

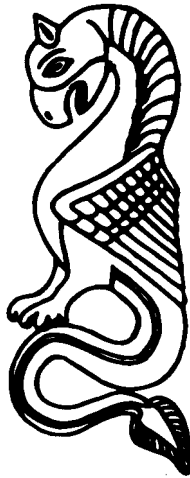
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Gregory's *Dialogues* for his multiple audiences. In the second is Innes-Parker's comparison of the well known Passion text in Cambridge, St John's College, G. 20 (and New York, Columbia University, Plimpton 256) with its now identified Latin source, Bonaventure's *Lignum vite*. Equally engaging are the two essays by Gunn and Watson that give different perspectives on essentially the same topic: Edmund of Abingdon's *Speculum religiosorum* in its Latin and English incarnations.

As with any collection of essays there are a few minor typographical errors, but editors feel uncomfortable enough when they find mistakes themselves without reviewers compounding matters by pointing them out. I mention just one, not so much for the editors as for the publishers. Repeatedly (for instance, pp. xiii and xv) we have to suffer the affront of '*Hali Meithhad*' minus its eth. It is about time that a reputable publishing house like Boydell and Brewer should consistently use the full range of Old English and Middle English letter-forms. It is particularly unfortunate to see this 'modernization' in a volume dedicated to a scholar who values accuracy and authenticity above all. This aside, the editors, the contributors, and the publisher are to be congratulated on a fine volume worthy of a fine scholar, Bella Millett.

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Tory Vandeventer Pearman, *Women and Disability in Medieval Literature*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010. xiv + 206 pp. ISBN 978-0-230-10511-9. £55.

This book is an interesting and worthwhile contribution to the growing field of Medieval Disability Studies, covering a wide range of late Middle English texts. After a mildly polemical but interesting introduction, the chapters are concerned with reproduction as disability in Chaucer's 'Merchant's Tale' and *Dame Sirith*; disabilities that result from domestic abuse in the *Book of the Knight* and 'The Wife of Bath's Prologue'; physical disability resulting from punishment in supernatural texts like *Sir Launfal*, *Bisclavret*, and Henryson's *Testament of Cresseid*; and a final return to disability and the procreative body in the *Book of Margery Kempe*. Throughout the book, Pearman does an exemplary job of delineating the parameters of the various debates informing and complicating her project, and locating herself explicitly within those debates (as in the very good discussion of reproduction, disability and the grotesque that opens the first chapter).

Pearman's project's 'main objective is twofold: by using the gendered model, it theorizes the ways in which medieval authoritative discourse produces the categories of "woman" and "disabled" as inevitably linked, and it examines how those links function within and even shape the production of literary texts' (p. 13). This emphasis on the combination of the Aristotelian idea that women were 'undercooked' men with the tradition of specifically Judeo-Christian misogyny rooted in ancient stories of apples and gardens is not really new to Pearman: she acknowledges that Rosemarie Garland Thomsen and Felicity Nussbaum have worked in this area. What is new in Pearman, perhaps, is the turn to the literary as a way of getting at complex issues of gender, health, and representation. Of course, Pearman is not alone in this, following the work of scholars like Sharon L. Snyder and David T. Mitchell.

This generally excellent book shows signs of a growing and problematic split between the British and American academies in medieval Disability Studies. Surely Pearman's chapter on reproduction as disability would have benefitted from engaging Irina Metzler's discussion of

the same, just as her discussion of the deafness of the Wife of Bath on pp. 67–70 benefits from Metzler’s work.¹ One of her few moments of engagement with Metzler’s book is to declare it a ‘defense of the power of such a small component of medieval society’, the ‘small component’ here being the authors of medical texts, which is a little mystifying (p. 6). Chasing the reference only leads to Metzler’s discussion of the problems and benefits of using said sources as historical documents, a discussion necessary in most historical studies, and to the question of whether such a small sample size can lead to a secure understanding of medieval medical discourse (Metzler, p. 66). One suspects that Pearman’s phrase is simply an unfortunate one, but since she then rehearses something of the discussion without further referencing Metzler, it sounds as though Metzler has been dismissed. Other infelicities occur: for example, she mistakes the British scholar Myra Stokes for the non-existent “Myra Tokes” throughout her discussion of *Sir Launfal*, and in the bibliography.

However, overall this is a smart, socially engaged addition to both Disability Studies and medieval literary criticism.

CORY JAMES RUSHTON

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The Doctrine of the Hert: A Critical Edition with Introduction and Commentary. Edited by Christiania Whitehead, Denis Renevey and Anne Mouron. Exeter: Exeter University Press, 2010. Lxxv + 234 pp. Hardback ISBN 9780859898218, £55. Paperback ISBN 9780859897785, £16.99

The Doctrine of the Hert is a fifteenth-century Middle English translation of the thirteenth-century *De doctrina cordis*, a treatise which was disseminated widely in Latin (in more than 200 manuscripts in different formats) and several vernacular languages. However, despite its importance as a pan-European devotional phenomenon in late medieval Europe, the treatise has escaped widespread scholarly attention. The authorship of *De doctrina cordis* is still debated, though opinion tends to favour either Hugh of St-Cher (d. 1263), a Dominican theologian from Paris, or the Cistercian Gerald of Liège. Scholars agree that it is likely to have been written in Liège or its environs in the mid-thirteenth century.

Although the editors register their indebtedness to Mary Patrick Candon’s edition, ‘*The Doctrine of the Hert*, Edited from the Manuscripts with Introduction and Notes’ (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Fordham University, 1963), which used Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud Misc. 330 as the base manuscript, their newly edited Middle English text is innovative, not only in its different choice of base manuscript, Cambridge, Fitzwilliam, MS McClean 132, but in how it illuminates the devotional context and significance of a comparatively neglected Middle English translation. The text is accompanied by a full textual commentary, which includes meticulous comparison with the Latin text (with acknowledgement to Guido Hendrix for the references in support of Hugh of St-Cher’s *Postillae* as a potential source), and is followed by modern English translations of Latin and medieval French extracts—accurate work by Anne Mouron. Together with this commentary and useful Middle English glossary, the edition should prove invaluable for both advanced scholars and readers new to late medieval devotional writings.

¹ Irina Metzler, *Disability in Medieval Europe: Thinking about Physical Impairment During the High Middle Ages, c. 1100–1400*, Routledge Studies in Medieval Religion and Culture, 5 (London and New York: Routledge, 2006).