Newsletter

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This year has continued to pose challenges for all of us, whether adapting to changes to our teaching and studying, or coping with increased solitude in our daily lives. Financial difficulties have also been a worry for some, including those on temporary contracts who are not eligible for government assistance and those who have had to significantly reduce working hours due to childcare responsibilities. With these precarious circumstances in mind, BAVS has been offering several hardship bursaries supported by generous donations from our members.

2020 has collapsed some of the physical distance that ordinarily separates us. The year brought new ways to watch, present, and discuss all matters Victorian while homebound. BAVS held a summer online symposium on the topic of race and imperialism in Victorian studies, which was well attended and generated some excellent discussion. I have also been following other online platforms with interest: Indiana University's unparalleled Victoria List has seemed especially lively, while Twitter has provided a welcome online hub for Victorianists to exchange ideas and reflections. #ShareBAVSmemories provided some nostalgia in this, the twentieth year that BAVS has been in existence — and it is not too late to add your own memories! The best may yet be to come in the form of the BAVS Writing Retreat and Christmas Quiz on Wednesday 2 December. Places still remain; registration is via Eventbrite.

It has been a particularly busy autumn for new books in Victorian studies, some of which are already in the hands of reviewers. I hope you enjoy reading the range of pieces in this issue and join me in thanking the reviewers for their work. Do continue to contact me by email regarding any newsletter matters: you may be interested in putting yourself forward as a reviewer, you may have a book to recommend for review, or you may want to announce a call for contributions to a new publication in Victorian studies that you are editing.

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Reviews

The BAVS Newsletter is always looking for new reviewers, particularly among postgraduate, early-career, and independent researchers. To express an interest in reviewing, please email your name, affiliation, five research keywords, and any titles or digital resources that you are interested in reviewing to bavsnews@gmail.com. Reviewers must join BAVS if they have not done so already. Authors, editors, and publishers of recent work on any aspect of Victorian history, literature, and culture are also invited to suggest titles for review by emailing the same address. Reviews printed in the BAVS Newsletter are distributed to over 600 members around the world and then archived on our open-access website. Reviews will be returned to each book's publisher to aid their publicity efforts.

***Hardy, Conrad and the Senses,* by Hugh Epstein (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020), 304pp., £80 (hardback), 978-1-4744-4986-1**

In this outstanding book Hugh Epstein achieves at least four significant things. First, he supplements the history of the senses as practised by, for example, the contributors to the *Bloomsbury Cultural History of the Senses* (2014) with case studies of the implications for selfhood of being immersed in the world through sight, hearing, and touch. The case studies are drawn from the fiction of Thomas Hardy and Joseph Conrad, and Epstein's second achievement is to have found and clearly articulated a satisfying basis for treating these two writers together. Hardy and Conrad met only a handful of times, and barely mentioned each other in correspondence, by name or implication, yet critics have long intuited a connection between them. Is it the centrality to their work of 'moments of vision', as Virginia Woolf hinted? Is it their supposed pessimism? 1895, the year of publication of both *Jude the Obscure* and *Almayer's Folly*, has been identified as a turning-point in the novel: does the attraction of pairing Hardy and Conrad derive from 'the notion of Hardy as the last of the old, and Conrad the beginning of the new' (p. 12)? Epstein argues 'not for a shift, but for a specific and pre-eminent *place* in late-Victorian culture for these two novelists', whom he co-positions as 'compatible' writers 'in an age of the observation of phenomena' (p. 18).

Epstein's third feat is to set Hardy and Conrad squarely in the context of 'mid- and late-century developments in physiology and physics' (p. 18). For example, in a superb chapter comparing the 'acoustic world' of *The Return of the Native* (1878) with the 'sonic drama' of 'Heart of Darkness' (1899) and both to the 'soundscape' of *Nostromo* (1904), Epstein demonstrates how Hardy's and Conrad's novels are informed by mid-century scientific accounts of sound as a 'mode of motion […] through a medium' (p. 145). His emphasis is on the emergence of new scientific accounts of sense-phenomena and perception, and his demonstrations of how the theories and discoveries of key figures from the age of observation such as Hermann von Helmholtz, Alexander Bain, and James Clerk Maxwell were absorbed into Hardy's and Conrad's writing are succinct and convincing.

Epstein's fourth achievement in this book is to provide a series of close readings of exceptional sensitivity of thirteen works, from the canonical to the relatively under-explored, including for example Hardy's first novel *Desperate Remedies* (1871) and Conrad's *The Rescue* (1920), begun in 1876. The readings build on Epstein's concept of 'scenic realism', a kind of impressionism 'which renders the physics of the scene that contains the mind, rather than the psychology of the mind that contains the scene' (p. 42). In passing Epstein notes the potential contribution of James Fenimore Cooper to the development of a scenic realist sense, especially in Conrad (p. 12), but his strategy (as noted above) is to follow the science. Thus chapter four, 'An Audible World', begins with Helmholtz's discovery, reported in *On the Sensations of Tone* (1862), that each filament of the inner ear acts as a 'tiny resonator' tuned to its own frequency (p. 146) before moving on to explore how Hardy and Conrad depict the process of the production, transmission, and reception of sound to create their singularly immersive auditory worlds. It is the blend of sound produced on Egdon Heath by the 'plaintive' wind, the rugged landscape, the various types of dried-up vegetation, and the 'lengthened sighing' of Eustacia that renders Egdon so 'dense with possibility and uncertainty' for its inhabitants (p. 153), and incorporates the reader 'into the heath's atmosphere' (p. 171). The space of 'Heart of Darkness' is likewise 'dense with sound' which seems to arrive 'from all sides at once' (pp. 162–176). Epstein contrasts the audible worlds of both *Return* and 'Heart of Darkness' with the 'thoroughly *contemporary*' soundscape of *Nostromo*, which demands 'a different auditory attention' (p. 177), as

'the depiction of economic, social and political change generates a new auditory fabric of noise in Conrad's prose' (p. 148). What we hear in *Nostromo*, as Epstein's section-title puts it, is nothing less than 'The Sound of History' (p. 177).

From the consideration of sightlines and soundscapes in the novels, and the question of what it means to be a seeing or a listening self, Epstein moves gradually inward to the role accorded to mental processes by his two writers. 'It is better for mankind to be impressionable than reflective,' Conrad wrote in the preface to *A Personal Record* (1912); in his final chapter Epstein discusses the implications of interiority for characters like Jude Fawley, whose 'sensory experience' is so 'limited and constrained' (p. 245), or Razumov, the lonely, brainy, obsessively inward-looking protagonist of Conrad's *Under Western Eyes*. Readers interested in either or both of Epstein's authors or in more general questions of the relationship of science and literature in the nineteenth century will find all the chapters of this scrupulously researched, clearly organised, and elegantly written book equally rewarding. *Hardy, Conrad and the Senses* raises the bar for anyone writing about either of these two authors; for anyone writing about both, it will be the touchstone of quality for some time.

Andrew Hewitt (University of Hull)

***Constance Naden: Scientist, Philosopher, Poet,* by Clare Stainthorp (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2019), 295pp., £60 (hardback), ISBN 978-1-78874-149-1**

In these days of growing interest in interdisciplinarity and a burgeoning field of Literature and Science studies, a figure like Constance Naden commands attention. As a publishing poet and philosopher who studied science and engaged with science in her poetry, interest in her work has been increasing steadily over the course of the last two decades. So far, however, most attention has been paid to Naden as a woman poet who engaged humorously with evolution theory, thus restricting the discussion of her work to a very limited number of poems. As the first book-length study of Naden's life and work, Clare Stainthorp's monograph is therefore very welcome, in particular because her extensive and thorough archival work has been rewarded with the spectacular find of previously unknown notebooks from the early years of Naden's life. In this patient and meticulous sifting of the archive lies the book's main strength. Stainthorp takes up every hint and follows every lead, from detailed reconstructions of the course schedule of Naden's scientific studies at Mason College, to reasoned speculation about the examination questions she would have encountered (p. 120).

The study begins by providing an 'intellectual biography' of Naden in which Stainthorp is, according to her own words, 'not interested in uncovering Naden's "true self"' (p. 27), but rather focuses in particular on her education in order to provide an intellectual context for Naden's published work. Naden's education therefore features centrally in this chapter, which also situates her main philosophical project, 'Hylo-Idealism', in the contemporary philosophical context and provides an overview of contemporary critical reactions to her work, both poetic and philosophical. The remainder of the book is divided into three chapters, devoted to Naden the scientist, Naden the philosopher, and Naden the poet respectively.

This structural choice, while understandable, seems not ideal. After all, the book's main concern is to show that 'Constance Naden's works reveal a life-long desire to find unity in diversity' (p. 1), and that Naden was committed to 'the ideal of unity in the face of specialization and increasing disciplinarity' (p. 68). The separate discussion of Naden's scientific, philosophic, and poetic endeavours forces the author into either untangling concerns and aspects of Naden's work which she wants to insist are closely intertwined, or to return to the same observations, texts, and conclusions repeatedly. The central argument developed in the 'Scientist' chapter concerns the role of light in Naden's work, both 'as a scientific subject and as a metaphor for knowledge' (p. 87). After first establishing the importance of John Tyndall's concept of the 'scientific imagination' for Naden, the chapter proceeds to focus on the themes of heliotropism and stargazing, tracing a 'shift from light (and truth) being conceived as singular to being understood as multiple' (p. 87) over the course of Naden's work. This focus uncovers some interesting and surprising perspectives on Naden's poetry, but in doing so it does not always give room to the complexity of the individual poetic text. For instance, Stainthorp summarily states that '[i]n her 1881 collection Songs and Sonnets, Naden demonstrates her belief that scientific knowledge, symbolized by light, is the harbinger of truth' (p. 95), but she fails to substantiate her claim that light consistently equals

scientific knowledge (or truth?) in Naden's work. Indeed, the poems in Songs and Sonnets are by no means as unambiguous in their use of light symbolism as Stainthorp would seem to suggest. Because she reduces the complexity of the poetic texts in the endeavour to fit them into her larger narrative, her readings of poetic quotations are not always fully convincing.

The next chapter is mainly concerned with Naden's relationship to religion, discussing the importance of her non-conformist upbringing and tracing her gradual adoption of an atheist position, via pantheism and free thought. This chapter draws on the unpublished poems in the uncovered notebooks to illustrate Naden's commitment to religious beliefs in her youth while engaging most directly with Naden's philosophical publications. Stainthorp provides brief summaries of Naden's most important essays and discusses in detail the relationship of her work to that of Herbert Spencer, which, she claims, is less derivative than has sometimes been suggested (pp. 177–183). The chapter concludes with a sustained reading of Naden's longest poem, 'The Modern Apostle' (1887), as an 'orienting text that speaks to, describes and interrogates the development of [Naden's] philosophical beliefs' (p. 185).

The final chapter puts Naden's poetry centre stage, showing her to be 'preoccupied with what it means to be a poet, and what poetry might achieve' (p. 195). Stainthorp's focus on Naden's troubled relationship with the lyric 'I' allows her to fruitfully draw together several strands of argument: the important influence of the Romantic poets of both generations on Naden's understanding of poetry, her negotiation of gender stereotypes around the figure of the 'poetess', and her use of distancing or masking techniques, in particular her propensity for dramatic monologues and comic verse. Since this chapter engages with the poetic texts on their own terms, without marshalling them to serve a larger argument, its readings are the most satisfying in the book. And yet it is perhaps indicative of Stainthorp's tendency to reduce poetic complexity that she ascribes to Naden an ideal of the poet that emphasises clarity of communication and concludes: 'she seems to be most successful in communicating her ideal through philosophical prose. There is not a lyric poem in "Modern Apostle" that intimates full disclosure' (p. 245). In light of the proliferating masking strategies which Stainthorp intelligently discusses, the ascription of such an ideal to Naden seems hard to justify. Considering the importance of dramatic monologues for Naden's poetic output, it is also regrettable that Stainthorp considers only male Romantic poets as important influences, scarcely mentioning obvious female predecessors like Augusta Webster or Christina Rossetti.

The study concludes with a brief consideration of Naden's final years before her life was cut abruptly short by a fatal inflammation of an ovarian cyst; years in which Naden was travelling and did not publish further. For anyone with an interest in Naden's life and work, Stainthorp's study amasses a wealth of detail and information and will no doubt be highly valuable. The expanse of Naden's poetical and philosophical work, however, has only begun to be explored.

Irmtraud Huber (Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München)

***The Edinburgh Companion to Anthony Trollope*, ed. by Frederik Van Dam, David Skilton and Ortwin de Graef (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018), 396pp., £150 (hardback), ISBN 978-1-4744-2440-0**

Until quite late in the twentieth century, Anthony Trollope studies were a niche, almost closet area of the British academy. Scholars wrote and published about a novelist who had a devoted following in the British well-heeled classes, but who was not seen as of the first water when it came to serious study. A great tidal wave of scholarship from the United States in the 1970s — by Ruth ap Roberts, Robert Polhemus, and James Kincaid, among others — helped to sweep away such fusty views, well supported this side of the Atlantic by David Skilton's 1972 study, *Anthony Trollope and his Contemporaries*. Since then there has been a plethora of monographs and essays examining Trollope's texts, and from the Edinburgh Companion to Trollope we now know his standing is world-wide; he is read and studied in China, Russia, Europe and the Commonwealth, as well as in Britain and the USA, demonstrating this extraordinary writer's capacity for the subtle examination of the issues of his day, in a style seemingly transparent, but with a powerful subversive undertone.

An overview of Trollope Studies over the past thirty years gives us a paradigm for the way styles of literary criticism have changed. We are moving away from a focus on the text and its associated close

reading and towards an exploration of wider theories that draw on texts to illustrate larger ideas. This is explicit in this latest collection, which springs from the joyous 2015 Trollope Bicentenary Conference in Leuven, Belgium, generously sponsored by the Paul Druwé bequest fund. Among the twenty-three contributions are some outstanding essays. As we have come to expect from Steve Amarnick, he gives us a thoughtful appraisal of the under-studied Harry Heathcote of Gangoil (1873), linking Dickens's creation and exploitation of a public taste for 'Christmassy' short fiction with Trollope's subversion of the genre. Francis O'Gorman offers a nuanced exploration of the metonymy of home-ownership in *The Way We Live Now* (1875) with interesting links and reflections on Trollope's father's disastrous attempts at property development and his own measured investment in housing his family, culminating in his purchase of 39 Montagu Square, the apogee of his aspirations, in 1873. Lauren Goodlad adds gravitas to any collection, and her essay here, 'Trollope, Seriality, Series', is as thoughtful as it is entertaining. Goodlad's identification of the success of long-running television series, such as 'The Sopranos' and 'The Wire', with the increasing success of serialised fiction through the 'long 1860s', links the zeitgeist of one age with the money-spinners of the other. In her close reading of *The Small House at Allington* (1864) she dissects the economic theorising that underpins the action of that novel. Continuing and expanding on her fine work on human geography, Sophie Gilmartin develops her analysis into an exploration of its links with free indirect discourse. Linking a parallel exploration of George Lewes' The Physiology of Common Life (1859), Gilmartin gives us a close reading of one chapter of *Can You Forgive Her?* (1865) which is as remarkable for its insight as it is erudite.

Sticking more firmly to the editors' professed concept of moving away from 'the historicist and contextualist paradigm', Kate Flint's 'Shoddy Trollope' adopts a material culture studies approach. In her account of the history of the making of 'shoddy', Flint explains how the material world becomes caught up with a metaphorical and metonymic language. This early embodiment of recycling, surely laudable in itself, metamorphoses into a paradigm for all that is found to be sham; inferior goods masquerading as sound fabric. This leads us into an illuminating exploration of Trollope's use of 'shoddy' as part of his cosmic view of the importance of integrity and honour in one's life, whether public or private.

But the pearl of the collection is surely John Bowen's 'Creation as Criticism: Anthony Trollope, Anthony Powell and Elizabeth Bishop'. In this essay, Bowen examines Trollope's unregarded *North America* (1862) alongside a twenty-eight line poem by Elizabeth Bishop, 'From Trollope's Journal' (1969). Both authors are disparaging about these works. Trollope says, 'I can recommend no-one to read it now.' Bishop says, 'I just copied out some of the Washington chapter', but what she succeeds in doing is to turn a short passage from Trollope's *North America* into a critique of the contemporary Washington City government, and make it a metonym for a nation's ills in the depth of the cold war. Bowen is poetic in his empathic and powerful engagement with both writers. As he says, 'Bishop has cut Trollope's two volumes into two sonnets'. She has written 'an important poem that is not just about Trollope, but deeply Trollopian in its voice and subject matter.' And surely, that quest for the essential author is what we all strive for, but more rarely achieve, when we write about Anthony Trollope.

Margaret Markwick (University of Exeter)

***A Victorian Architectural Controversy: Who was the Real Architect of the Houses of Parliament?*, edited by Ariyuki Kondo (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2019), 286pp., £64.99 (hardback), ISBN 152753944X**

In 1834 the Houses of Parliament were destroyed by fire. A competition to redesign the Palace of Westminster was launched in June 1835, with the proviso its style was to either be Gothic or Elizabethan. Ninety-seven designs were submitted, Sir Charles Barry, being announced the winner in January 1836. Barry was a leading proponent of the current fad of Victorian Renaissance Revivalism. To give his plans the heist needed to include the Gothic style required by the competition, Barry engaged the young mediaevalist architect Augustus Pugin. Surprisingly Pugin did not enter the competition himself. Pugin had recently converted to Catholicism and despite the 1829 Emancipation Act, there was still prejudice against a Catholic designing the Parliament of an Anglican nation. His was a pre-reformation type of English Catholicism, influenced

by mediaeval architecture and the catholic liturgy which was not Roman but English. He regarded that architects and craftsmen of that era were designing for the glory of God. Their Gothic style consisted of irregular, asymmetrical forms and composition to suit the functional needs of the people. This contrasted with the strict symmetry and formality of the Victorian Renaissance style

This book quotes correspondence showing that the association between Barry and Pugin commenced in August 1835. A complete set of designs by Pugin had been sold to Barry for 400 guineas. An assertion had been made in the House of Lords that Pugin and Barry were joint architects of the project. In response Pugin wrote to *The Builder* magazine: 'I am engaged by him [Barry] and him alone, with the approval of the Government, to assist in preparing working drawings, and models from his designs of all the wood carvings and of the internal decorations […] I do not do anything on my own responsibility' (p. 14). Pugin repeatedly stressed this in correspondence to Barry: 'exaggerated statements respecting the nature of my employment at the Palace of Westminster have appeared in one of the papers […] I have been most careful to prevent any misconception on this head […] my occupation was simply to carry out your views in the practical execution of the internal detail […] I wish to serve you on this work with the greatest fidelity' (p. 15). The author casts doubt that Pugin wrote these letters on his own initiative or even meant what he wrote, with circumstantial evidence that the letter in The Builder was written under coercion from Barry in order to preserve his reputation.

After Pugin's death in 1852 controversy arose because the architectural styles of both Barry and Pugin, the Italianate Renaissance and the Gothic, are identifiable in the building. Was Pugin just an assistant to Barry or a bona fide architect, but 'ghosted' to preserve Barry's reputation?

The controversy was stirred by the disappearance of seventy-six letters written by Charles Barry to Augustus Pugin confirming Pugin's role in designing the new Parliament buildings. Pugin's son Edward complied with a request by Barry to lend him these letters, shortly before Barry died in 1860. Charles Barry's son Alfred, a clergyman, told Edward Pugin that there was no evidence for the existence of these letters. Yet Alfred Barry had included transcriptions of some of these letters in his biography of Charles Barry,

In 1867 Edward Pugin published a pamphlet 'Who was the Art Architect of the Houses of Parliament' in which he asserted 'my desire is that my father should receive his fair share of that fame which is now accorded to one, who has hitherto been regarded as the sole designer of that which my father mainly originated' (p. 51). Alfred Barry published his riposte in a pamphlet the following year stating that Pugin was one of his father's assistants. Edwin Pugin published a response to Barry's pamphlet. The controversy entered the public domain with supporters of both sides having letters printed in newspapers and magazines.

This book contains a well indexed introductory chapter describing the origins and the process of the conflict. There is also an overview of the conflicting styles of Neo-Classicism and Gothic Revivalism in the nineteenth century which had a resonance in art and literature, where it provided the leitmotif of Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* (1895). The rest of the book is an exhaustive collection of correspondence and documents, both published and private, concerning the Pugin-Barry dispute.

While this comprehensive and well researched book presents an interesting topic for Victorian historians in general, it would be a particularly useful subtext for students of architectural history. However, it would have been helpful to have had a postscript summarising which particular components of this extraordinary edifice were designed by Barry and those which were accomplished by Pugin.

Graham Whitehouse (Independent Researcher)

***Sex and Sexuality in Victorian Britain*, by Violet Fenn (Barnsley: Pen and Sword History, 2020), 144pp., £25 (hardback), ISBN 978-1-5267-5668-8**

There are so many myths surrounding sexuality in the Victorian era that it is easy to assume their reality, no matter how disguised. However, Violet Fenn's *Sex and Sexuality in Victorian Britain* shows that there is more fiction than fact in these stereotypical images of the Victorians. Fashion, courtship, virginity, fidelity, sex toys, libido, pornography, health, homosexuality and the relationship between art and sex are just some of the topics covered in this short yet thought-provoking book. Although the Victorians tried to be as secretive as possible, this does not mean they were as conservative as they claimed to be. In fact, we discover this repression was just a façade to stay on the right side of public morals and expectations.

This book is surprising, as one would not expect the seemingly serious Victorians to be so *sexy*. Divided in thematic chapters, *Sex and Sexuality in Victorian Britain* explains how the ladies and gentlemen of those times found a way to hide their desire from public view, although not always with much success. As the reader will discover, this was a time of much repression, even if the Victorians' urges did find a way to be satisfied, however scandalous the consequences.

What connects Queen Victoria with a bridal white dress? Why did the Victorians treat male homosexuality so harshly when compared to lesbianism? The truth may be more surprising than readers might expect. From laws to moral rules, Violet Fenn immerses the reader in a world that is not what it seems to be, filled with romance, treachery, secret affairs, expectations and veiled moans. Although the author admits that sexuality can be a difficult subject, her analysis remains clear and accessible, while never losing her scholarly approach to the matters in hand. *Sex and Sexuality in Victorian Britain* would be a perfect choice for anyone interested in the topic; it is readable enough for any graduate, or indeed secondary school student, to enjoy.

There were little doses of humor here and there in all of the chapters, which made the reading all the more enjoyable. For instance, we discover that even the poorest people in nineteenth-century Britain found a way to satisfy their fantasies and indulge their desires. Examining all classes of the Victorian era, Fenn also provides a comprehensive account of sexuality in the period. We also discover why Victorian art and sex are symbiotic, such that painting has tended to present sexual content more openly than written works. Readers will likely find the chapter on this topic to be one of the most interesting, even if a little short.

Sex and Sexuality in Victorian Britain was enlightening, entertaining, and charming in equal parts. This book will give many hours of pleasure to its readers, who will want to know more after reading it. It is a delight for the brain.

Alan D.D. (Independent Researcher)

***In Cynara's Shadow: Collected Essays on Ernest Dowson*, edited by Alice Condé and Jessica Gossling (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2019), 285pp., £60 (hardback), ISBN 978-1-78707-625-9**

In Cynara's Shadow is an evocative title, conjuring the muse who haunts, judges, and inspires the Decadent writer Ernest Dowson. Cynara is the shadowy presence in Dowson's most famous poem (published in 1891, revised and republished in 1894) in which he laments that although he has 'Flung roses, roses riotously with the throng' (l. 14) he remains unable to 'put [Cynara's] pale, lost lilies out of mind' (l. 15). Not only is this poem, entitled '*Non sum quails eram bonae sub regno Cynarae* ' ('I am not now what I once was, under the reign of the good Cynara,' from Horace's *Odes*, IV.1) seen as *the* quintessential English Decadent poem, but its legacy has resonated through the twentieth century. It was set to music by Frederick Delius in 1911; its twilight world echoes in T.S. Eliot's 'The Hollow Men' in 1925; and its central image of Cynara as one 'gone with the wind' (l. 13) was appropriated as the title of Margaret Mitchell's epic civil-war novel in 1936. Today, a YouTube search for 'Ernest Dowson' reveals various renderings of this poem. Cynara takes us straight to the heart of this poet's oeuvre, illuminating its preoccupations and paradoxes.

Bringing Dowson out of the shadows has taken a long time. He first needed to be liberated from the negative legacy of the 'Dowson Legend' that characterised him as an archetypal Decadent whose life was marked by alcohol, drugs, and perverse sexuality. Various mid-century biographies accentuated Dowson's obsession with unreciprocated love and his complex approach to religion, but it was not until the 1980s and 1990s that a scholarly interest in Dowson's writing grew apace with *fin-de-siècle* studies. More recently, reappraisals of Dowson's work have been informed by new perspectives on Decadence. This volume, which originated in a symposium at Goldsmiths in April 2016, finally places Dowson in the limelight: it constitutes the first full-length critical study of Dowson's works published in English. The collection is divided into two sections: 'Texts' (close readings of Dowson's poetry and prose) and 'Contexts' (Dowson's interactions with contemporaries, and reassessments of his influence on twentieth-century literature and music). It is skillfully edited with inter-chapter connections highlighted throughout.

The contributors to this volume do not shy away from the thorny issue of Dawson's infatuation with the innocence and beauty of young girls, but engage with the paradox that underpins much of his writing that the unattainability of the object of his passion fomented that very desire. Dowson's real-life 'innocent' was the daughter of the Polish restauranteur Adelaide Foltinowicz, aged eleven when Dowson first met her in 1889. The theme of Dowson's obsession with Adelaide is addressed from various directions, all handled sensitively. Kostas Boyiopoulos establishes 'courtly love' as 'an anachronistic product of modern Decadent culture' and illustrates how its artificiality and focus on play-acting underpins Dowson's conception of desire as a perpetually unfulfilled quest (p. 29). Jessica Gossling shows how Dowson viewed his relationship with Adelaide 'in sacred and sanctified terms' (p. 102), highlighting an impulse in Dowson's Catholic verses to sublimate sexual desire to religious abstinence. Placing Dowson's virginal ideal in its cultural context, Jay Adams explores the 'emphatically anti-sexual love of girl children […] in the late Victorian mind,' considering parallels between Dowson and such figures as William Clarke Hall, John Ruskin, and Lewis Carroll (p. 134, p. 154). Alice Condé interrogates Dowson's Decadent credentials by differentiating 'the Decadent masochistic fantasy of rapacious female sexuality' from Dowson's intent to 'preserve and protect the innocence of the fantasy girl' (p. 218). This last reading inverts the Pygmalion legend: rather than carving a statue that is brought to life, Dowson turns his fantasy girl into marble. This notion is foregrounded by the book's cover-image depicting Edward Burne-Jones's painting of Pygmalion on bended knee worshipping the female figure of his own making.

Readers may be intrigued by the volume's frontispiece, a comic-strip depiction of Dowson's bohemian London wanderings in the company of Robert Thurston Hopkins. Drawn by Edmund Trueman for Dowson Day, the imagery and text are drawn from Hopkins's memoir. Because neither Trueman's image nor Hopkins's narrative is discussed in the volume, it seems that this graphic piece functions as a stand-alone reminder of the 'Dowson Legend,' the reputational hurdle that the contributors here have overcome by their multi-disciplinary approaches to Dowson's writing. Dowson is finally out of the shadows.

Kathy Rees (Independent Researcher)

***Aging, Duration, and the English Novel: Growing Old from Dickens to Woolf*, by Jacob Jewusiak (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 222pp., £75 (hardback), ISBN 978-1-108-49917-0**

Jacob Jewusiak's *Aging, Duration, and the English Novel* is a welcome contribution to the burgeoning critical interest in age that the humanities is currently experiencing. Age is a category that researchers have historically neglected. Whilst other categories of identity and difference — gender, race, class — have come to be understood as essential for analysing cultural-historical figures, events, and artefacts, the critical value of age has been nearly entirely overlooked.

Aging, Duration, and the English Novel successfully demonstrates that scholarly engagement with the category of age can generate interesting new interpretations of well-known works. Jewusiak opens his book by asserting that analysing representations of old age and ageing in Victorian novels reveals that the conventions of the nineteenth-century realist novel repress the natural process of ageing. According to Jewusiak, authors 'deploy a set of literary conventions to evade the difficulty of representing aging: the rapid onset of dementia after an illness, the development of gray hair after a traumatic loss, the sudden appearance of a wrinkle in the brow of a spurned lover' (pp. 1–2). The realist novel typically uses these conventions to accelerate the process of ageing into a descriptive moment, writing the passage of years on the body all at once. In short, Jewusiak argues, the Victorian novel 'trains readers to skip over the duration of aging, transforming it into a shocking moment of revelation' (p. 3).

Jewusiak makes the intriguing assertion that '[t]he formal disappearance of aging from the novel […] corresponds to the rise of industrial capitalism and the long novel, which jointly redefine duration away from temporal continuity and toward sheer length and quantifiable intervals' (p. 3). Thus, Jewusiak contends, the extended length of the Victorian novel 'stands in for the representation of duration […] and serves as a kind of ideological training that devalues slow and uneventful time' (p. 3). In short, Victorian novels can be seen as echoing the capitalist stratification of time and the lifespan itself in nineteenth-century Britain.

But did all Victorian novelists handle old age and ageing in this manner? With reference to an impressively broad selection of works by writers as diverse as Oscar Wilde, Charles Dickens, and Virginia Woolf, Jewusiak uses the following six chapters to explore both the reasoning behind and the effects of various different authorial decisions relating to age. Chapter One, 'Aging Theory', theorises the relationship between narrative, time, and ageing. Chapters Two and Three, 'No Plots for Old Men' and 'Life After the Marriage Plot', are dedicated to analysing the marginalisation of old age in key mid-Victorian plots, such as the marriage plot and the *Bildungsroman.* Chapter Two takes Dickens's *The Old Curiosity Shop* (1840), *Martin Chuzzlewit* (1844), and *A Christmas Carol* (1843) as its primary case studies, with Jewusiak arguing that old men posed a problem for the author's literary project as such characters had 'outlived' all the meaningful plots of the nineteenth century. In Chapter Three, Elizabeth Gaskell's *Cranford* (1853) serves as an example of a Victorian novel that subtly challenged the established belief that older female characters 'outside the marriage plot [were] outside the dominant narrative' (p. 79).

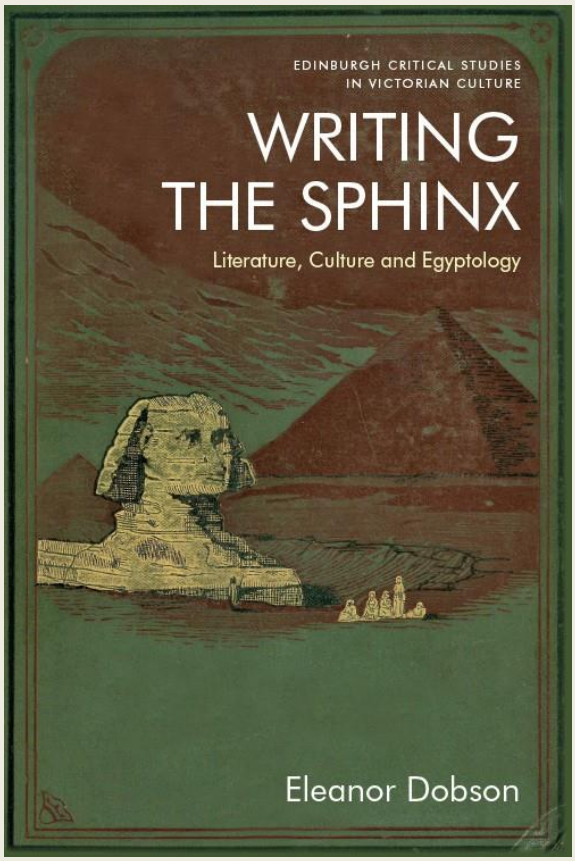
Chapters Four and Five, 'A Wrinkle in Time' and 'The Technology Age', consider literary constructions of ageing in the context of *fin-de-siècle* pessimism. Jewusiak analyses how Thomas Hardy and H. G. Wells follow Gaskell's example and subvert the normative, naturalist plot of decline; as Jewusiak notes though, these authorial decisions continue to demonstrate the Victorian need to interfere with the natural process of ageing and decline. Chapter Six, 'Gray Modernism', focuses on the work of Virginia Woolf, with Jewusiak using her publications to demonstrate that following the turn of the twentieth century new critical attitudes towards age and identity had emerged. *Orlando* (1928) is shown to be dedicated to rendering the once dependable concepts of narrative, time, and ageing brilliantly nonsensical.

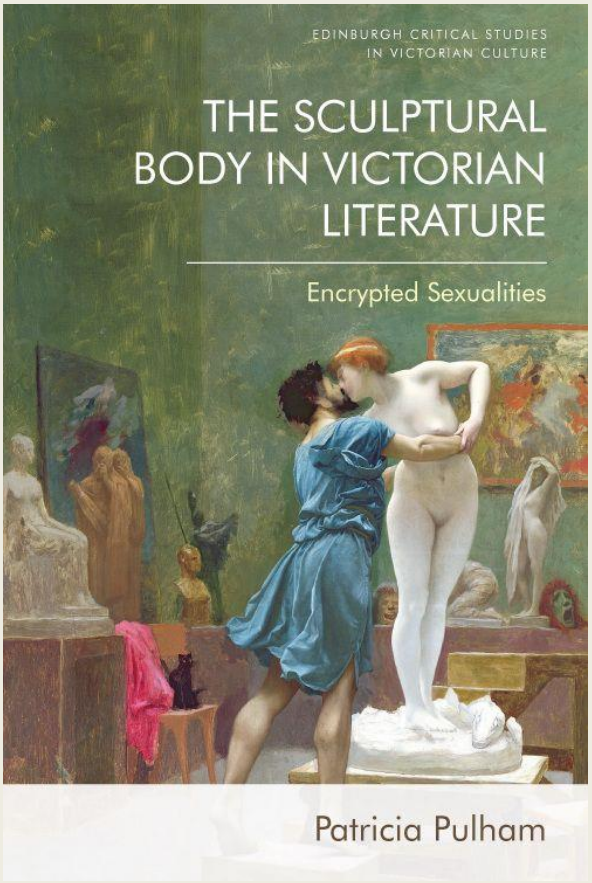
Aging, Duration, and the English Novel makes a valuable contribution not just to literary age studies, but also to ongoing debates within the humanities about the value of recognising age as a master identity on par with gender, race, and class. With Andrea Charise's *The Aesthetics of Senescence: Aging, Population, and the Nineteenth-Century British Novel* (2020) being published hot on the heels of Jewusiak's book, I am optimistic that age is getting ever closer to being recognised by humanities scholars as the essential category of analysis that it is.

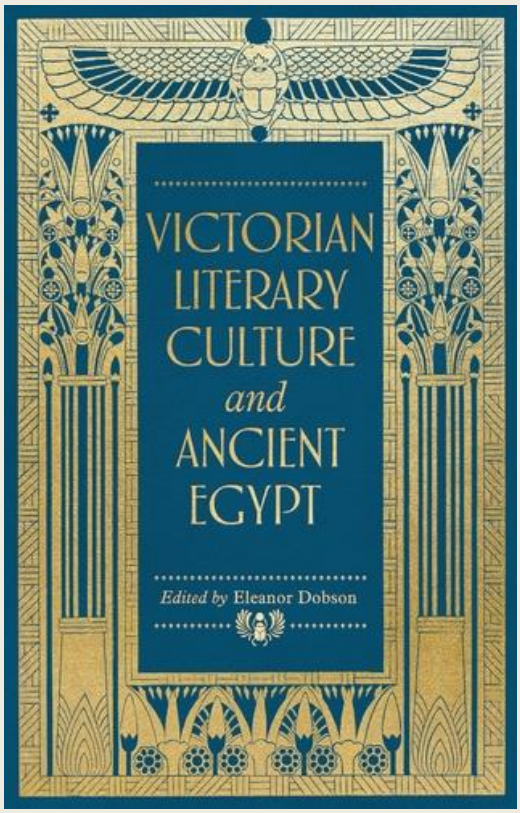
Caitlin Doley (University of York)

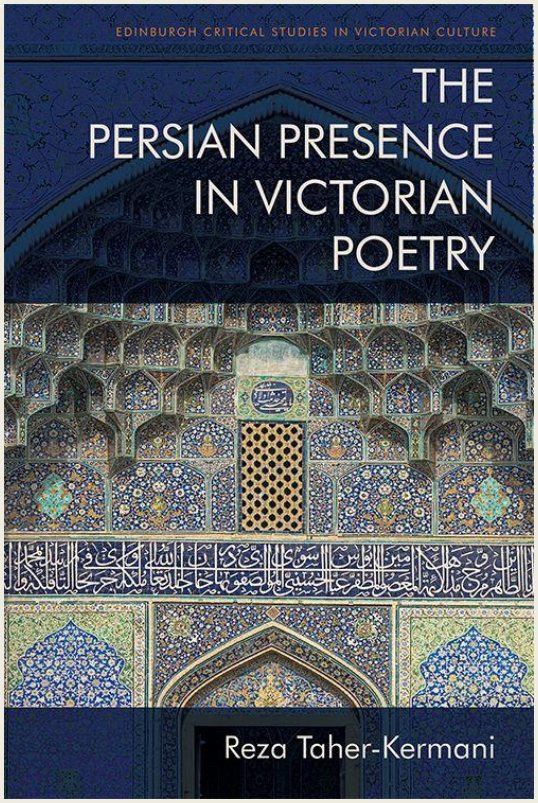
Recent Publications

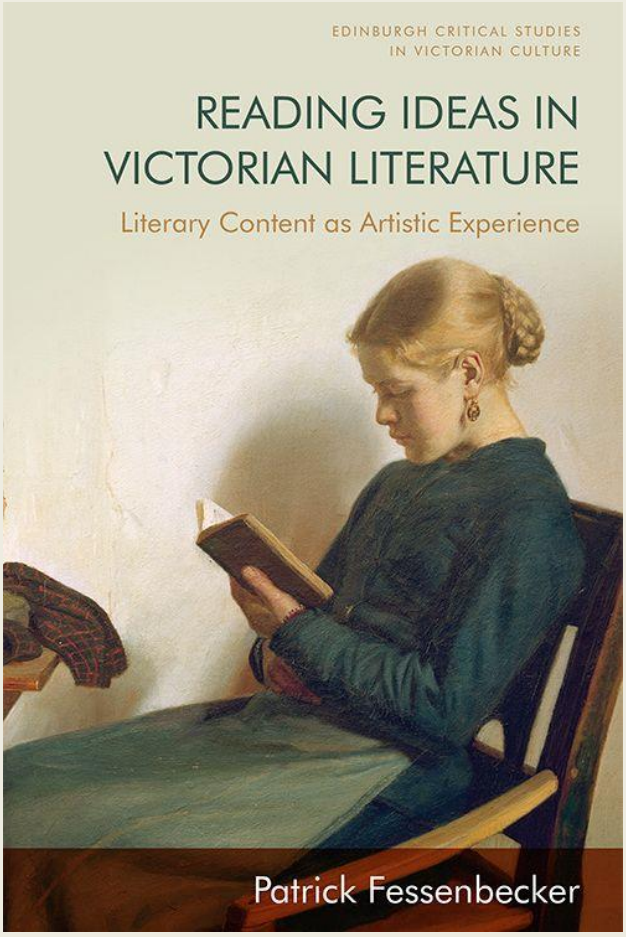
Are you an author or publisher of a recent or forthcoming book in Victorian studies? Please email a JPG image of the cover to bavsnews@gmail.com for inclusion in a future issue.







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READING IDEAS IN
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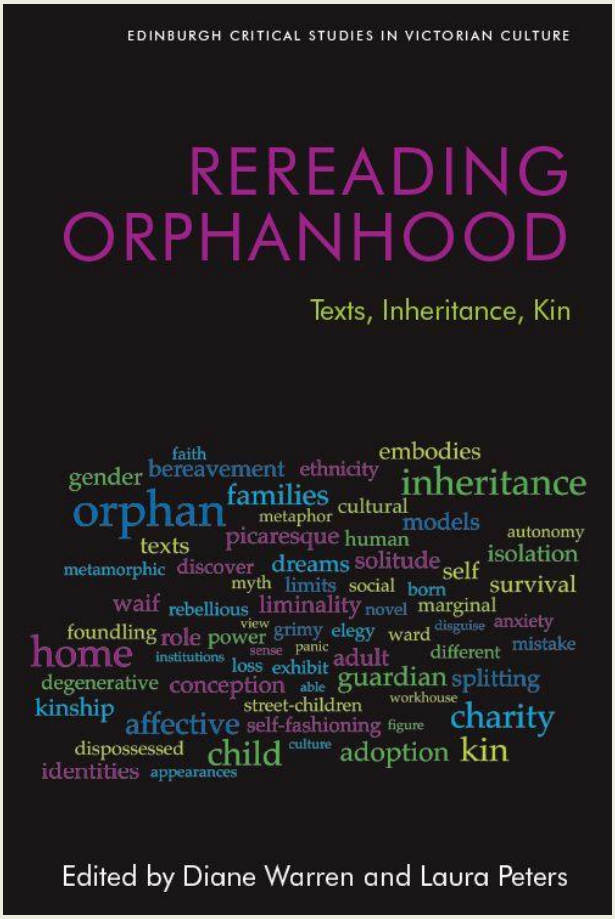
Literary Content as Artistic Experience
Patrick Fessenbecker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gender
bereavement
ethnicity
inheritance
orphan
families
metaphor
cultural
models
autonomy
texts
picaresque
human
isolation
metamorphic
discover
dreams
solitude
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survival
myth
limits
social
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waif
rebellious
liminality
novel
marginal
view
disguise
anxiety
foundling
role
power
grimy
elegy
ward
home
sense
panic
mistake
institutions
loss
exhibit
adult
different
degenerative
conception
able
guardian
splitting
workhouse
kinship
street-children
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affective
self-fashioning
figure
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child
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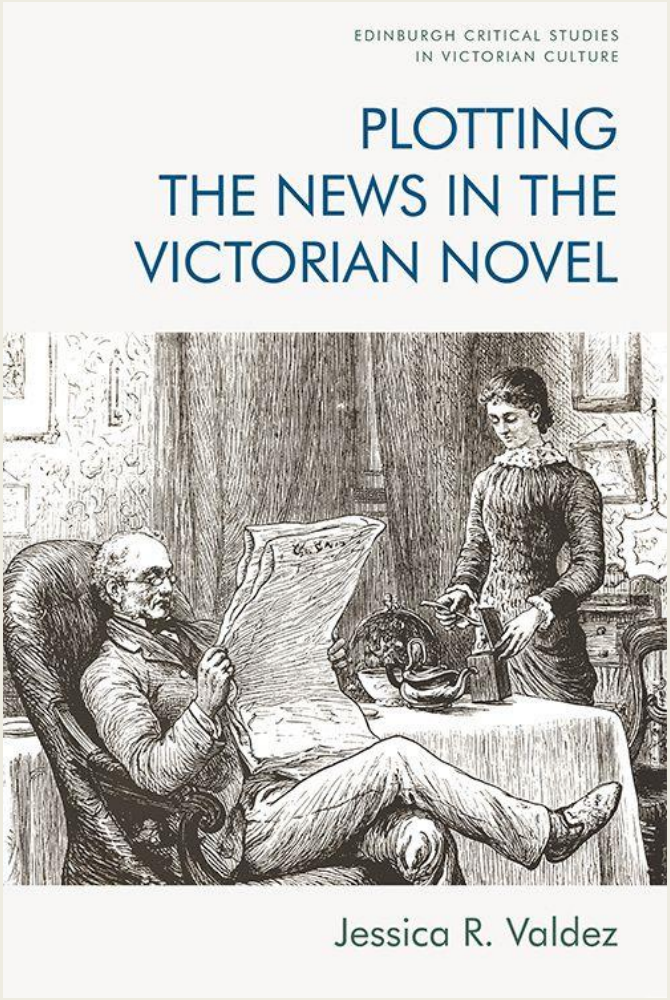
adoption
kin
identities
appearances
Edited by Diane Warren and Laura Peters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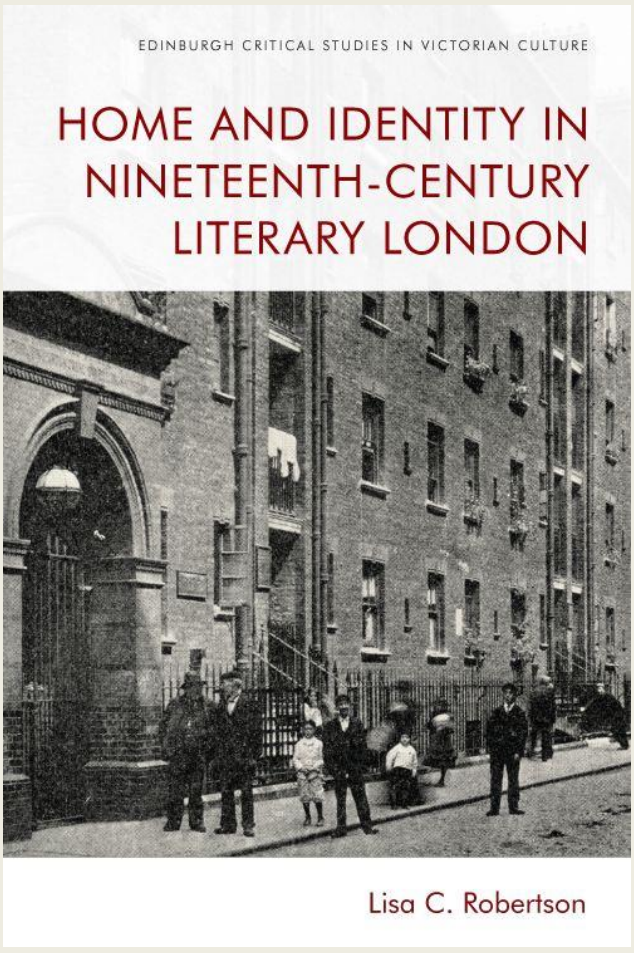
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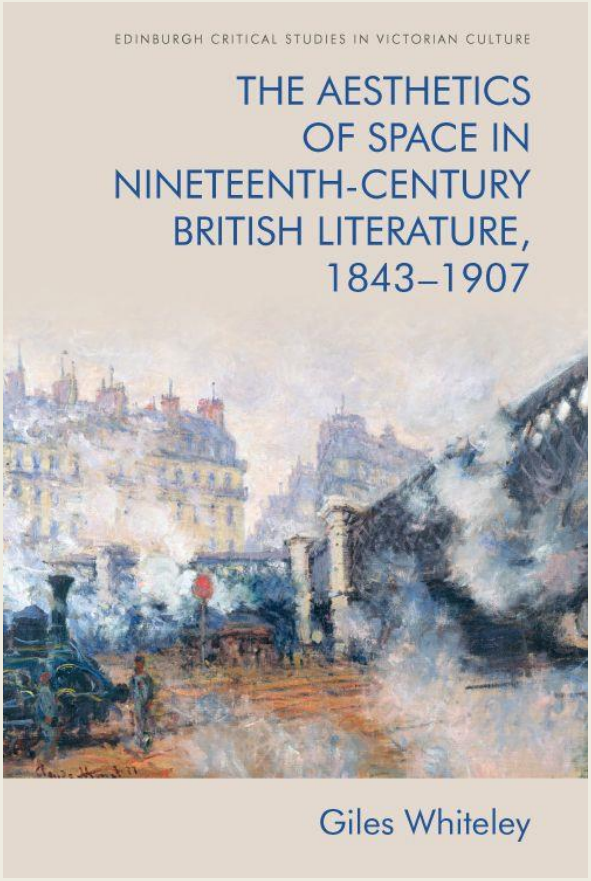
Lisa C. Robertson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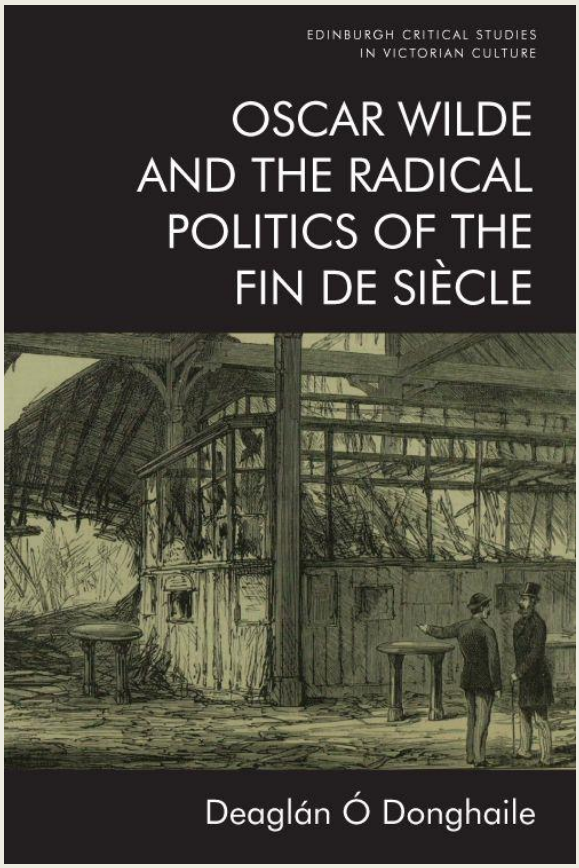
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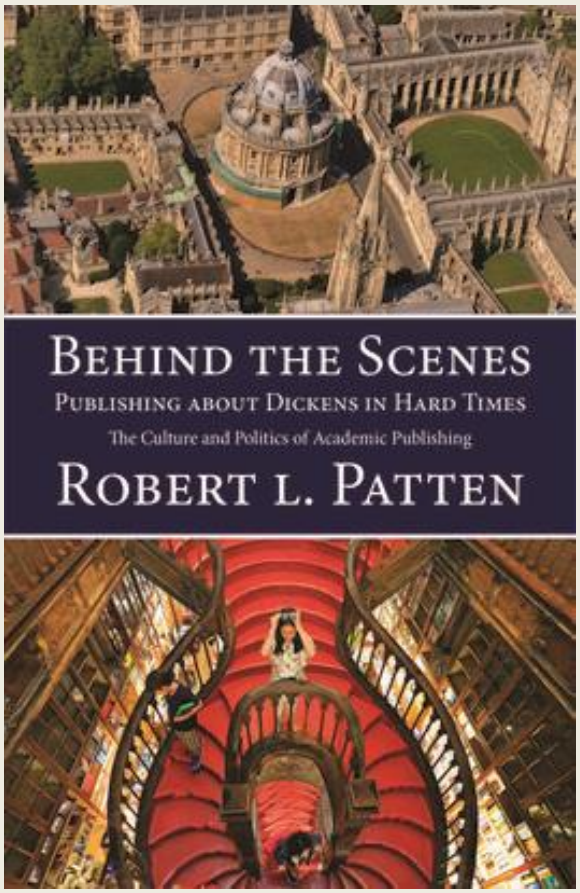
Deaglán Ó Donghaile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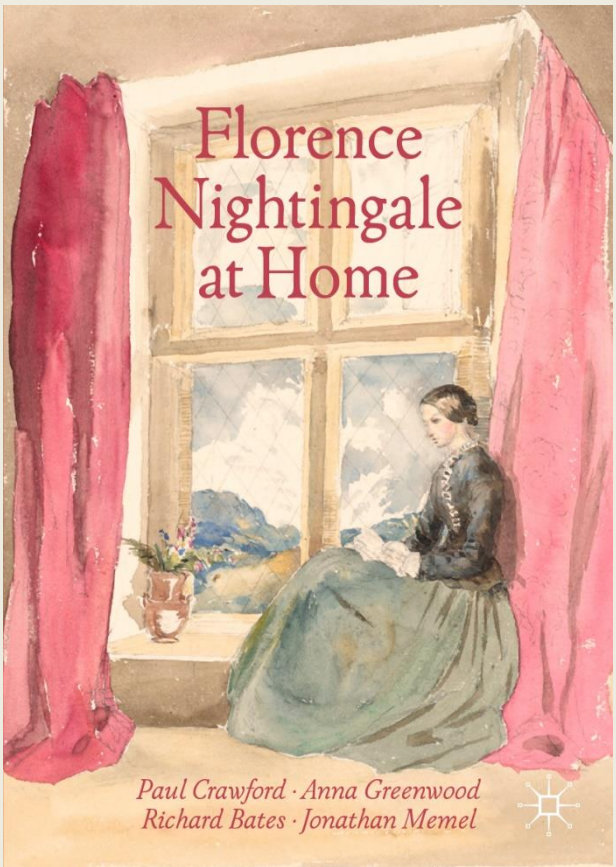
ROBERT L. PATTEN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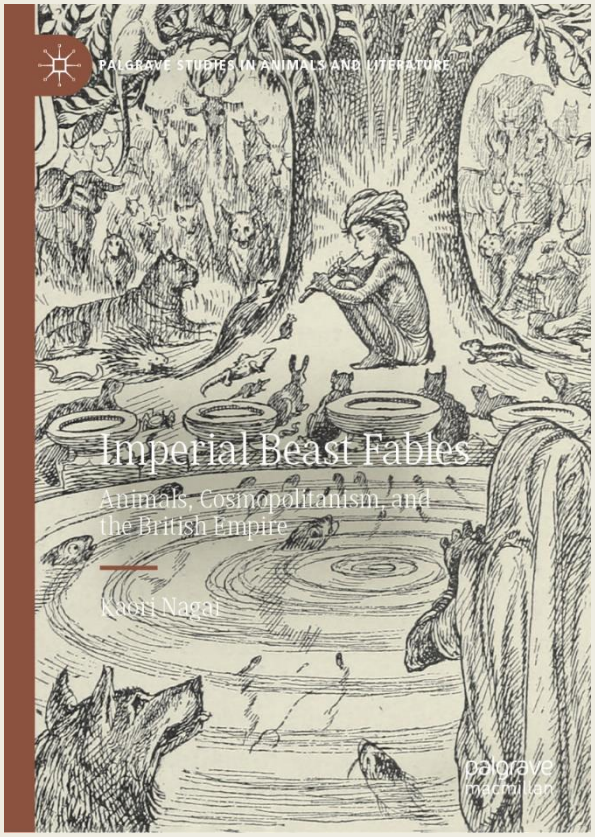
Paul Crawford · Anna Greenwood
Richard Bates · Jonathan Memel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Animals, Cosmopolitanism, and the British Empire
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palgrave
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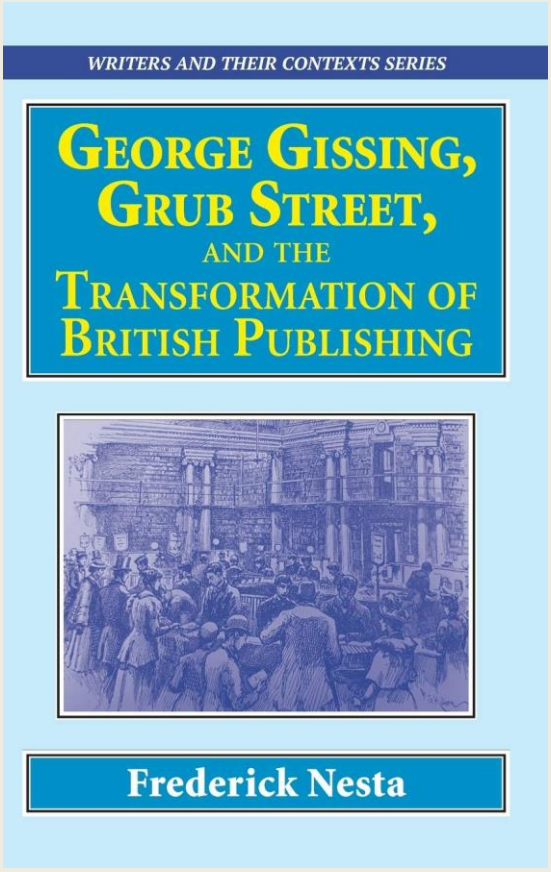
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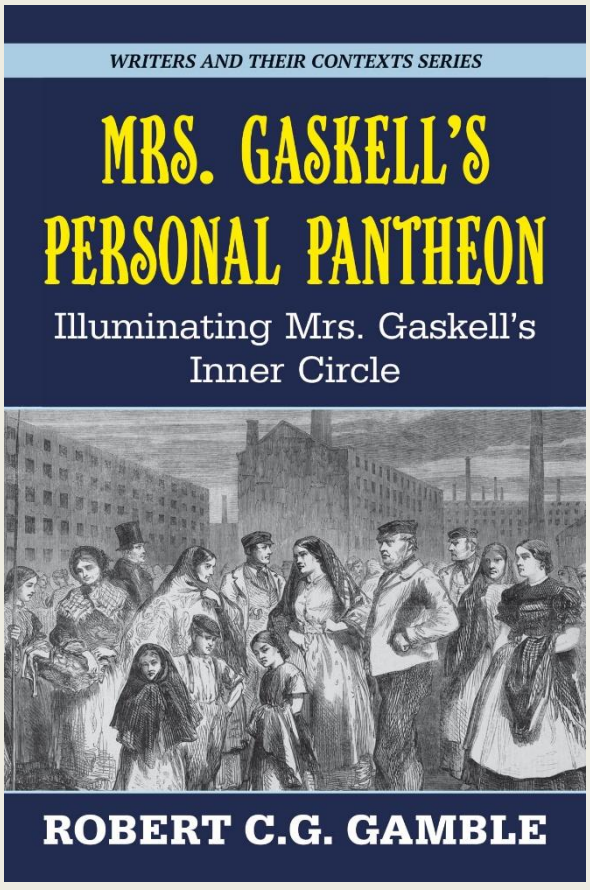
GEORGE GISSING, GRUB STREET, AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF BRITISH PUBLISHING
Frederick Nesta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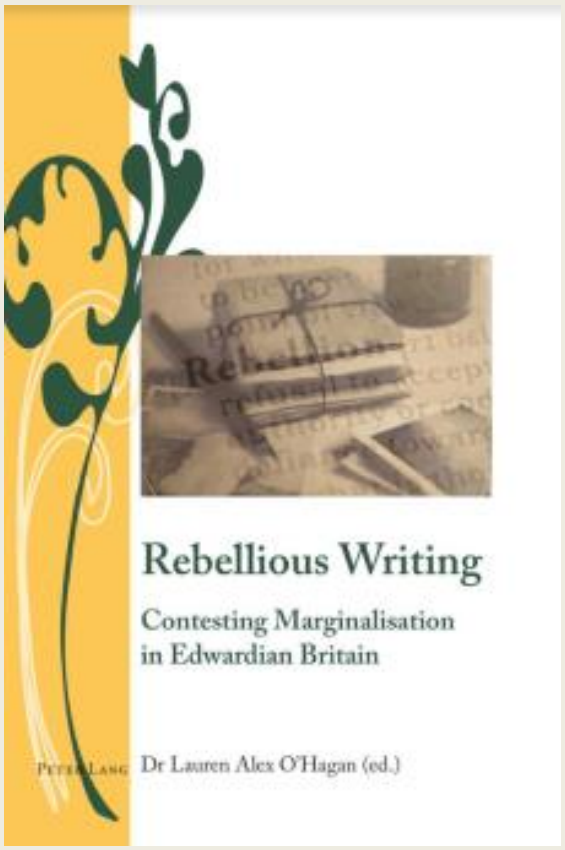
ROBERT C.G. GAMBLE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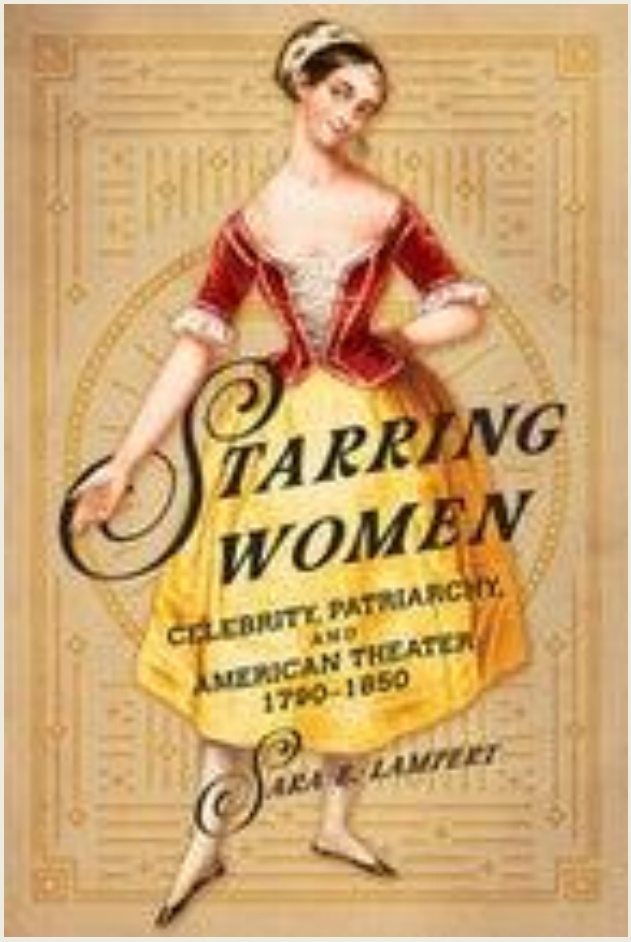
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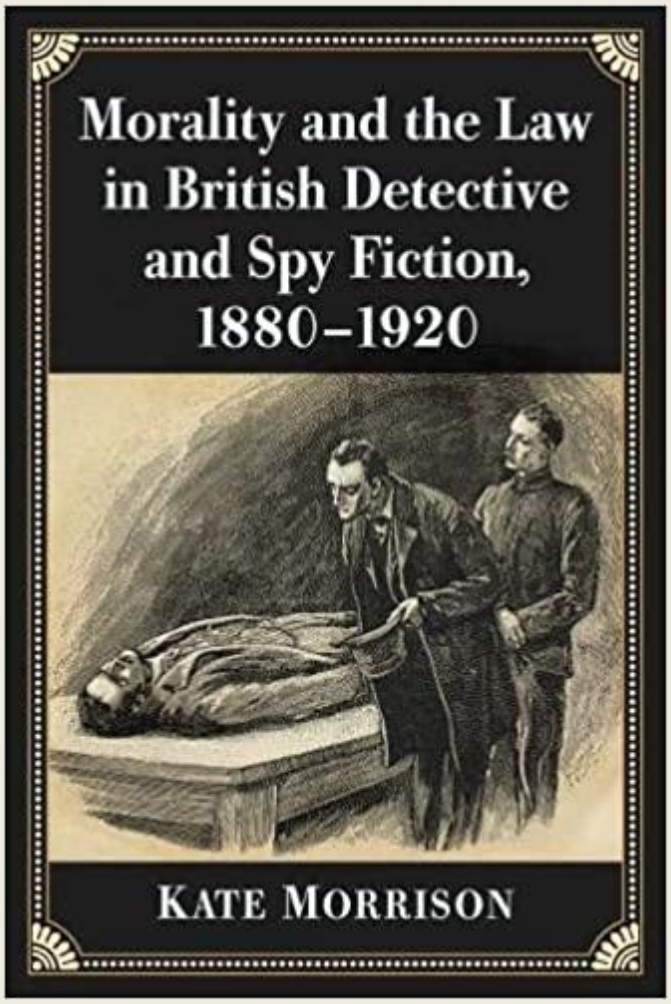
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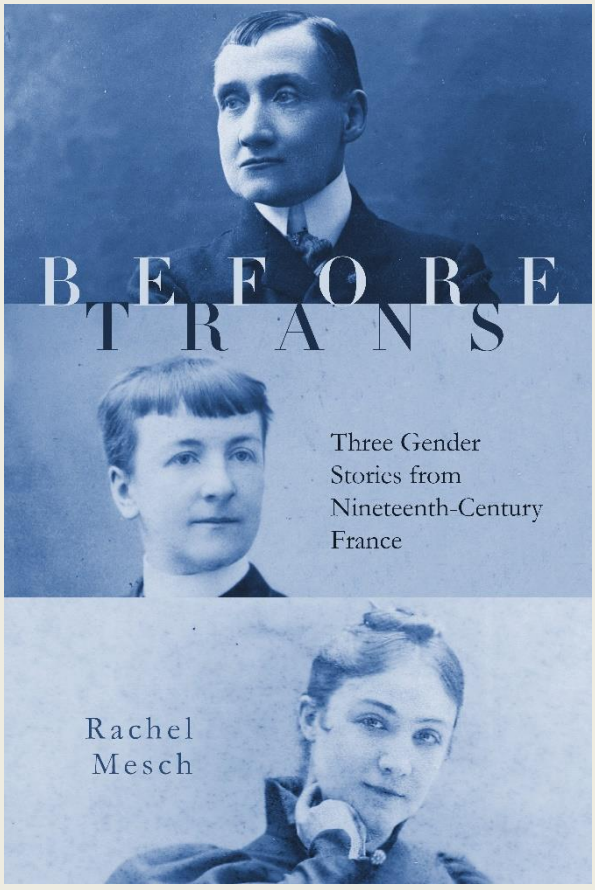
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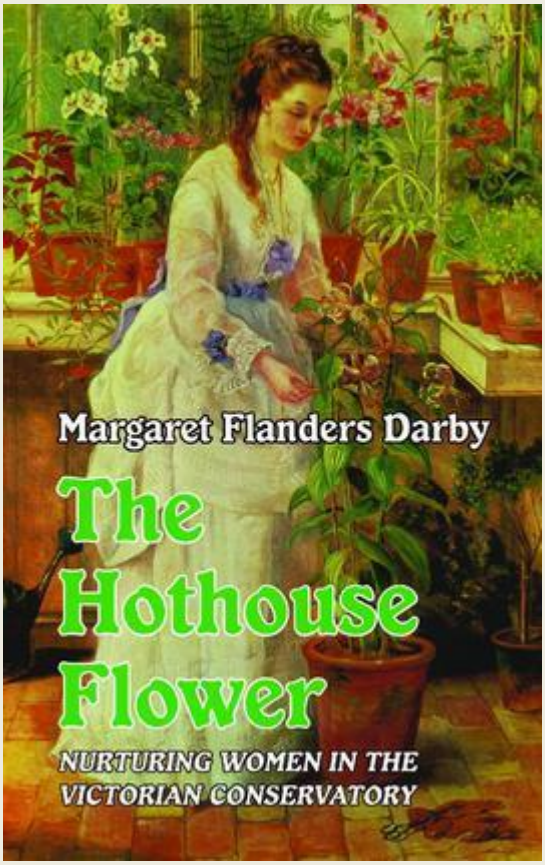
Rachel Mesch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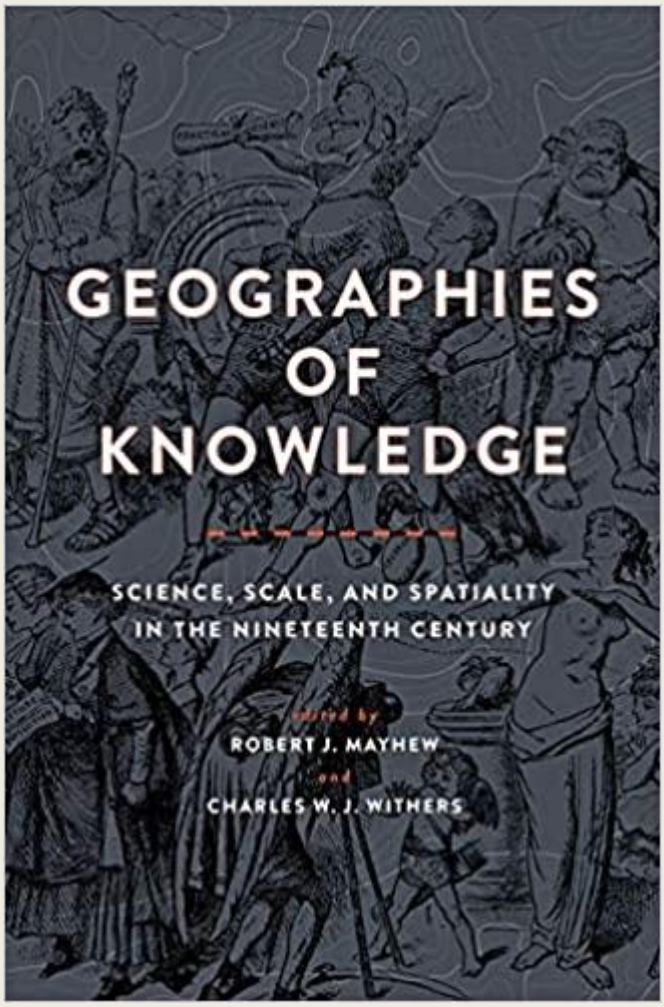
The Hothouse Flower
NURTURING WOMEN IN THE VICTORIAN CONSERVATORY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edited by
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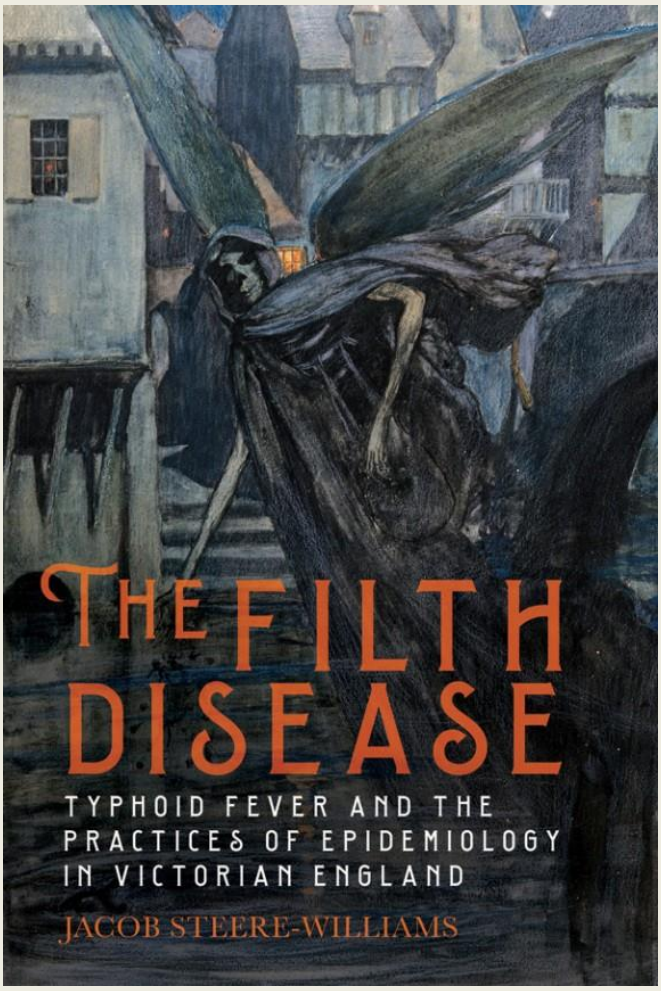
and
CHARLES W. J. WITHERS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JACOB STEERE-WILLIAMS

Calls for Submissions

Please email calls for publication submissions and funding opportunities to bavsnews@gmail.com for inclusion in future issues.

19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century

The latest issue of *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century* is now live at https://19.bbk.ac.uk/

Issue 30
Reframing Stained Glass in the Nineteenth-Century British World: Culture, Aesthetics, Contexts
Guest edited by Jasmine Allen, Gareth Atkins and Kate Nichols.

Stained glass was a ubiquitous art form in the nineteenth century, present in churches, railway stations, museums, and homes. Nevertheless, it has rarely been discussed outside of specialist fields. This issue of 19 brings together scholars from across a range of disciplines in order to examine, interpret, and reframe stained glass from the widest possible variety of perspectives in order to demonstrate its rich potential. We explore how this entrepreneurial and technologically innovative medium used 'traditional' forms not just to articulate well-worn stories, but to tell new ones in self-avowedly modern settings, revealing much about nineteenth-century culture, aesthetics, and contexts.

Also included is the latest instalment of 19 Live which discusses recent exhibitions, events, and performances with a nineteenth-century focus. This includes reviews of recent exhibitions including the reopened Aubrey Beardsley exhibition at Tate Britain.

Aubrey Beardsley Society Essay Prize

To mark the foundation of the Aubrey Beardsley Society, a prize for the best short essay on any aspect of Beardsley's work, life, and reception will be awarded to an outstanding emerging scholar. The Society aims to encourage new work that is intellectually adventurous and stylistically accomplished, and seeks submissions that highlight Beardsley's relevance today.

Eligibility

- Postgraduate (MA, MPhil, PhD) and early career researchers who have not held a permanent academic post are invited to participate.
- The participants should join the Aubrey Beardsley Society (discounted membership).
- Essays should be up to 2,500 words and formatted in accordance with the MHRA style.
  The amount of the Emerging Beardsley Scholar Prize is £500. Two runners-up will be awarded £100 each, and the three winning pieces will be published in the AB Blog. The Prize is supported by the Alessandra Wilson Fund.

Deadline

Please email your submission by 31 December 2020 to Dr Sasha Dovzhyk at contact@ab2020.org.

CfP: Victorian Ecologies

Victorian Network is an open-access, MLA-indexed, peer-reviewed journal dedicated to publishing and promoting the best work across the broad field of Victorian Studies by postgraduate students and early career academics. We are delighted to announce that our fourteenth issue (2021) on the theme of "Victorian Ecologies" will be guest edited by Elizabeth Miller (UC Davis).

As the climate crisis has shifted with unprecedented urgency to the centre of public, political, and scientific discourse, it has sent profound ripples through the humanities and Victorian Studies in particular. New work in the field is pushing to reassess and reconfigure longstanding assumptions about periodicity and modes of cultural production in order to better understand how the human species emerged as an actor on a planetary scale over the course of the long nineteenth century.

The turn of the nineteenth century has come to be recognised by many scholars as the onset of the Anthropocene as a geological epoch as well as an interdisciplinary nexus of discourses and epistemologies. The Industrial Revolution and imperial expansion shaped the geopolitics of climate change, including the unequal distribution of climate change's consequences, the fossil fuel economy, mass consumerism, and globalisation. At the same time, the work of such writers as Charles Darwin, John Ruskin, or Charles Lyell recalibrated public and scientific thinking about the human species' impact on and relationship with the environment.

In our current moment – as much as in the nineteenth century – global climate change is a phenomenon investigated, and a challenge tackled, most productively at the intersections of different disciplines. Recent work in the field has been taking this to heart, acknowledging Dipesh Chakrabarty's influential observation that human and geological timescales, and human and natural history, have collapsed into one another. "Victorian Ecologies" seeks to explore new political ecologies, and new modes of literary and cultural inquiry into anthropogenic climate change.

We invite submissions of approximately 7,000 words on any aspect of the theme. Possible topics include, but are by no means limited to:

- ecocritical perspectives on Victorian or neo-Victorian fiction
- humans and the environment
- new ontologies of human and nonhuman life
- narrative or literary form and climate change/the environment
- anthropocene and posthuman temporalities, incl. geological deep time
- empire / inequality and the geopolitics of climate change
- cultural imaginaries of ecological disaster
- Victorian climate fiction
- climate and health
- energy and waste
- agriculture and the seasons/climate

All submissions should conform to MHRA house style and the in-house submission guidelines. Submissions should be received by 28 February 2021.
Contact: victoriannetwork@gmail.com