

former bases on a syllogism that is then dismantled by Harvet. The overall erudition of all four texts is remarkable and reflects the general public's interest in health issues; only Verville cannot refrain from eroticizing his account, and the editors underline the way he slants his narration of the case.

This volume is suitable for scholars of sixteenth-century literature and of medical texts written in French and Latin. It also speaks to readers of essays, observations, and exempla, as well as to scholars of the medical humanities in general. Moreover, as the editors indicate in their introduction, the volume fills a gap in adding cases from the Renaissance to the medieval anorexic saints discussed in Rudolf M. Bell's *Holy Anorexia* (1985). The volume potentially would also speak to instructors in the medical humanities who might pair it with Marya Hornbacher's *Wasted: A Memoir of Anorexia and Bulimia* (1997) or with discussions surrounding hunger and society's recurring interest in exploring how long we can survive without food.

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Disease and Disability in Medieval and Early Modern Art and Literature.

Rinaldo F. Canalis and Massimo Ciavolella, eds.

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In recent years, we have witnessed an increased interest of scholars and institutions in medical humanities, and the interdisciplinary volume published by Brepols is a good example of this trend. Despite its title, the book is almost exclusively dedicated to disease, and the introduction and four of the essays focus on the usual suspects: bubonic plague (Lori Jones, Efraín Kristal), leprosy (Gaia Gubbini), and syphilis (Alfonso Paoella). Still, the editors should be commended for the inclusion of research on mental illness (Sara Frances Burdoff), ailments that affected artists (Manuela Gallerani, Roberto Fedi), and the role of built environments in the healing process (Francis Wells). Likewise, essays dedicated to such canonical works as *Tristan et Yseut* (Gubbini) and *Hamlet* (Burdoff), alongside paintings by Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, and Nicolas Poussin (Gallerani, Fedi, and Kristal), demonstrate that somatic, mental, and psychosomatic illnesses must be considered central to the cultural history of medieval and early modern Europe.

Beyond the general interest in disease and disability, the volume does not follow any more specific theme, and the quality of essays remains uneven. Alain Touwaide analyzes a fascinating disparity between visual and textual information in Byzantine medical and non-medical manuscripts, and his chapter in the volume also serves to summarize some aspects of classical medicine and its impact on the arts. A similar conundrum—the dearth of symptom-specific descriptions and depictions of the bubonic plague for much of the

disease's history—is analyzed by Lori Jones. Jones challenges our expectations of narrative styles adopted in medical treatises versus lay literature and contributes to the understanding of allegorical representations of the disease in the Middle Ages.

Of particular interest is Jenni Kuuliala's essay on constructions of disability versus monstrosity in medieval canonization processes, which is a crucial addition to Elizabeth Bearden's scholarship and the Palgrave volume *Monstrosity, Disability, and the Posthuman in the Medieval and Early Modern World* (eds. Richard H. Godden and Asa Simon Mittman, 2019). Kuuliala shows that "although discourses on disability and the monstrous partially overlap, the idea of a monster as something extraordinary or alien was only attached, if to anything, to exceptional physical conditions" (124). Furthermore, Kuuliala's reconstruction of interactions between a disabled person and the community offers a unique glimpse into the lived experience of impairment in medieval societies—something that we rarely see in scholarship. Finally, Domenico Bertoloni Meli's chapter on images of bone pathologies mobilizes an expert understanding of printmaking techniques to highlight the challenges inherent to anatomical illustrations.

Besides those complex and original chapters, the volume offers a more traditional philosophical approach in Joachim Küpper's essay on the understanding of malady, alongside a perplexing overview of Renaissance art and architecture in Tuscany by the cardiothoracic surgeon Francis Wells. Wells, the only author in the collection who is a medical practitioner, is clearly invested in the role of art and architecture in the well-being of patients; thanks to his profession, he would be uniquely equipped to offer a comparative analysis between Renaissance and contemporary hospital environments. But instead, we are presented with a reductive summary of connections between visual arts and medicine in the early modern period, which neglects to consider the findings of scholars such as Frances Gage and Maggie Bell who have persuasively written on the therapeutic efficacy of images and architecture. Similarly, while Alfonso Paoloella's chapter provides a handy summary of the early outbreaks and treatments of syphilis, it does not offer any new insights on the cultural impact of the "great pox."

On the one hand, the disparity among essays is frustrating; on the other, the more general, synthetic, and accessible chapters could be productively used in lower-division undergraduate classes and enjoyed by nonspecialist readers. But overall, the volume remains a cautious proposition that does not bring art history and history of literature an inch closer to the field of disability studies. With few exceptions, it confirms that medieval and early modern studies lag behind the work of scholars of modern and contemporary visual culture. Likewise, the outsized importance given to diseases about which we already knew a lot has hindered the volume's potential to become an invigorating new resource for students of medical humanities.

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