling’s approach is that she assumes a pattern of “influence” or “reception” that is faulty. She assumes that Frith (and the other mid-Victorian painters she uses) “knew” the physiognomic treatises and she postulates these treatises—which are not written as handbook for artists (with some exceptions, such as the work of Sir Charles Bell)—as the “sources” for the readings. This is, of course, a rather difficult question. For the idea that the “influence” runs from the physiognomic treatises to the paintings, from a discourse of (pseudo-) science to a discourse of art assumes a social model which is questionable. It is the “trickle-down” model of the history of ideas. “Great” ideas “decay” into “popular” or “mass” ideas. They move from “serious” realms such as science to more trivial ones such as “art.” (Low art, mind you, never “real” art—this is why Frith is such a good object for such a study.) This model demands a direction for history, one which, I am afraid, cannot be postulated as a given. The flow of influence, if one can speak in these terms at all, is never set. Indeed, one is