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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.

**Sander L Gilman**, University of Chicago

**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

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fellow who wears the shoe always knows”.

We learn little about Whitman’s specific illnesses during this time, but we can presume there was little therapy other than general advice, recognizing Whitman’s attitude and Osler’s famous therapeutic nihilism. We are indebted to Professor Leon for bringing to us the previously unpublished draft graduation talk which Osler was preparing about his relationship with Whitman, written just before Osler died. He also brings to us previously unpublished marginal notes in his presentation copy of Whitman’s *Leaves of grass*, and Osler’s correspondence with an unusual group of English gay radical socialists who called themselves the Bolton College, and who regarded Whitman as their spiritual leader.

Although the Whitman–Osler relationship has been known to Oslerians, this is the first extensive documentation of the five years they knew each other. The new information is helpful and interesting, particularly as it gives us a different view of the famous bedside manner of Osler, viewed from wise, ageing eyes that saw him as brilliant but annoyingly cheerful, over-confident and perhaps somewhat brash. All of this would have been adequate for a journal article had not Professor Leon expanded his canvas to a patchwork of all those people who in some way related to them both. The result includes Richard M Bucke; the Philadelphia neurologist S Weir Mitchell and his son; Edith Wharton; artists Thomas Eakins and John Singer Sargent; literati Edmund Gosse, the Brownings, Swinburne, and the Rossettis; and the interesting group of Bolton College.

There were some unsatisfying things about the book, but historians are limited by the amount of material available and Professor Leon has searched widely for information on the relationship. The format he uses is sometimes repetitive and he writes as though he is uncertain of his audience. He begins as if he is writing for those who know neither Whitman nor Osler, but the portrait of each is faint and inadequate. Oslerians will be more satisfied by the picture of Whitman, who really seems to interest Leon, than Whitman admirers

will be by what they learn of Osler. I think it unlikely that anyone would read the book and not wish to know more about a third character lurking in the background, the psychiatrist, mystic and “Whitmaniac” Richard Bucke. Those so inclined will find it in S E D Shortt’s *Victorian lunacy: Richard M Bucke and the practice of late nineteenth-century psychiatry* (New York, 1986), or in the more recent biography by Peter A Rechnittzer, *R M Bucke: journey to cosmic consciousness*, (Toronto, 1994).

Over the years, Osler grew in his admiration of Whitman but he never quite understood his poetry. At his first reading of *Leaves of grass*, Osler understood little of the poems. Later he commented on their greatness, but did so by constantly quoting what Bucke thought of Whitman’s poetry and his place among the great prophets. Therein probably rests the difficulty between the doctor and patient. Osler brought his medical skills and brilliance to the bedside, but Whitman wanted someone like Bucke, who had a sensitivity and an understanding about him as a person and what he was. Osler is often quoted as saying one should try to understand the patient who has the disease rather than the disease the patient has. In this instance one has the feeling that Osler struggled but did not fully understand the person, at least as Whitman wished to be understood.

Despite the patchwork approach, this book adds important information to the scholarship of two important personages of the Victorian era.

**T J Murray**, Dalhousie University

**David Innes Williams**, *The London Lock: a charitable hospital for venereal disease 1746–1952*, London and New York, Royal Society of Medicine Press, 1995, pp. x, 166, illus., £16.00, \$32.00 (1-85315-263-3).

Historians of institutions face the challenge of telling a detailed chronological story of specific people and places, whilst avoiding charges of triumphalism, lack of