Monsters, Monstrosities, and the Monstrous in Culture and Society

Based on a conference held Apr. 4-5, 2008 at Amherst College.

Storytelling

From the chilling threats of the “ISIS vampire” to the view of al-Qaeda as the “Frankenstein the CIA created,” terrorism seems to be inextricably bound with monstrosity. But why do the media and government officials often portray terrorists as monsters? And perhaps more puzzling, why do terrorists sometimes want to be perceived as such? This book, the first of its kind, examines the use of archetypal metaphors of monstrosity in relation to terrorism, from the gorgons of Robespierre’s “reign of terror” to the dragons and lycanthropes of anarchism, the beasts and blood-licking demons of ethnonational terrorism, and the hydras and Frankenstein’s monsters of Islamic jihadism. Marco Pinfari argues that politicians frame terrorists as unmanageable monsters not only in an effort at cultural “othering” and dehumanization, but also to secure popular backing for rule-breaking behavior in counter-terrorism. The book also explores the way that terrorists themselves impersonate monsters, showing that several groups have pursued such a tactic throughout the history of terrorism. It contributes to a number of ongoing public debates by highlighting how, even when actors like the Islamic State present themselves as mad and irrational, their tactics remain in essence rational. Pinfari also provides an original historical outlook on the roots of monster metaphors and by their impersonation, Terrorists as Monsters helps the reader understand the political processes that hide behind the fangs.

Lake and Sea Monsters

“Yes, women are the greatest evil Zeus has made, and men are bound to them hand and foot with impossible knots by God.”—Semonides, seventh century B.C. Men put women on a pedestal to worship them from afar—and to take better aim at them for the purpose of derision. Why is this paradoxical response to women so widespread, so far-reaching, so all-pervasive? Misogyny, David D. Gilmore suggests, is best described as a male malady, as it has always been a characteristic shared by human societies throughout the world. Misogyny: The Male Malady is a comprehensive historical and anthropological survey of woman-hating that casts new light on this age-old bias. The turmoil of masculinity and the ugliness of misogyny have been well documented in different cultures, but Gilmore’s synoptic approach identifies misogyny in a variety of human experiences outside of sex and marriage and makes a fresh and enlightening contribution toward understanding this phenomenon. Gilmore maintains that misogyny is so widespread and so pervasive among men that it must be at least partly psychogenic in origin, a result of different experiences in the male developmental cycle, rather than caused by the environment alone. Presenting a wealth of compelling examples—from the jungles of New Guinea to the boardrooms of corporate America—Gilmore shows that misogynistic practices occur in hauntingly identical forms. He asserts that these deep and abiding male anxieties stem from unresolved conflicts between men’s intense need for and dependence upon women and their equally intense fear of that dependence. However, misogyny, according to Gilmore, is also often supported and intensified by certain cultural realities, such as patrilineal social organization; kinship ideologies that favor fraternal solidarity over conjugal unity; chronic
warfare, feuding, or other forms of intergroup violence; and religious orthodoxy or asceticism. Gilmore is in the end able to offer steps toward the discovery of antidotes to this irrational but global prejudice, providing an opportunity for a lasting cure to misogyny and its manifestations.

**Monsters**

Once upon a time all literature was fantasy, set in a mythical past when magic existed, animals talked, and the gods took an active hand in earthly affairs. As the mythical past was displaced in Western estimation by the historical past and novelists became increasingly preoccupied with the present, fantasy was temporarily marginalized until the late 20th century, when it enjoyed a spectacular resurgence in every stratum of the literary marketplace. Stableford provides an invaluable guide to this sequence of events and to the current state of the field. The chronology tracks the evolution of fantasy from the origins of literature to the 21st century. The introduction explains the nature of the impulses creating and shaping fantasy literature, the problems of its definition and the reasons for its changing historical fortunes. The dictionary includes cross-referenced entries on more than 700 authors, ranging across the entire historical spectrum, while more than 200 other entries describe the fantasy subgenres, key images in fantasy literature, technical terms used in fantasy criticism, and the intimately convoluted relationship between literary fantasies, scholarly fantasies, and lifestyle fantasies. The book concludes with an extensive bibliography that ranges from general textbooks and specialized accounts of the history and scholarship of fantasy literature, through bibliographies and accounts of the fantasy literature of different nations, to individual author studies and useful websites.

**Terrorists As Monsters**

From vampires and demons to ghosts and zombies, interest in monsters in literature, film, and popular culture has never been stronger. This concise Encyclopedia provides scholars and students with a comprehensive and authoritative A-Z of monsters throughout the ages. It is the first major reference book on monsters for the scholarly market. Over 200 entries written by experts in the field are accompanied by an overview introduction by the editor. Generic entries such as 'ghost' and 'vampire' are cross-listed with important specific manifestations of that monster. In addition to monsters appearing in English-language literature and film, the Encyclopedia also includes significant monsters in Spanish, French, Italian, German, Russian, Indian, Chinese, Japanese, African and Middle Eastern traditions. Alphabetically organized, the entries each feature suggestions for further reading. The Ashgate Encyclopedia of Literary and Cinematic Monsters is an invaluable resource for all students and scholars and an essential addition to library reference shelves.

**Monsters of the Gévaudan**

Every culture has in its folklore and mythology beings of immense size and strength, as well as other preternatural humanoids great or small who walk among us, serving the divine or fulfilling their own agendas. This book catalogs the lore and legends of more than 1,000 different humanoid species and individual beings, including the Titans, Valkyries, Jotnar, yōkai, biblical giants, elves, ogres, trolls and many more.

**Misogyny**

Richly-illustrated consideration of the meaning of the carvings of non-human beings, from centaurs to eagles, found in ecclesiastical settings.

**Children's Book of Mythical Beasts and Magical Monsters**

Presents an A-to-Z reference to American folklore with articles on folk heroes, authors, significant historical events, cultural groups, social aspects and more.

**Encyclopedia of Beasts and Monsters in Myth, Legend and Folklore**

Sporting fins, scales, and sometimes horns or fur, a riot of unidentifiable water creatures have poked their dripping heads above the waves throughout recorded history to shock grizzled sailors and hardy fisherfolk alike. But survivors of water monster encounters are usually left as puzzled as they are terrified, questioning the origins and elusiveness of the creatures. Most people can describe what a typical sea monster looks like, yet no museum boasts a skeleton or even an irrefutable photograph of a sea serpent or the legendary Loch Ness Monster. Lake and Sea Monsters thoroughly explores humanity's fascination with Nessie, sea serpents, and all the other wet wonders of the world, separating fact from fiction by examining ancient
legends and myths, contemporary eyewitness stories, and the latest scientific discoveries. Chapters include: Swimming Through Time: Birth of the Sea Monster, Merfolk and Other Scaly Humanoids, Kraken, Giant Squids, and Octopuses, Nessie: Scotland's Sea Monster, Superstar, Mistake or Fake: Natural Creatures and Hoaxes.

Evil Incarnate

This interdisciplinary collection brings together world leaders in Gothic Studies, offering dynamic new readings on popular Gothic cultural productions from the last decade. Topics covered include, but are not limited to: contemporary High Street Gothic fashion, Gothic performance and art festivals, Gothic popular fiction from Twilight to Shadow of the Wind, Gothic popular music, Gothic on TV and film, new trends like Steampunk, well-known icons Batman and Lady Gaga, and theorizations of popular Gothic monsters (from zombies and vampires to werewolves and ghosts) in an age of terrorism.

Monsters of Film, Fiction, and Fable

The field of monster studies has grown significantly over the past few years and this companion provides a comprehensive guide to the study of monsters and the monstrous from historical, regional and thematic perspectives. The collection reflects the truly multi-disciplinary nature of monster studies, bringing in scholars from literature, art history, religious studies, history, classics and cultural and media studies. The companion offers scholars and graduate students the first comprehensive and authoritative review of this emergent field.

There's More to Fear than Fear Itself: Fears and Anxieties in the 21st Century

"Here there be dragons"—this notation was often made on ancient maps to indicate the edges of the known world and what lay beyond. Heroes who ventured there were only as great as the beasts they encountered. This encyclopedia contains more than 2,200 monsters of myth and folklore, who both made life difficult for humans and fought by their side. Entries describe the behavior, appearance, and cultural origin of mythic creatures well-known and obscure, collected from traditions around the world.

Evil Arabs in American Popular Film

The "evil" Arab has become a stock character in American popular films, playing the villain opposite American "good guys" who fight for "the American way." It's not surprising that this stereotype has entered American popular culture, given the real-world conflicts between the United States and Middle Eastern countries, particularly since the oil embargo of the 1970s and continuing through the Iranian hostage crisis, the first and second Gulf Wars, and the ongoing struggle against al-Qaeda. But when one compares the "evil" Arab of popular culture to real Arab people, the stereotype falls apart. In this thought-provoking book, Tim Jon Semmerling further dismantles the "evil" Arab stereotype by showing how American cultural fears, which stem from challenges to our national ideologies and myths, have driven us to create the "evil" Arab Other. Semmerling bases his argument on close readings of six films (The Exorcist, Rollover, Black Sunday, Three Kings, Rules of Engagement, and South Park: Bigger, Longer & Uncut), as well as CNN's 9/11 documentary America Remembers. Looking at their narrative structures and visual tropes, he analyzes how the films portray Arabs as threatening to subvert American "truths" and mythic tales--and how the insecurity this engenders causes Americans to project evil character and intentions on Arab peoples, landscapes, and cultures. Semmerling also demonstrates how the "evil" Arab narrative has even crept into the documentary coverage of 9/11. Overall, Semmerling's probing analysis of America's Orientalist fears exposes how the "evil" Arab of American popular film is actually an illusion that reveals more about Americans than Arabs.

Archetypes and Motifs in Folklore and Literature

Stories have been told on every continent since the dawn of time, and some have lasted for thousands of years, becoming what we know today as myths. These fantastical tales educate and fascinate by creating amazing worlds and inhabiting them with wondrous feats of heroics and dastardly deeds of evil. Children's Book of Mythical Beasts and Magical Monsters gives children the opportunity to discover these stories, and encourages them to understand storytelling from different cultures.

The Oxford Handbook of Animal Studies

Existing research on monsters acknowledges the deep impact monsters have especially on Politics, Gender, Life Sciences, Aesthetics and Philosophy. From Sigmund Freud's essay 'The
Uncanny’ to Scott Poole’s ‘Monsters in America’, previous studies offer detailed insights about uncanny and immoral monsters. However, our anthology wants to overcome these restrictions by bringing together multidisciplinary authors with very different approaches to monsters and setting up variety and increasing diversification of thought as ‘guiding patterns’. Existing research hints that monsters are embedded in social and scientific exclusionary relationships but very seldom copes with them in detail. Erving Goffman’s doesn’t explicitly talk about monsters in his book ‘Stigma’, but his study is an exceptional case which shows that monsters are stigmatized by society because of their deviations from norms, but they can form groups with fellow monsters and develop techniques for handling their stigma. Our book is to be understood as a complement and a ‘further development’ of previous studies: The essays of our anthology pay attention to mechanisms of inequality and exclusion concerning specific historical and present monsters, based on their research materials within their specific frameworks, in order to ‘create’ engaging, constructive, critical and diverse approaches to monsters, even utopian visions of a future of societies shared by monsters. Our book proposes the usual view, that humans look in a horrified way at monsters, but adds that monsters can look in a critical and even likewise frightened way at the very societies which stigmatize them.

Monstrosity, Disability, and the Posthuman in the Medieval and Early Modern World


Religion and Myth in the Marvel Cinematic Universe

Encyclopedia of American Folklore

In a brilliant, original rendition, Monsters of the Gévaudan revisits a spellbinding French tale that has captivated imaginations for over two hundred years, and offers the definitive explanation of the strange events that underlie this timeless story. In 1764 a peasant girl was killed and partially eaten while tending a flock of sheep. Eventually, over a hundred victims fell prey to a mysterious creature, or creatures, whose cunning and deadly efficiency terrorized the region and mesmerized Europe. The fearsome aggressor quickly took on mythic status, and the beast of the Gévaudan passed into French folklore. What species was this killer, why did it decapitate so many of its victims, and why did it prefer the flesh of women and children? Why did contemporaries assume that the beast was anything but a wolf, or a pack of wolves, as authorities eventually claimed, and why is the tale so often ignored in histories of the ancien régime? Smith finds the answer to these last two questions in an accident of timing. The beast was bound to be perceived as strange and anomalous because its ravages coincided with the emergence of modernity itself. Expertly situated within the social, intellectual, cultural, and political currents of French life in the 1760s, Monsters of the Gévaudan will engage a wide range of readers with both its recasting of the beast narrative and its compelling insights into the allure of the monstrous in historical memory.

Encyclopedia of Giants and Humanoids in Myth, Legend and Folklore

The ancient myth of a battle between a Divine Warrior and a primordial monster undergoes significant development in postbiblical and rabbinic literatures. This development is the focus of the present study.

Monsters in the Classroom
Storytelling is an ancient practice known in all civilizations throughout history. Characters, tales, techniques, oral traditions, motifs, and tale types transcend individual cultures - elements and names change, but the stories are remarkably similar with each rendition, highlighting the values and concerns of the host culture. Examining the stories and the oral traditions associated with different cultures offers a unique view of practices and traditions. "Storytelling: An Encyclopedia of Mythology and Folklore" brings past and present cultures of the world to life through their stories, oral traditions, and performance styles. It combines folklore and mythology, traditional arts, history, literature, and festivals to present an overview of world cultures through their liveliest and most fascinating mode of expression. This appealing resource includes specific storytelling techniques as well as retellings of stories from various cultures and traditions.

The Ashgate Encyclopedia of Literary and Cinematic Monsters

An important contribution to the growing interdisciplinary field of monster studies

I, Monster

Appealing to Monster Theory and the ancient Near Eastern motif of "Chaoskampf," Safwat Marzouk argues that the paradoxical character of the category of the monster is what prompts the portrayal of Egypt as a monster in the book of Ezekiel. While on the surface the monster seems to embody utter difference, underlying its otherness there is a disturbing sameness. Though the monster may be defeated and its body dismembered, it is never completely annihilated. Egypt is portrayed as a monster in the book of Ezekiel because Egypt represents the threat of religious assimilation. Although initially the monstrosity of Egypt is constructed because of the shared elements of identity between Egypt and Israel, the prophet flips this imagery of monster in order to embody Egypt as a monstrous Other. In a combat myth, YHWH defeats the monster and dismembers its body. Despite its near annihilation, Egypt, in Ezekiel's rhetoric, is not entirely obliterated. Rather, it is kept at bay, hovering at the periphery, questioning Israel's identity.

The Gothic in Contemporary Literature and Popular Culture

Monsters known as yōkai have long haunted the Japanese cultural landscape. This history of the strange and mysterious in Japan seeks out these creatures in folklore, encyclopedias, literature, art, science, games, manga, magazines and movies, exploring their meanings in the Japanese imagination over three centuries.

In contrast to other figures generated within social theory for thinking about outsiders, such as Rene Girard's 'scapegoat' and Zygmunt Bauman's 'stranger', Foucault's Monsters and the Challenge of Law suggests that the figure of 'the monster' offers greater analytical precision and explanatory power in relation to understanding the processes whereby outsiders are constituted. The book draws on Michel Foucault's theoretical and historical treatment of the category of the monster, in which the monster is regarded as the effect of a double breach: of law and nature. For Foucault, the monster does not simply refer to a particular kind of morphological or psychological irregularity; for the body or psyche in question must also pose a threat to the categorical structure of law. In chronological terms, Foucault moves from a preoccupation with the bestial human in the Middle Ages to a concern over Siamese or conjoined twins in the Renaissance period, and ultimately to a focus on the hermaphrodite in the Classical Age. But, although Foucault’s theoretical framework for understanding the monster is affirmed here, this book's study of an English legal history of the category 'monster' challenges some of Foucault's historical claims. In addition to considering this legal history, the book also addresses the contemporary relevance of Foucault's theoretical framework. Structured around Foucault's archetypes and the category crises they represent - admixed embryos, conjoined twins and transsexuals - the book analyses their challenge to current distinctions between human and animal, male and female, and the idea of the 'proper' legal subject as a single embodied mind.
These contemporary figures, like the monsters of old, are shown to threaten the rigidity and binary structure of a law that still struggles to accommodate them.

Monsters by Trade

Breaking box office records, the Marvel Cinematic Universe has achieved an unparalleled level of success with fans across the world, raising the films to a higher level of narrative: myth. This is the first book to analyze the Marvel output as modern myth, comparing it to epics, symbols, rituals, and stories from world religious traditions. This book places the exploits of Iron Man, Captain America, Black Panther, and the other stars of the Marvel films alongside the legends of Achilles, Gilgamesh, Arjuna, the Buddha, and many others. It examines their origin stories and rites of passage, the monsters, shadow-selves, and familial conflicts they contend with, and the symbols of death and the battle against it that stalk them at every turn. The films deal with timeless human dilemmas and questions, evoking an enduring sense of adventure and wonder common across world mythic traditions.

Fantastical Creatures and Magical Beasts

"This book presents a variety of Japanese mythical beasts, such as Kirin, Byakko (White Tiger), Suzaku (Vermilion Bird), Genbu (Black Tortoise), Ho-o (Fenghuang), and Ryu (Japanese Dragon), some of which originally came from Chinese mythology in ancient times. Most of featured works, mainly from 12th century to 19th century, are in the motifs of the sacred animals painted by artists such as Kawanabe Kyosai, Ito Jakuchu, Utagawa Kuniyoshi and more." --Book Jacket.

Monsters, Gender and Sexuality in Medieval English Literature

This book offers the first full length study on the pervasive archetype of The Gothic Forest in Western culture. The idea of the forest as deep, dark, and dangerous has an extensive history and continues to resonate throughout contemporary popular culture. The Forest and the EcoGothic examines both why we fear the forest and how exactly these fears manifest in our stories. It draws on and furthers the nascent field of the ecoGothic, which seeks to explore the intersections between ecocriticism and Gothic studies. In the age of the Anthropocene, this work importantly interrogates our relationship to and understandings of the more-than-human world. This work introduces the trope of the Gothic forest, as well as important critical contexts for its discussion, and examines the three main ways in which this trope manifests: as a living, animated threat; as a traditional habitat for monsters; and as a dangerous site for human settlement. This book will appeal to students and scholars with interests in horror and the Gothic, ecohorror and the ecoGothic, environmentalism, ecocriticism, and popular culture more broadly. The accessibility of the subject of ‘The Deep Dark Woods’, coupled with increasingly mainstream interests in interactions between humanity and nature, means this work will also be of keen interest to the general public.

The Forest and the EcoGothic

In the 1980s, America was gripped by widespread panics about satanic cults. Conspiracy theories abounded about groups who were allegedly abusing children in day-care centers, impregnating girls for infant sacrifice, brainwashing adults, and even controlling the highest levels of government. As historian of religion David Grankfurter listened to these sinister theories, it occurred to him how strikingly similar they were to those that swept parts of the early Christian world, early modern Europe, and postcolonial Africa. he began to investigate the social and psychological patterns that give rise to these myths. The first work to provide an in-depth analysis of the topic, Evil Incarnate uses anthropology, the history of religion, sociology, and psychoanalytic theory to answer the questions “What causes people collectively to envision evil and seek to exterminate it?” and “Why does the representation of evil recur in such typical patterns?”

Foucault's Monsters and the Challenge of Law

I, Monster is a resource for all professionals in health and education who work with challenging young people. The book aims to explain the issues behind challenging behaviour, to enable empathy, and to facilitate a more productive therapeutic relationship between the health/education professional and the child. I, Monster is divided into three parts. Part one suggests that our greatest foes lurk deep within ourselves, and that knowing our own darkness is the best method for dealing with the darkness of other people (Jung, 1973). Part two focuses on the inner world of adolescents who use aggression to manage early terrors. Part three explores approaches and strategies to help them heal the pain of the past. Full of case studies as well as coverage of key concepts and theory, this book offers a fascinating insight into the minds of the young people you work with.
Enter the enchanting world of mythical creatures and explore the history behind them in this beautifully illustrated compendium for kids aged 7 to 9. You'll meet an incredible cast of mind-boggling fictional animals from all around the world. Say hello to Bigfoot in the forests of North America and learn about the Native American traditions that inspired its story. Voyage to Japan to meet kitsune, supernatural nine-tailed foxes that can turn into humans. And jump onboard an ancient storm-battered ship to learn why mermaids were the last thing a sailor wanted to see. Learn about the societies that spawned these legendary creatures, from Ancient Greece to the indigenous tribes of Australia, and find out what the beasts tell us about the people who created them. From narwhal tusks inspiring the legend of unicorns, to dinosaur bones creating rumours of dragons, there is an interesting story behind every magical beast. Mythical Beasts and Magical Creatures tells you everything you need to know about supernatural animals great and small. Perfect for fans of Harry Potter and other fantasy tales, this is the only kids' e-guide to magical creatures that tells you the history behind the mythology.

The "Other" in Second Temple Judaism

A gendered reading of monster and the monstrous body in medieval literature.

The A to Z of Fantasy Literature

The human mind needs monsters. In every culture and in every epoch in human history, from ancient Egypt to modern Hollywood, imaginary beings have haunted dreams and fantasies, provoking in young and old shivers of delight, thrills of terror, and endless fascination. All known folklores brim with visions of looming and ferocious monsters, often in the role as adversaries to great heroes. But while heroes have been closely studied by mythologists, monsters have been neglected, even though they are equally important as pan-human symbols and reveal similar insights into ways the mind works. In Monsters: Evil Beings, Mythical Beasts, and All Manner of Imaginary Terrors, anthropologist David D. Gilmore explores what human traits monsters represent and why they are so ubiquitous in people's imaginations and share so many features across different cultures. Using colorful and absorbing evidence from virtually all times and places, Monsters is the first attempt by an anthropologist to delve into the mysterious, frightful abyss of mythical beasts and to interpret their role in the psyche and in society. After many hair-raising descriptions of monstrous beings in art, folktales, fantasy, literature, and community ritual, including such avatars as Dracula and Frankenstein, Hollywood ghouls, and extraterrestrials, Gilmore identifies many common denominators and proposes some novel interpretations. Monsters, according to Gilmore, are always enormous, man-eating, gratuitously violent, aggressive, sexually sadistic, and superhuman in power, combining our worst nightmares and our most urgent fantasies. We both abhor and worship our monsters: they are our gods as well as our demons. Gilmore argues that the immortal monster of the mind is a complex creation embodying virtually all of the inner conflicts that make us human. Far from being something alien, nonhuman, and outside us, our monsters are our deepest selves.

The Book of Mythical Beasts and Magical Creatures

This book provides an exploration of the historical conditions that gradually defined subordinating symbols and conflictual values in social relations between the sexes. It reveals how snakes and the gelid eyes of Medusa—the archetypical snake-woman—have reverberated across the visual arts and written sources throughout the ages in association with negative emotions: fear, anger, scorn and shame. The outcomes and implications of the disturbing correlation between the dangerous female gaze, the malignitas of the snake and the lethal power of menstruation that have been woven through the fabric of the Western imaginary are analysed here. This analysis reveals an intriguing history of female reptilian hybrids—from the pleasing Minoan snake goddesses to the depressing Gorgon, Echidna, Amazons, Eve, Melusine, Basilisk, Poison-Damsel, Catoblepas and Sadako/Samara—and gives the reader an opportunity to explore things that never happened but have always been.

The Ashgate Research Companion to Monsters and the Monstrous

Exploring the pedagogical power of the monstrous, this collection of new essays describes innovative teaching strategies that use our cultural fascination with monsters to enhance learning in high school and college courses. The contributors discuss the implications of inviting fearsome creatures into the classroom, showing how they work to create compelling narratives and provide students a framework for analyzing history, culture, and everyday life. Essays explore ways of using the monstrous to teach literature, film, philosophy, theater, art history, religion, foreign language, and other subjects. Some sample syllabi, assignments, and class materials are provided.
Two Strange Beasts

The Marvellous and the Monstrous in the Sculpture of Twelfth-century Europe

Meet some of the magical creatures people have invented throughout history.

Monsters and Monstrosity in Augustan Poetry

Monsters are a part of every society, and ours is no exception. They are deeply embedded in our history, our mythos, and our culture. However, treating them as simply a facet of children’s stories or escapist entertainment belittles their importance. When examined closely, we see that monsters have always represented the things we fear: that which is different, which we can’t understand, which is dangerous, which is Other. But in many ways, monsters also represent our growing awareness of ourselves and our changing place in a continually shrinking world. Contemporary portrayals of the monstrous often have less to do with what we fear in others than with what we fear about ourselves, what we fear we might be capable of. The nineteen essays in this volume explore the place and function of the monstrous in a variety of media – stories and novels like Baum’s Oz books or Gibson’s Neuromancer; television series and feature films like The Walking Dead or Edward Scissorhands; and myths and legends like Beowulf and The Loch Ness Monster – in order to provide a closer understanding of not just who we are and who we have been, but also who we believe we can be – for better or worse.

Pandemonium and Parade

Transatlantic studies have begun to explore the lasting influence of Spain on its former colonies and the surviving ties between the American nations and Spain. In Monsters by Trade, Lisa Surwillo takes a different approach, explaining how modern Spain was literally made by its Cuban colony. Long after the transatlantic slave trade had been abolished, Spain continued to smuggle thousands of Africans annually to Cuba to work the sugar plantations. Nearly a third of the royal income came from Cuban sugar, and these profits underwrote Spain’s modernization even as they damaged its international standing. Surwillo analyzes a sampling of nineteenth-century Spanish literary works that reflected metropolitan fears of the hold that slave traders (and the slave economy more generally) had over the political, cultural, and financial networks of power. She also examines how the nineteenth-century empire and the role of the slave trader are commemorated in contemporary tourism and literature in various regions in Northern Spain. This is the first book to demonstrate the centrality of not just Cuba, but the illicit transatlantic slave trade to the cultural life of modern Spain.

Egypt as a Monster in the Book of Ezekiel

This collection examines the intersection of the discourses of “disability” and “monstrosity” in a timely and necessary intervention in the scholarly fields of Disability Studies and Monster Studies. Analyzing Medieval and Early Modern art and literature replete with images of non-normative bodies, these essays consider the pernicious history of defining people with distinctly non-normative bodies or non-normative cognition as monsters. In many cases throughout Western history, a figure marked by what Rosemarie Garland-Thomson has termed “the extraordinary body” is labeled a “monster.” This volume explores the origins of this conflation, examines the problems and possibilities inherent in it, and casts both disability and monstrosity in light of emergent, empowering discourses of posthumanism.