Hello, and welcome to the

Autumn BAVS newsletter!

Greetings from bonnie Scotland! I’m happy to be continuing in editorship of the BAVS Newsletter from my new post as Lecturer in English Literature at the University of Aberdeen. I have a feeling it is going to be a cold Scottish winter so please send layer upon layer of BAVS news to keep me busy and warm compiling the next issue: items are best as word attachments, please, to BAVSnews@gmail.com.

In this instalment we hear from our two graduate reporters on the recent annual BAVS conference, ‘Composition and Decomposition’, which took place on 1-3 September at the University of Birmingham. Congratulations to the organising committee on what was by all accounts a stimulating and successful conference, and thanks to Melissa Score (Birkbeck, University of London) and Fariha Shaikh (King’s College, London) for their close observations which will, in written form, keep something of the energy of the event alive. In addition, Fran Scott, Ji Won Chung and Kate Scarth (University of Warwick) provide a robust representation of ‘Picturing Women’s Health: 1750-1910’, which took place at the University of Warwick earlier this year.

Stephen Roberts (University of Birmingham) reports on the discovery of a long-lost oil painting and Rosemary Mitchell (Director of the Leeds Centre for Victorian Studies) exhorts you to see ‘Art for the Nation: Sir Charles Eastlake’ at the National Gallery: but hurry, it closes on 30th October!

‘Abandoning the Past’, the five-year Cambridge Victorian Studies Group Project, is gone but not forgotten; and there are notices that may be of interest to those who work on Wilkie Collins (a digital archive launched), Oscar Wilde (a summer seminar with grant to be
had, provided you are a US citizen or permanent resident) and Octavia Hill (conference co-organiser wanted).

Several forthcoming events are noted, including two in the next month: ‘Re-Imagining the Brontës: A Conference’ (which I am organising, to be held at Senate House, London on Saturday 5th November: it would be lovely to see you there!) and ‘Wandering Feelings: The Transmission of Emotion in the Long Nineteenth Century’ (at Queen Mary University of London, on 11th November). Calls for papers on Victorian Spiritualities; Sex, Pleasure and Coercion; Paranoia and Pain; Dickens; and Lights and Shadows of Scottish Fiction are issued, among others...

...which brings me full circle to the plea for Victorian lights against the encroaching shadows of a fierce season: make your voice heard in the next (Winter) edition of the BAVS Newsletter. Academics and postgraduate students are warmly encouraged to offer articles for future editions of this newsletter. Whether you have organised a conference, attended an event or exhibition, or would like to draw attention to research projects that have recently been recognised by funding bodies, I would love to hear from you! For further information, and to forward review or research contributions, please contact me at BAVSnews@gmail.com.

Yours,

Alexandra

Dr. Alexandra Lewis (University of Aberdeen)
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Art for the Nation:
Sir Charles Eastlake at the National Gallery
(27 July to 30 October 2011)

The exhibition currently showing at the National Gallery, Art for the Nation, explores the role of Sir Charles Eastlake, director of the National Gallery from 1855, in creating the national collection. A run-of-the-mile history painter, but a talented administrator, and a knowledgeable art critic and collector, Eastlake was lucky enough to have the funds at his disposal to acquire some 150 paintings for the Gallery, mainly medieval and early Renaissance Italian works (not to mention some additional canvases for himself). His purchases for the collection include such outstanding works as Bellini's Madonna of the Meadow (which appears in the exhibition) and Uccello's Battle of San Romano (which does not). Other works which show Eastlake's eye for artistic talent and developmental trends are Catena's Saint Jerome in his Study, a masterpiece of lineal and perspectival tranquillity in which the saint's accompanying lion sleeps like a homely domestic tabby, and Pisanello's bizarre and golden Virgin and Child with Saints: naturalism and traditional codes of representation contend as a grumpy Saint Anthony and a stylish Saint George view a vision of the Virgin within a cartoonish zig-zag insert. In the process of acquisition, Eastlake developed proto-scientific methods of authentication, which are partially reflected in his thirty-six travel diaries, some of which are exhibited, and which are now edited by Susanna Avery-Quash and published jointly by the Gallery and the Walpole Society. Eastlake was also innovative in terms of exhibition techniques, being a pioneer of the now commonplace preference for hanging paintings by school, period, and place of production. We owe to him the wonderful collection of early Italian art in the National Gallery, which allows it to represent so fully the conventional narrative of artistic development in the west.

The exhibition is very small (although also free!). This does allow you to concentrate very fully on some of the representative works on display, and the excellent accompanying panels, detailing Eastlake's journeys and experiences, and the process of acquisition. But I would like to have seen more attention to the role of his 'incorporated wife', Lady Eastlake, formerly Elizabeth Rigby, famous or perhaps infamous for her Quarterly Review critique of Jane Eyre and her partisan involvement in the annulment of Ruskin's marriage. The tours became an artistic education for Lady Eastlake, and A.M. Ernstrom has explored the intellectual partnership of the couple, which I am sure will be further examined in the book accompanying the exhibition - jointly authored by Avery-Quash and Julie...
Sheldon, the editor of an much-needed edition of Lady Eastlake's letters. It would also have been good to see some contextualisation of the Eastlakes' taste for early Italian art within the art world of the 1840s and 1850s: 'Pre-Raphaelitism' permeated the institutions of the National Gallery, and the Fine Art Commission (which Eastlake chaired and which commissioned the Houses of Parliament frescoes), as well as the works of young, would-be revolutionary artists in the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. But it is perhaps unreasonable to expect so much of this small but interesting and illuminating exhibition.

Dr Rosemary Mitchell (B.A., D. Phil., Oxon., P.G.C in H.E., Open)
Associate Principal Lecturer in History & Reader in Victorian Studies
Director of the Leeds Centre for Victorian Studies

Detail from: John Partridge, 'Sir Charles Lock Eastlake', 1825
Reflections on ‘Composition and Decomposition’, BAVS conference, University of Birmingham, 1-3 September, from our two postgraduate conference reporters

This year’s BAVS conference demonstrated that research into Victorian studies is as vibrant as ever, although it was also mindful that Arts and Humanities departments in British universities face major funding challenges. My report as a BAVS observer bursary holder therefore focuses on panels and plenaries that I attended but also touches on some of the discussions that took place on the future for postgraduates and post-doctoral researchers.

It is impossible to do justice to such a diverse conference programme in one report. I heard many delegates comment that they were forced into very difficult choices between equally alluring panels! Several threads examined the conference themes of composition and decomposition, as well as recomposition, in terms of social, political or cultural contexts. Many papers were interdisciplinary, for example the panel on Technologies and machines drew from literature and natural theology as well as science. Methodology was examined in papers on constructing archives and databases. But there were also panels entirely devoted to specific authors: William Morris, Charles Dickens and Thomas Carlyle.

Physical and moral decomposition dominated Thursday’s panel on “Women’s Bodies and Social Context”. Sos Eltis (Brasenose College, Oxford) used the concept of sexual degradation to look at how so-called “fallen” women were portrayed in melodrama and musical comedy. The stereotypical passive girl lured into disgrace and death held sway in melodrama for much of the century. But by the 1870s and 1880s, reflecting the Contagious Diseases Acts, the fallen woman had become a threatening figure – “decay incarnate” to society. However, another trope of melodrama, the savvy sidekick, resurfaced in musical comedy. Here, contemporary working girls, such as shop girls, are far from innocent or passive about the sexually exploitative world in which they live. Margaret Forsyth (Edge Hill University) in her paper “Sown in Labour’s Soil: Industrial poetry and the ‘factory girls’” gave a different perspective on working-class life, though she also examined contrasts in depictions of ‘working’ versus ‘respectable’ women and the ways in which working-class women were both exploited by and liberated by work. Looking at the decomposition of identity, Alexandra Messem’s (University of Portsmouth) paper on “Decomposing the body politic” showed how the novelist George Egerton depicted the little-recorded phenomenon of self-mutilation by late-Victorian women to aim a subversive blow at patriarchal images of the control of women’s bodies.

Friday’s session on ‘Political Contexts’ saw Juliette Atkinson presenting similarities and contrasts in the ways in which the novelists Mary Braddon, Anne Thackeray Ritchie and Bulwer Lytton treated the fall of the
1871 Paris Commune. Robert O’Kell examined the anti-semitism of Victorian political satire in his paper on *Punch* and Disraeli, using reproductions of the famous “Long Cut” cartoons to show how the satirical weekly constructed various images of Disraeli as an outsider who was not to be trusted. O’Kell argued that we should pay more attention to the effect of *Punch’s* political satire – its cartoons were not a passive reflection of politics but an active comment on them.

Degeneracy in the cultural context of the 1890s was discussed in Michael Davis’s (University of the West of England) paper on “Mind and Matter in *The Picture of Dorian Gray,*” which discussed how the narrative’s references to the atoms of the painting echo analogies drawn by late nineteenth-century psychologists examining the relationships between the physical self and the mind. Christine Corton (Wolfson College, Cambridge) talked about the metaphor of a natural phenomenon in her paper “London Fog: formlessness to degeneration “ in which the city’s famous fog played a mixed role as cultural signifier. It was a symbol of the dissolution of the moral order and the corruption of London on the one hand and a positive emblem of material and commercial success on the other. Later, fog became a symbol of regressive dissolution, turning back progress and returning society to a more primitive age.

The nineteenth-century press prompted some lively discussions on the first day of the conference. Bob Nicholson (University of Manchester) traced “The Journey of a Joke: Composing and Recomposing Humour in the Transatlantic Popular Press” - recounting how a joke originally published in a newspaper in New York found its way to a political meeting in North Wales. As well as being an example of transatlantic cross-cultural exchange, the joke embodied the complicated interplay between British and American newspapers and magazines. Delegates were curious to know at what point journalists and newspapers became possessive about intellectual copyright, though piracy was rife on both sides of the Atlantic. Ingrid Hanson (University of Sheffield) examined socialist journalism in “Composition, Corpses and the Deconstruction of Politics in *The Commonweal*” describing the way in which the journal used imagery of the working-class dead and wounded of the past to deconstruct the present.

The keynote paper late Thursday was given by Tracy C. Davis, Professor of English & Theatre at Northwestern University. “Amelia Chesson Enters the Fourth Estate: ‘She must, therefore, be considered a pioneer in lady journalism’” used primary source material, including diaries, to show how a young wife and mother in the 1850s contributed opera and theatre reviews to the *Morning Star,* a newspaper of which her husband was a managing editor. She also wrote book reviews for the *Athenaeum.* Amelia was a very rare example of a woman journalist invading the male space of the newsroom but she is also interesting because of the radical circles in which she moved and in her ability to reconcile pregnancies and domestic duties with her reviewing work. Professor Davis ended her talk with a series of questions raised by Amelia’s career. In the discussion that followed, delegates expressed interest in the extent to which the *Morning Star* newspaper itself might have been more inclined than others to accommodate women writers.
Art history was well-represented at the conference. Colin Cruise, from Aberystwyth University, gave Friday’s Keynote paper on “Composing New Meanings: Pre-Raphaelite Compositions and the Art of Narrative” looking at innovations in composing space, with specific examples from the work of Ford Madox Brown. This was followed by Saturday’s panel on the composition and reception of fine art, which debated notions of taste, subject-matter, technical skill and the illustrator-publisher relationship. Cordelia Smith (Birkbeck) discussed the role of the London Art Union and its mixed success in bringing fine art to the masses; Edward Burne-Jones’s recurring treatment of “Sleeping Beauty” in his various Briar Rose series was shown by Cristina Pascu-Tulbere (University of Liverpool) to be a profound meditation on mortality and immortality; and Joanna Karlgaard’s (University of Bristol) treatment of Frederick Sandys showed the complex working relationship between artist and engraver, printers, authors and publishers in periodical illustration in the 1860s.

The post-graduate seminars were stimulating and thought-provoking. Lisa Alberici (Birmingham University) described how postgraduate students can make a valuable contribution to schools through university outreach programmes—possibly inspiring a future crop of Victorianists! In the conference’s closing session, Shearer West (Oxford University) led the discussion on the Value of Victorian Studies, with the crucial question of how we can make the case for our public value without falling into a purely economic or purely cultural argument. She argued that arts and humanities academics need to engage more broadly in debates and that it is not enough simply to be critical of short-term policy-making. Postgraduate representative Sarah Parker voiced student delegates’ concerns about the job market and about how funding changes will potentially restrict the accessibility of university education for many undergraduates. She stressed also that postgraduates support participation programmes because we believe passionately in the value of our research.

BAVS President Regenia Gagnier emphasized the particular life skills that academic teaching can promote—for example, understanding how people think and act in social communities and summed this up by saying that in the nineteenth century, the aim was to achieve not the “Big Society” but the “Good Society.”

Finally, I would like to thank BAVS for the bursary that helped me attend this conference. The conference was superbly organised by Kate Newey and the committee, with the many panels running like clockwork and the catering provided by Birmingham Business School was excellent. Next year’s conference at Sheffield on Victorian Values has much to live up to!

Melissa Score, Birkbeck, University of London
BAVS 2011 showcased the very best in Victorian Studies across England, and overseas. This year, the conference was hosted by the University of Birmingham. We spent the three days of the conference listening to three splendid plenaries, a lively roundtable discussion and an astonishing array of papers. We visited no less than two exhibitions, attended a wonderful Conference dinner, and relaxed amidst the beautiful campus grounds in Edgbaston. This was my first BAVS conference and I was looking forward to how speakers from so many different backgrounds and disciplines would interpret this year’s theme of ‘Composition and Decomposition’. I was not disappointed.

I start with the plenaries, held over the course of the three days. Herbert Tucker (Leeds/Virginia) led us through the secret underworld of composition: to be composed necessarily hints towards a prior de-composure, of being unsettled before becoming settled. He bought this double world of composition to bear upon Alfred Tennyson’s *In Memoriam*, and showed how disgust at decomposition in this poem is tempered by a sheer olfactory delight in the composting earth. Tracy Davis’s (Northwestern) paper was a welcome reminder to postgraduate students of the rewards that come with sheer perseverance. Using the diary of Amelia Chesson that she had come across fortuitously, she posited a way of thinking through female difference positively, without resorting to the familiar tropes of oppression and domesticity. Colin Cruise (Aberystwyth) provided us with yet another intervention into the theme of composition. He argued that a close analysis of the use of pictorial space in Pre-Raphaelite paintings showed that their compositions were as much to do with invention as arrangement.

I’m a literature student and the first panel I attended, ‘Publishing and Reception’, accorded well with my literary sensibilities. Anne-Marie Beller (Loughborough) looked at the tensions that placed Mary Braddon’s prolific career right in the middle of the debate between literary merit and the increasing professionalization of authorship. Jim Cheshire (Lincoln) examined how the growth of Tennyson’s popularity across the Atlantic posed problems to his career as an author and eventually lead to the ruin of his relationship with his publisher. Malcolm Cocks (KCL) looked at the discrepancies between Ruskin’s public proscription and his private consumption of German authors and argued that this formed a part of his effort to shape a moral reading public.

I enjoyed the second panel on ‘Theatre’ immensely. Karen Laird (Missouri) led us on a fascinating journey into John Courtney’s stage adaptations of *Jane Eyre* and *David Copperfield*. This previously unknown playwright’s rewriting of Charlotte
Bronte’s famous novel brings the working classes discontent to the fore of the novel, as a parallel to Jane’s own class conflicts with Rochester. Victoria Garlick (Manchester) talked about the composition of the Broadhead Theatre Circuit, an enterprise spearheaded by William Henry Broadhead that changed the theatrical landscape of Manchester. Kevin Morrison (Syracuse) looked at a rather different ‘theatre’ - that of the carefully constructed space of John Morley’s home, which realized the liberal ideas that he sought to promote.

The first panel of the second day, ‘Supernatural’, had a healthy mix of witches, werewolves – and fungi. Louisa Hodgson (Leeds) started us off by making the case for seeing Elizabeth Gaskell’s *Lois the Witch* as a transatlantic witch-narrative that crossed the national boundaries of literary production. Working with close readings of Arthur O'Shaughnessy’s ‘Bisclavaret’ (The Werewolf), Jordan Kistler (KCL) drew out the connections between his poetry and his work at the Natural History Department of the British Museum and suggested that we might understand his poetry as a nuanced engagement with Darwinian theory. Anthony Camara (UCLA) examined the fungoid life in Arthur Machen’s *The Hill of Dreams* and argued that it was a regenerative force that unleashed life from the rot.

In keeping with the growing interest in Victorian material cultures, BAVS 2011 offered a selection of papers on ‘Things’. Paul Dobraszczyk (Manchester) took ornamental cast iron as his focus and argued that the very superfluity of cast iron suggests that the aesthetic value of mechanical reproductions was not met with scepticism. Duncan Marks (Sheffield) examined the memorabilia in the paintings of Charles Spencelayh and put the very convincing case forward that they were not to be regarded as atypical kitsch but, in fact, entirely ordinary. Jennifer McDonnell (New England) finished the panel by looking at the regimes of value in Robert Browning’s work that define the ways in which objects acquire different meanings.

Maria Danikjaer (KCL) opened the ‘Serials’ panel with a lightly amusing paper on Isabella Beeton’s cookbook. She argued that the politicized repetitive domestic practice that the cookbook aimed to inculcate in its readers was directly linked to its serial publication. Catherine Delafield examined how Dinah Craik’s strategic publication of her novel *Mistress and Maid* in Norman McLeod’s magazine *Good Words* cut across class boundaries to gain a readership both above and below the stairs of the Victorian household. Following on with this thread of the dialogic relationship between volume and serial publication, Jude Piesse (Exeter) argued that the migratory preoccupations of *Great Expectations* lay, not in the shadows and silences of the novel, but openly within the pages of *Household Words*. This was a very engaging panel, where the papers spoke to each other very well.

One could not have a Victorian Studies conference without mentioning Dickens, so it was unsurprising that there was a whole panel devoted to him and the ‘urban city’. Mary Shannon (KCL) zoomed in on Wellington Street, where Dickens and his contemporaries formed a community of print that became the hub of empire. Klaudia Lee (Nottingham) zoomed back out again and questioned the changed cityscape in early twentieth-century Chinese...
translations of Dickens’s novels that reflected China’s largely rural economy. Laura Peters (Roehampton) offered both literal and metaphorical ways in which to read ‘race’ and ‘degeneration’ into Our Mutual Friend, in an effort to align Dickens’s works with contemporary developments in racial science.

Coming from a literary background, I was fascinated by the ‘Medicine/Science’ panel, the first panel on the third day. Ben Carver (Exeter) took us away from the close environs of this world, to the stars. He introduced us to the theological and historiographical implications of the technological improvements that aided a better understanding of nebulae and planet formation. Will Tattersdill (KCL) asked us to trouble the boundaries between ‘science’ and ‘literature’ to overcome the negative effects of specialisation and Pamela Gilbert (Florida) presented us with her recent work on Charles Bell, an anatomist dedicated to understanding the anatomy of facial expressions as a manifestation of human beings’ relationship to God.

In the last panel of the conference, Charlotte Mathieson (Warwick) looked at the travelling passenger on the new railway trains and argued that the wrapped-up moving human body in Mary Braddon’s Lady Audley’s Secret was a means of protecting it from the possibilities of contamination - from both the ravages of railway travel and the clutches of capitalist modernity. Deborah Wynne (Chester) re-examined the industrial novels North and South and Shirley to uncover the language of needlework alongside the clamour of the factory machinery and argued that needlework offered women a way in which to form their own communities. Alison Lundie (Roehampton) carried on with the theme of needlework in relation to Gaskell’s oeuvre, to critique the ways in which the shawl becomes the site of female creativity and artistry.

In keeping with BAVS’s commitment to support postgraduate research (something that was also touched upon at the AGM), Lisa Alberici (Birmingham) led a workshop on the different ways in which we could introduce our research to secondary school children. For me, this was certainly an illuminating experience, and something that I will definitely consider doing during the course of my PhD. In many ways, the workshop spoke to the themes of the Roundtable discussion on ‘What is the Value of Victorian Studies?’. Shearer West (Oxford), Linda Bree (OUP), Sarah Parker (Birmingham) (our very own postgraduate representative!) and Regenia Gagnier (Exeter) provided critical, frank thoughts on where they felt the threats to academia came from. This was an opportunity for us to openly discuss the political contingencies of academia and was a rousing end to the three days. Though the roundtable discussion did not have a celebratory air to it, it left me feeling good. I’ve been to many sessions on the public value of the humanities since starting my PhD, but hearing this particular roundtable busted the myth that I’ve imbibed of the lone academic, divorced from the realities of everyday life. It bought home to me that, to quote the words of one respondent, we are not unaware of where we are going. And this is, if anything, a comforting thought indeed.

Fariha Shaikh, King’s College, University of London
Francesca M. Scott, Ji Won Chung & Kate Scarth report on the ‘Picturing Women’s Health 1750-1910’ Conference, University of Warwick, January 22nd 2011

In conceptualizing and planning our conference Picturing Women’s Health 1750-1910, we wanted to both enhance our own professional and academic development and to provide a venue for other scholars to discuss issues that have been under-analyzed. We easily arrived at a general conception of a conference theme about women’s health as this seemed an obvious and productive overlap of our work. We chose the period 1750-1910, as it was one in which medical knowledge and practice developed and expanded significantly, and thereby provides fruitful ground for inquiry. For example, William Hunter (1718-1783) revolutionized anatomy and obstetrics through a commitment to accuracy in his anatomical drawings. Moreover, the medical and scientific legacy of these periods—the Victorian invention of institutionalization, for example—still impacts today.

We had found that discussions of women’s health were often restricted in a disciplinary sense. Yet, in the years we had chosen to explore, the growing interest in science, anatomy, and medicine was not confined to a specific group of professionals as a wide range of writers and artists documented these extraordinary discoveries and advancements. We therefore decided to explore the interface of diverse discourses that constructed ideas about women’s health—these could include contemporary medical and scientific discourses, fictional/non-fictional literature, fine arts, and visual media. Recent scholarly conversations about women’s health often also failed to consider the wider contexts of women’s lives and experiences. Women’s health would be considered solely in relation to ‘the body,’ for example. So, our aim was to develop a unique approach by offering a more holistic understanding of women’s health in the period. We therefore solicited papers that considered representations of women’s health in relation to their bodies, as well as factors like their social roles and relationships, their mental health, and their surroundings.

By developing this inter-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary approach, we sought to examine the vicissitudes of attitudes towards women’s ‘healthy’ and ‘unhealthy’ bodies over the one-hundred-and-sixty year period.

Dr. Claire Brock (Leicester) opened the day as our first keynote speaker with an engaging visual presentation on the life of women surgeons in the late nineteenth century, ‘Picturing the Woman Surgeon and her Patients in Late Victorian and Edwardian Britain.’ In one of the first panels, Victoria Fairclough (St. Andrews) and Lisa Coar (Leicester) focused on ‘anorexia,’ discussing the Victorian pathologising of, and therefore the struggle to control, the female body through the branding of the term. This session fulfilled our conference aims by linking women’s health and bodies to their social situation—anorexia was viewed in the context of patriarchal social control. Meanwhile, the parallel panel on ‘Fashion, Exercise, and
Leisure’ with Clare Mendes (Leicester) and Rachel M. Johnson (Leeds) looked at the fashionable female body in relation to in the discourse of various women’s magazines and the search for medical cures in spa towns, respectively.

Another panel not only linked women’s relationships to health as both sufferers and carers in the context of work and labour but also created a dialogue between literary criticism (by Kristin Gifford (Manchester) and Armida M. Azada (Roehampton)) and more historical work (by Tabitha Sparks (McGill)). Meanwhile examinations of women’s disability in Wilkie Collins’s novels by Ruth Ashton (Leicester), of female masturbation in John Keats’s Isabella; or the Pot of Basil by Rachel Schulkins (Independent Scholar), and women’s mental health in Joseph Le Fanu’s novel by Valeria Angela Cavalli (Trinity College Dublin) raised interesting issues of power and representation as they all addressed the representation of women’s physical and mental health by male authors.

Alexandra Lewis (Warwick), Cheryl Blake Price (Florida State), and Rebecca Sundharam (Reading) looked at portrayals of women’s bodily signs of the mind in the works of Charlotte Brontë, Charles Dickens, and Olive Schreiner. This panel again showcased interdisciplinary issues by demonstrating fiction writers’ awareness of and even propagation of medical ideas; for example, Price analysed Dickens’s use of fiction to promote smallpox vaccination. These papers thereby reflected our goal of interdisciplinarity as they demonstrated the pervasiveness of medical and scientific knowledge through the periods and fiction writers’ desire to accurately relay it. The audience next door was introduced to various Victorian forms of imprisonment both literal, including the lunatic asylum and prison, in papers by Katherine Ford (Independent Scholar) and Anastasia Chamberlen (King’s College London), respectively—and metaphorical, specifically the identity of ‘fallenness’ as addressed in Maria Dorn’s presentation (Hamburg). This panel created an interdisciplinary dialogue on imprisonment through asylum photographs, contemporary prison documents, and fiction. In one of the final panel sessions—‘Beauty and Health’—the audience was gratified with the aesthetic pleasure of looking at colourful and entertaining images of Rossetti’s illustrations in Goblin Market presented by Carina Hart (East Anglia) and eighteenth-century satirical fashion plates explained by Andy McInnes (Exeter). The parallel panel scrutinized the real-life accounts of the health of female authors. Chrisy Dennis (Falmouth) examined reports of the Mary Robinson’s health in the press and Ruth Bromiley (Leicester) explored the attitude of Olive Schreiner’s husband in his biography of his wife. The issue of representation was again highlighted; Dennis, for example, described the contested representations of Robinson’s body including her own depictions and those of journalists.

The conference in many ways exceeded our expectations—both within papers and panels, cross-genre, interdisciplinary, and cross-period conversations arose. Key issues that were raised include the interplay between representation, point of view, and power; gender and genre; and the nature of genre more generally, as the authors and artists considered used and appropriated a plethora of discourse relating to women’s health. The day ended with Professor
Hilary Marland’s ‘Unstable Adolescence?: Managing Girls’ Health in Late Victorian Britain,’ a compelling exploration of the attitudes towards female adolescent health in an era that was fraught with anxieties about women’s new social, educational, and political roles.

Picturing Women’s Health 1750-1910 proved to be a truly international, interdisciplinary postgraduate conference by bringing together postgraduate students, established academics and independent scholars in history, cultural studies, and literature not only from across the UK but also from overseas such as the U.S.A., Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Canada, and Ireland. N.B. The organisers would like to advise that some of the papers will be available in audio format on the Picturing Women’s Health blog, details of which will shortly be posted up at: http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/english/events/pwhconference/

Valeria Angela Cavalli (Trinity College, Dublin) reports on ‘Insanity and the Asylum in the Nineteenth Century’, Birmingham

Organised by Birmingham City University, the conference ‘Insanity and the Lunatic Asylum in the Nineteenth Century’ did not take place in the many lecture theatres on campus, as one would have expected. In fact, organisers Serena Trowbridge and Tom Knowles invited their guests to the majestic and awe-inspiring setting of Birmingham Lunatic Asylum, an impressive building used to restrain and treat patients from 1862 until 1964, and now occupied by the Ministry of Justice.

The one-day colloquium took place on Friday 13th May (as if the location was not enough to make one feel uneasy) and proved extremely rich in both quantity and quality of the papers presented. Twenty-seven international speakers from as far away as the United States of America and Canada, to closer Germany, Ireland, and different regions of the United Kingdom filled the eight panels, introduced and concluded by keynote speakers of the calibre of Professor John Goodridge (University of Nottingham Trent) and Dr Jonathan Andrews (Newcastle University).

This interdisciplinary conference gathered together several generations of students and scholars from various fields of study and backgrounds: undergraduate Charlotte Bartle (University of Hull), at her very first experience as a speaker, together with more PhD candidates, had the chance to share their research with published authors and established lecturers in literature, social history, anthropology, philosophy, and the history of medicine, and listen to the fascinating accounts of Bernard Melling (University of Salford), Claire Chatterton (Open University), and Malcom Shifrin (Independent Scholar), whose studies have developed from decades of experience as a social worker in community mental health services, a mental health nurse,
and the head of library resources service, respectively.

The four parallel sessions shed light on aspects of the asylum and asylum life from the most heterogeneous perspectives. Panel 1 focussed on the rise of moral management, not only in the United Kingdom (Gerold Sedlmayr, University of Würzburg), but also in the West Indies (Leonard Smith, University of Birmingham) and in the State of New York (Shawn Phillips, Indiana State University). Panel 2 shifted from history of psychiatry to the study of madness in literature, a subject introduced by Prof. Goodridge in his inspiring analysis of the life and work of the “mad” poet John Clare. If Anne-Marie Beller (Loughborough University) offered new insights on the sensational fiction of bestselling writer Mary Elizabeth Braddon, Clare Broome Saunders (Oxford University) and myself investigated the production of less famous authors like Mrs Costello and Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, respectively. Panel 5 continued along this line, by investigating more cases of ‘Literary Madness’, such as the archetypical figure of the mad genius (Wendy Brockie, Birmingham City University), the holy fool in the poetry of T. E. Brown (Julia Courtney, Open University), the female patient in the fiction of Scandinavian writer Amalie Skram (Charlotte Bartle), and the work of William Blake (Mark Ryan, University of Nottingham), while Panel 6 concentrated specifically on the theme of ‘Masculinity and Madness’, with insights on artist Matilda Betham (Elaine Bailey, University of Ottawa), on drunkenness as a cause of insanity (Kostas Makras, University of London), on madmen in the fiction of Dickens and Trollope (Helen Goodman, Royal Holloway University), and on the physicality of the male patient’s body (Jennifer Wallis, Queen Mary University). Moving away from representations of madness in literature, Bernard Melling and Claire Mendes (University of Leicester) reported in Panel 4 on debates regarding asylums and insanity in local and women’s press, respectively. In parallel, Panel 3 focussed on space in the madhouse, with captivating talks on patients’ clothing and appearance (Jane Hamlett and Lesley Hoskins, Royal Holloway University), on the spatial construction of the Salpêtrière (Amanda Finelly, Surrey University), and on an archaeological analysis of asylum architecture (Katherine Fennelly, University of Manchester), which rendered the lunch-break tour of the asylum all the more interesting. The late afternoon parallel sessions offered six further views on asylum life, such as the use of a Turkish bath at the Retreat (Malcom Shifrin), the portrayal of Broadmoor asylum in its patients’ letters (Jade Shepherd, Queen Mary University), the figure of the attendant and asylum keeper (Claire Chatterton), daily routine and activities (Louise Hide, Birkbeck University), the representation of patients in letters and photographs (Katherine Ford, Independent Scholar), and the account of anti-asylum sentiments (Rebecca Wynter, Birmingham City University). Dr Jonathan Andrews closed the conference with an original investigation of the role of the asylum chaplain and a warm encouragement to the many representatives of the new generations of researchers in this extremely fascinating field.

The conference proved an effective instrument for bringing together students and scholars from various disciplines and building a proficient network for future discussions and possible collaborations. The organisers were delighted to inform that ten of the papers presented will be published in an edited collection of articles expected for 2013.
Institute of Advanced Study, University of Warwick &
Institute of English Studies, School of Advanced Study, University of London

Re-Imagining the Brontës: A Conference

Saturday 5th November 2011, 9am - 6pm, followed by a wine reception

Venue: Senate House, London (The Court Room, First Floor)

The aim of the conference will be to reassess the Brontës’ perspectives on and uses of imagination (scientific; medical; childhood; romantic; poetic; visual; private; collective; auto/biographical; religious; political; theatrical; historical) together with the ways the Brontës’ works have been critically and creatively re-imagined from the nineteenth to the twenty-first century.

Speakers: Professors Isobel Armstrong (Birkbeck, University of London), Janis Caldwell (University of California, Santa Barbara), Barbara Hardy (Birkbeck), Cora Kaplan (Queen Mary, University of London), Blake Morrison (Goldsmiths, University of London), Sally Shuttleworth (St Anne’s College, Oxford), Helen Small (Pembroke College, Oxford) and Marianne Thormählen (Lund University). Welcome address from Professor Hilary Marland (University of Warwick) and Dr Alexandra Lewis (University of Aberdeen) and summation from Dr Emma Francis (Warwick).

Organiser: Dr Alexandra Lewis (University of Aberdeen), alexandra.lewis@abdn.ac.uk

Attendance is free, and places are limited! To register contact Jon Millington: jon.millington@sas.ac.uk

Wandering Feelings: 
The Transmission of Emotion in the Long Nineteenth Century

Friday 11th November 2011, 10am-6pm, Queen Mary University of London

‘If we accept with comparatively ready acquiescence that our thoughts are not entirely independent, we are, nonetheless, peculiarly resistant to the idea that our emotions are not altogether our own.’

Although Brennan is surely correct in identifying the tenacity of our commitment to our feelings as our own, history shows that locating feeling has always been a problematic task. In the seventeenth century, a sore body part might induce a corresponding discomfort in another bodily region; in the eighteenth century, Hume wrote of the passions as highly contagious, passing ‘with the greatest facility from one person to another’. Feelings don’t readily stay in place: they wander, and get passed around.

This day-length colloquium seeks to investigate emotional transmission in the nineteenth century. In this period, the traditional location for ‘higher’ feelings – the soul – was challenged by theories of physiology which posited instead reflex actions and the localization of brain functions. At the same time, literature was pervaded by new anxieties about the consequences of too much feeling, and of feelings insufficiently under control. From Charles Bell’s idea that weeping might be produced of sympathy between the lachrymal gland and internal organs, to Gustave Le Bon’s accounts of the spread of panic among crowds, the contagion of emotions has called into question the composition of the body, the individual autonomy of feelings, and the possibility of an emotional self.

Speakers: Isobel Armstrong (Birkbeck), Geoffrey Cantor (UCL), Thomas Dixon (QMUL), Helen Groth (University of New South Wales), Susan Lanzoni (Wellesley College), Louise Lee (KCL), Alexandra Lewis (University of Aberdeen), Shane McCorristine (National University of Ireland/University of Cambridge), Gregory Tate (University of Surrey), Paul White (University of Cambridge) & Cheryce von Xylander (Technische Universität Darmstadt).

Organisers: Carolyn Burdett (Birkbeck, University of London) & Tiffany Watt-Smith (QMUL)

Full Registration £20 
Student Registration £10
Places are limited. To register, please visit https://eshop.qmul.ac.uk
Victorian Studies Association of Western Canada: Victorian Media

Victoria, BC, Canada, April 2012

The Victorian Studies Association of Western Canada warmly invites you to our 40th anniversary conference. This year’s theme will be Victorian Media. The conference, hosted by the University of Victoria, will be held from 26-28 April 2012 in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada. It will take place at the Inn at Laurel on Victoria’s beautiful inner harbour.

Papers will focus on the theme of media in relation to Victorian culture and knowledge: that is, the relation of Victorian media to the culture of the period and the relation of new media to the study, dissemination, and archiving of Victorian materials.

The keynote speaker will be Matthew Rubery (Department of English at Queen Mary, University of London). Dr. Rubery is the author of *The Novelty of Newspapers: Victorian Fiction after the Invention of the News* (2009), which won the European Society for the Study of English First Book Award in 2010. He is currently at work on a monograph entitled *The Untold Story of the Talking Book*, a history of recorded literature since the invention of the phonograph in 1877.

The conference will also feature a workshop on Victorian print materials led by Brian Maidment (University of Salford), author of *Comedy, Caricature and the Social Order 1820-1850*, and *Reading Popular Prints 1790-1870*. This workshop will provide a hands-on opportunity to analyze original Victorian materials guided by an expert on print media and production methods.

Leeds Centre for Victorian Studies

‘Victorian Spiritualities’

*One Day Colloquium on 17 March 2012*

Keynote Speakers:
Elisabeth Jay and Michaela Giebelhausen
Colloquium convenor:
Revd Dr Jane de Gay

Image © Paul Hardwick
The nineteenth century was the period during which disability was conceptualised, categorised, and defined. The industrial revolution, advances in medicine, the emergence of philanthropy and the growth of asylums all played their part in creating what today’s society describes as the medical model of disability.

Disability can be traced through many forms: in material culture and literary genres; scientific, medical and official inquiries; art; architecture; the history of disabled charities; disabled people’s experiences; the legacy inherited by disabled people today of the taxonomies and categories of disability – the ‘handicapped’; the ‘deaf and dumb’; the ‘feeble minded’; the blind; the ‘imbecile’ the ‘idiot’ and the ‘cretin’ -- the legacy of the relationship between the body, the visual, the scientific and the literary text; the intersection of disability, theories of evolution, the emergence of the disciplines of statistics, social sciences and anthropology, eugenics and degeneration.

This conference seeks to address conceptualisations of disability in the Victorian period and their legacy(ies); the ways in which we can draw disabled voices and testimonies together to construct ‘the long view’, the intersection of disability studies and Victorian studies, and the conceptual, disciplinary, and pedagogical issues that arise as a consequence of this research.

Themes will include:

- **Resistance/conformity**: subversion, transgression, agency and constraint.
- **The visibility and invisibility of disability**: beggars, street sellers, hawkers, freak shows and circuses.
- **Victorian institutions**: charities, asylums, schools and clubs.
- **Normalising practices**: definitions, constructions, categories and taxonomies.
- **Victorian technologies**: assistive and medical.
- **The emergence of specialisms**: from audiology to psychiatry.
- **Disability as a moral force for improvement**: theology and spiritual enlightenment/development, literature and the school of pain.
- **The formation of Victorian identities**: nation, empire, ‘race’.
- **Disability and the fear of loss**: national efficiency, eugenics and ‘degeneration’.
- **Medical and cultural histories**: medical illustration and advertising, the relationship between the literary, the medical and the scientific text.
- **Acts**: Victorian social policy and legal frameworks.
- **Work**: employment, employability, the regulated employment and non-employment of disabled people.
- **The spaces of disability**: art, architecture, environment.
- **Pedagogy**: teaching about disability and the disabled in the Victorian period.
- **Representing disability to non-specialist audiences**: heritage interpretations, public histories, dictionaries.

This is an interdisciplinary conference, grounded in Victorian Studies, for which the Leeds Centre for Victorian Studies, being established since 1994 and home of the Journal of Victorian Culture, has a longstanding and influential reputation. Within Victorian Studies, and the humanities more broadly, disability studies has emerging significance (e.g. Martha Stoddard Holmes, Fictions of Affliction (2006), Julia Miele Rodas, rev essay, Mainstreaming Disability Studies?, Victorian Literature and Culture, 36/1 (2006), and the Special Issue on 'Victorian
Disability’ for the Victorian Review (Fall, 2009)). The aim of the conference is to bring these two interdisciplinary fields together.

As the history of disability has tended so far to focus on social constructions of disability, in part a reflection of the available sources, a key aim of the conference is to offer a new direction by addressing the experiences or testimonies of those who are disabled and by considering the long-term impact of such social constructions. It is intended that the conference will bring together academic researchers, those with an involvement in disability, (either through work, teaching and/or direct experience), and those conducting independent research, in order to construct ‘the long view’.

The organisers are also currently engaged in working with local organisations e.g. Leeds Society for Deaf and Blind People (established in 1876) who will be invited to present on their own histories, and to reflect on the question of legacies. The lead organiser is also working with the Youth Worker for CohearentVision (the working title of the Leeds Society for Deaf and Blind People) to develop a children's conference within the main event, (within which Deaf young people from local schools will present research that they have carried out on their own histories, and the history of Deaf culture). Heritage organisations, e.g. the Thackray Medical Museum, have also been invited to present material on the issue of interpreting collections connected with this topic for the public.

It is the intention of the organisers that though there will be keynote papers, those wishing to present material at the conference will also have the opportunity to do so in other, non-traditional, forms, in order to facilitate work that crosses disciplinary boundaries and presents the field with an intellectual challenge. For instance, Mat Fraser has been invited, as a solo artist, to perform his cabaret on freak shows; John Smith, Deaf Comedian, will be performing, covering topics such as Current Deaf issues, Deaf politics and school life. The aim here is to open up new lines of research and inquiry relating to any aspect of Disability in the Victorian period.

**Confirmed Speakers include:**

Joanne Woiak, Ph.D., Disability Studies Program, University of Washington; Professor Martha Stoddard Holmes, Ph.D., Professor and Chair of Literature and Writing Studies, Cal State University San Marcos, USA, ‘Fictions of Affliction: Physical Disability in Victorian Culture’; Professor Vanessa Toulmin, Director of National Fairground Archive, National Fairground Archive (Western Bank Library) University of Sheffield.

Mat Fraser, Actor, writer, MC, and Disability Artist, ‘Freak to Clique’ (invited to attend and perform)

John Smith Deaf Comedian (invited to attend and perform)

Participants also already include independent researchers in the field, charities including [coHearentVision](#), and those working with heritage providers/within public history, as well as those holding academic posts.

**General enquiries to:**

Prof Karen Sayer, Leeds Centre for Victorian Studies, Leeds Trinity University College, Brownberrie Lane, Leeds, LS18 5HD [k.sayer@leedstrinity.ac.uk](mailto:k.sayer@leedstrinity.ac.uk).

Or, Joy Hamblin, Leeds Centre for Victorian Studies, Leeds Trinity University College, Brownberrie Lane, Leeds, LS18 5HD [j.hamblin@leedstrinity.ac.uk](mailto:j.hamblin@leedstrinity.ac.uk); tel. 0113 2837305
The Nineteenth-Century Memory: Approaches and Appropriations

postgraduate conference at Leeds Trinity University College, 3rd March 2012

“...nothing that is once mentally our own can ever be entirely lost”.

(Sigmund Freud, The Interpretation of Dreams (1899))

“We teach people how to remember, we never teach them how to grow”.

(Oscar Wilde, The Critic as Artist (1890))

Nineteenth-century society, feeling in many ways disjointed from and dispossessed of its own past became a founding site for the study of memory in its multiple forms. Not only was this a period obsessed with understanding and penetrating the workings of the mind - as demonstrated by the pseudo sciences of phrenology, spiritualism and mesmerism - but it was also an era obsessed with remembering its own past. Writers repeatedly re-imagined and reworked their recent past, in novels such as Waverley and Middlemarch, as well as recalling and recasting a medieval past as witnessed in the Gothic and Arthurian revivals. This era felt itself to be both an unprecedented historical anomaly and the forge of a new and exciting modernity, creating a duality of retrospection and anticipation. The legacy of nineteenth-century culture has proved equally dominant and challenging for its successors in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

‘Memory’ has become a burgeoning topic of scholarship in recent decades. We want to bring together that general recognition of the central place of memory in any culture with a specific focus on its significance for Victorian studies. We welcome proposals for papers on any area related to the nineteenth-century memory, including but not confined to such topics as:

- Nineteenth-century memories of their own past
  † Memorialisation and the museum
  † Re-imaginings through art and other mediums
  † Biography and autobiography
  † Medievalism
  † The melancholic effects of memory
  † The implications of gender on memory and vice versa

- Nineteenth-century notions of memory and the mind
  † The narrative structures of Victorian texts (e.g. authority, retrospection, reliability)
  † Attempts to divine the workings of the mind via mediums, séances etc

- More recent recollection and appropriations of the era
  † Neo-Victorianism
  † Critical approaches (and hostility) to the Victorian episteme.

We are delighted to be able to announce Professor Ann Heilmann (University of Hull) and Dr Trev Broughton (University of York) as our two keynote speakers.

The conference will be held, in conjunction with the Leeds Centre for Victorian Studies, at Leeds Trinity University College on Saturday 3rd March 2012.
We invite proposals of 200-300 words, for 20-minute presentations, and especially welcome proposals from postgraduates and early-career researchers. Please send proposals and any queries to Tracy Hayes, Helen Kingstone and Kate Lister at memory19thc@yahoo.co.uk. The deadline for proposals is 31st October 2011.

We will be offering a small number of bursaries to cover travel costs and possible fees to postgraduate students still working on their PhD thesis. In this way we hope to encourage participation from students at all levels of research. If you would like to apply, please send with your proposal a statement detailing your research, and how this conference could be of benefit to you.

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Taking Liberties:

Sex, Pleasure, Coercion (1748-1928)

15th – 17th June 2012, Newcastle University

Helen Berry (Newcastle University) on Sex, Marriage and the Castrato
Joseph Bristow (UCLA) on Oscar Wilde’s Sexual Practices
Cora Kaplan (Queen Mary, University of London) on Rape, Representation and Slavery
Richard C. Sha (American University) on Romanticism and the Paradoxes of Free Love

From the publication of John Cleland’s *Fanny Hill* (1748) to D.H. Lawrence’s *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* (1928), literature has imaginatively exploited the relationship between freedom, coercion and sexual pleasure, constantly pushing at the boundaries of what it is permissible to describe, represent and perform. At the same time, the history of print, film and theatre censorship has been told as a story of progressive unshackling from constraint. In this narrative, these ever-widening freedoms and challenges have been understood as positively beneficial to individuals and to societies. Yet the idea of sexual liberty as an unqualified good has increasingly come under scrutiny, giving way to the realization that freedom from sexual constraint can sometimes mean imprisonment in new and alternate structures of power, frustration and denial. This international, multidisciplinary conference seeks to complicate and enrich our understanding of the relation between sex, pleasure and coercion in a liberal context. It will explore the many ways in which literary and visual texts and performances can be understood to create, reinforce, question and/or dissolve these structures, as well as interrogate the complicity of publishing and the law in their framing and dismantling.

Key conference questions are:

How are the complex relations between sexual licence, pleasure and coercion understood, represented and negotiated during the long nineteenth century?
How did censorship and obscenity laws shape the literary/cinematic/theatrical landscape?

How were sexually controversial texts – from erotica to triple-decker novels, from peep-shows to West-End theatre – produced, circulated, preserved and consumed?

We are interested in literary and visual texts/performances from across the cultural spectrum. We welcome papers from English, Drama, Film & Visual Culture, History, Law, Modern Languages, Sociology and Geography.

Possible topics include:

- Sex, Sexuality and the Law
- Gender and the Law
- Obscenity/Pornography
- Censorship
- Rakes/Dandies/Mollies
- Prostitutes/Madams/Pimps
- Rape/Sexual Violence
- Sex on Stage/Screen
- Sex Manuals/Diaries
- ‘Lewd’ Behaviour
- The Politics of Pleasure
- Flirtation, Seduction, Exploitation
- Corrupting the Innocent
- Voyeurism/Striptease/Burlesque
- ‘Dirty’ Books
- Bowdlerization
- Advertising Sex/Abortion/Contraception
- Sexual Initiations
- Sadomasochism/Masters and Slaves
- Tyranny and Slavery

Proposals of up to 300 words should be emailed by 1 November 2011 to TakingLiberties@ncl.ac.uk. Other inquiries should be directed to Dr Ella Dzelzainis at ella.dzelzainis@ncl.ac.uk.
Shared Visions: Art, Theatre and Visual Culture in the Nineteenth Century

Conference date: Saturday 11th February 2012 (10am to 6pm)

CFP Deadline: 15 November 2011

School of Theatre, Performance and Cultural Policy Studies, Millburn House, Warwick University

This one-day conference, held in conjunction with the journal, Nineteenth Century Theatre and Film, will explore the connections between art, theatre, and visual culture in the nineteenth century. During this period, the ‘art of seeing’ challenged the traditional dominance of the written word. Vision, previously denigrated as deceptive, became considered as a universal language, accessible to all, and more authentic than text. Popular theatre, especially melodrama, led the way in exploring the possibilities of the new visuality. We invite papers that explore the visual culture of theatre and exchanges between theatre and the visual arts. We are particularly interested in contributions which explore the following topics:

- Theatre as visual culture
- The relationship between word and image
- Theatrical illustration
- Theatrical portraiture
- Audiences and reception of art/theatre/visual culture
- Posters/playbills
- Visual technology: panoramas; dioramas; phantasmagorias; magic lanterns
- Stage spectacle: set design, scene painting, lighting, special effects, costume
- Stage pictorialism/stage tableaux/realization
- Local colour
- Illusion
- Authenticity
- Theatricality
- Attitude and gesture
- Theatre architecture
- Caricature
- Narrative/temporality
- History as spectacle

Please submit abstracts (500 words maximum) to patricia.smyth@nottingham.ac.uk.

Papers should be no more than 20 minutes long and will be followed by a panel discussion.

Lunch, tea and coffee will be provided.

Conference fee: £20 (£10 for postgraduate students)

For further information, please contact Patricia Smyth at the above e-mail address.

Kate Newey and Jim Davis

Editors, Nineteenth Century Theatre and Film
Joint Meeting of MIVSS (Midlands Interdisciplinary Victorian Studies Seminar) and MRS (Midlands Romantic Seminar)

Friday 13 January 2012, 2pm–5pm (Loughborough University)

The next meeting of the Midlands Interdisciplinary Victorian Studies Seminar (MIVSS) will take place at Loughborough University on 13th January 2012 and will be held jointly with the Midlands Romantic Seminar. Our theme is ‘Borders’, which we hope to interpret broadly in both theoretical and practical terms, but with a particular focus on issues of periodicity, the borders between disciplines, and the many conceptual borders, boundaries, and thresholds that inform, challenge, and shape humanities research and teaching in the long nineteenth century. In addition to two keynote speakers, we would like to invite proposals for two additional papers on this theme from Midlands-based scholars. For further details, expressions of interest, or to offer a paper, please contact one of the MIVSS committee.

Anne-Marie Beller (a.m.beller@lboro.ac.uk), Holly Furneaux (hf35@le.ac.uk), Kate Hill (KHi ll@post01.lincoln.ac.uk), Rebecca Styler (rstyler@lincoln.ac.uk), Sarah Townley (acsx4@nottingham.ac.uk), Serena Trowbridge (serenatrowbridge@blueyonder.co.uk).

MIVSS is supported by BAVS:

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Founded in 1843, and refashioned in 1891, The News of the World was one of the UK’s longest-running and best-selling Sunday newspapers when it came to its inauspicious end in the summer of 2011. Gone but not forgotten: the NOTW continues to be of interest as the full ‘story’ of the hacking scandal is revealed in the wake of parliamentary and other investigations. Throughout media coverage of the paper’s demise in 2011, few discussions took an historical view or sought to understand the title within the framework of media history. This special number of VPR seeks to redress that.

We seek papers that take a historically informed view of the NOTW in the 19C, such as:
Other related topics are welcome.

Articles of 6,000-7,500 words including notes and bibliography are sought for a special number of Victorian Periodicals Review, guest edited by Laurel Brake and Mark Turner, to be submitted by 30 Dec. 2012. Articles selected will appear in 2013. Please contact the guest editors for further particulars, and the VPR style guide: l.brake@bbk.ac.uk and mark.2.turner@kcl.ac.uk.

A day conference on the News of the World will be held at King’s College London on 24 Feb 2012. This event welcomes papers on the NOTW throughout its run, 1843-2011. A selection of papers on post 19C topics will appear in Media History. Proposals for the conference to be sent to Laurel Brake and Mark Turner (mark.2.turner@kcl.ac.uk) by 16 November 2011.

Paranoia and Pain (University of Liverpool, 2-4 April 2012)

Paranoia and Pain is an international cross-disciplinary conference, seeking to raise an awareness of various intersections of literature and science. The conference aims to explore overlapping paradigms of paranoia and pain in psychology, biological sciences, and literary texts/contexts.

How is paranoia related to pain? How is pain expressed with/without paranoia? How are these two terms exposed in various contexts? How does our understanding of the psychophysiology of pain interrelate with literary accounts of paranoia and pain? What does research in the field of paranoia offer to literary studies surrounding this concept and vice versa? To what extent does pain echo paranoia; and is this echo physiological, stylistic, psychological, symbolic, or literal? How do these terms regulate our behaviour and expression of emotions in relation to broader concepts such as faith, ethics, and the value of human life? What does the study of these concepts offer today’s generation of intellectuals with regard to human relationships and the way we communicate with each other? This international conference brings together experts from different fields to address these questions by incorporating individual presentations and panels that focus on cross-disciplinary studies.
Considering the diversity of themes and questions for this conference, individual papers as well as pre-formed panels are invited to examine the following three key areas, proposed by the conference organizers. Other inter- and multi-disciplinary topics, relevant to the conference, will also be considered:

1- Impressions:
Expression of paranoia and pain in literary/scientific contexts; Metaphorical and literal exposition of pain and paranoia; Paranoid texts, painful contexts; The image of paranoia and pain in poetry, prose, and visual arts; Textual culture and the symbolics of pain; Stylistics of pain and paranoia in communication; How does the narrative of pain/paranoia identify with studies of affect?

2- Intersections:
The biology of pain and the emotional interpretation; The biology/literature of anaesthesia; Physical symptoms, emotional translations; Aesthetics and affective perspectives on pain/paranoia; How have cultural attitudes to the experience of pain and/or paranoia changed over the course of history?

3- Dissections:
Faith and the formation of our ideas on pain/paranoia; Side effects of pain-relief medication; Ethics and the questions of double effect; Is it ever appropriate to withhold pain relief in order to extend the life of a sufferer where analgesics have the side effect of shortening life?

Submissions:
Deadline for 250-300 word abstracts for 20-minute papers and a 50-100 word biography for individual presenters (including each presentation within potential panels): Wednesday, 30 November 2011 (12:00 noon GMT)

Deadline for Registration: Wednesday, 1 February 2012 (12:00 noon GMT)
Deadline for full draft of accepted papers: Friday, 10 February 2012 (12:00 noon GMT)
After the conference a selection of presentations, developed and edited, will be considered for publication.
Please send submissions and enquiries to the organising board at paranoia.pain@gmail.com & painpara@liverpool.ac.uk

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The Other Dickens: Victorian and Neo-Victorian Contexts

International Conference: 6-8 July 2012

Centre for Studies in Literature, University of Portsmouth

Keynote Speakers: Professor Jay Clayton (Vanderbilt University), Professor Ann Heilmann (University of Hull), Professor Cora Kaplan (Queen Mary, University of London), Professor Lillian Nayder (Bates College) and Professor Gail Turley-Houston (University of New Mexico)
‘The Other Dickens: Victorian and Neo-Victorian Contexts’ is an interdisciplinary conference which will form part of Portsmouth’s bicentenary celebrations of Dickens’s birth in the city on 7 February 1812. We invite scholars working in the fields of literature, film, history, cultural and media studies to consider the other Dickens – those aspects of Dickens (both of his life and work) that remain relatively unexplored, or require re-evaluation. Our objective is to foster interaction between Victorian and contemporary scholars in order to re-examine Dickens in his Victorian context; to assess his continuing importance in contemporary culture, in film and television adaptations, on the internet, and as a character in neo-Victorian fiction; and to explore the rising interest in Dickens’s family members and associated figures (e.g. Ellen Ternan, Catherine Dickens, née Hogarth) in biography and biofiction. Conference participants will be invited to challenge popular perceptions of Victorian Dickens and to explore his cultural impact on new genres and technologies. Papers will be selected with these criteria in mind and possible topics may include:

- Dickens and journalism
- Dickens and performance
- Dickens and the internet
- Dickens and adaptation
- Dickens and biography
- Dickens and biofiction
- Neo-Victorian Dickens
- Dickens as a character in fiction, film and TV
- Postcolonial Dickens
- Dickens’s family in fiction and biography

Please send abstracts of no more than 300 words, together with a brief biographical note listing your affiliation, to: theotherdickens@port.ac.uk

The deadline for submissions is 30 November 2011

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Dickens and the Visual Imagination

An international two-day conference to celebrate the bicentenary of Charles Dickens in 2012

9-10 July 2012

This conference, hosted by the Paul Mellon Centre in London and the University of Surrey in Guildford, will explore the interfaces between art history and textual scholarship through the work of Charles Dickens.

Plenary speaker: Professor Kate Flint (Rutgers University). Other speakers to be confirmed.
Dickens is renowned for the richness of his visual imagination and his publications encouraged readers to interpret his words with and through their accompanying illustrations. Not only was Dickens deeply engaged with ideas of the visual in his writing, but his work has also provoked responses from artists across multiple disciplines within the Victorian period and beyond. The conference seeks to build on recent interdisciplinary work (such as that of Kate Flint and Isobel Armstrong) that illuminates nineteenth-century understandings of visual culture. By focussing the conference through a writer whose work is embedded in the visual imagination, Dickens will provide a test case for examining and theorising the connection between text and image across two hundred years of cultural history.

We invite proposals for panels and individual papers from scholars across disciplines. Topics might include, but are not limited to:

- Dickens and illustration
- The visual arts in Dickens’s work
- Responses to Dickens in the visual arts
- Dickens and performance
- Dickens in the press
- Dickens and new media
- Sciences of vision
- Dickens and commodification
- Dickens and aesthetics
- Observation and spying
- Perspective
- Blindness and the difficulties of representation

Please submit proposals (of up to 250 words) by 30 November 2011 to: g.tate@surrey.ac.uk

The conference programme will also feature a reception at the Watts Gallery in nearby Compton, Surrey, to coincide with the gallery's exhibition Dickens and Art. See below for details:

Dickens and Art will explore the significant connection between Charles Dickens and visual art. A remarkably visual writer, Dickens grew out of a tradition where illustration formed a significant part of both serial and book. He admired artists, probably more than his fellow writers, and had long and close friendships with several, including Clarkson Stanfield, Daniel Maclise, Frank Stone and William Powell Frith. His own taste in art and his views on art are manifest not only in his novels, but in his magazine Household Words where he publicly attacked Millais’ painting of Christ in the House of His Parents and the developments of the National Gallery. Dickens was interested in both contemporary artists and the art of the Old Masters which he viewed and commented on in his tours of Europe. The influence of Dickens was widespread and many artists chose to depict scenes from his novels as well as being influenced by the subjects and characterization in his work.
E. A. Freeman: The Life and Times of a Victorian Intellectual

21 - 23 June 2012

'History is past politics, politics is present history'.

Edward Augustus Freeman's activities as a scholar are widely acknowledged for having helped establish the study of medieval history on a professional footing. As his most cited remark indicates, however, for Freeman past and present were interlaced. The past afforded antecedents, but it also awoke analogies that caused "then" and "now" to collapse into a single impulse or moment. Freeman's frequent interventions in the current affairs of his day did not represent so many digressions from "scientific" research into history; they were implicit in that endeavour.

The convenors have joined forces with the John Rylands Library, keepers of Freeman's archive, to organize a three-day conference based at Gladstone's Library, Hawarden - a shrine to another eminent Victorian, one with whom Freeman tussled on questions of foreign and imperial policy. Freeman considered becoming an architect and wrote the first history of world architecture published in English before he turned his attentions to medieval history. It is appropriate, therefore, that this conference should take place in two fine Gothic Revival institutions, and include architectural history within its remit.

The overall aim is to bring medieval historians, architectural historians as well as historians of Victorian politics and culture together, to consider Freeman and his legacy as a whole and to place his life and work in the context of High Victorian ideas of empire, race and science (in its broadest sense, from the science of Ecclesiology to the science of evolution). In addition to enjoying lively discussion in a collegiate setting delegates will have the opportunity to view displays of archival material, including material relating to Freeman, Gladstone and Sir Stephen Glynne (1807-1874), this last a pillar of the Ecclesiological Society.

The convenors are eager to hear from scholars interested in delivering a paper. Among the topics which suggest themselves are:

- Interpretations of the Norman Conquest
- The Cambridge Camden and Oxford Architectural Societies
- The Gothic Revival
- Constitutional theory and federalism
- Race and empire
- Freeman and his contemporaries
- The "Eastern Question" in High Victorian Britain
- Ideas of "development" and evolutionary change

Organisers: Dr Alex Bremner (University of Edinburgh) and Dr Jonathan Conlin (University of Southampton)
Event Location: The Gladstone Library, Church Lane, Hawarden CH5 3DF
United Kingdom

Call for papers deadline:
1 January 2012

Please submit paper proposals or other queries via email to j.conlin@soton.ac.uk
John Wilson, in his series of vignettes for *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine* entitled ‘Lights and Shadows of Scottish Life’, consciously sought to illuminate the manners and customs of Scotland in the early nineteenth century. However, in spite of recent scholarly developments in the field of nineteenth-century Scottish Literature, critical discourses remain largely centred upon a narrow range of writers and their works. Such a view belies the richness of literary activity in Scotland in the early to mid nineteenth century. Recent studies by Ian Duncan, William Christie and others point to a revival of interest in writers whose work has generally been neglected by scholars of this period. This two-day symposium aims to provide an opportunity to discuss Scottish literature in the age of the Waverley novel and beyond. The organisers therefore invite papers on authors including James Hogg, John Gibson Lockhart, John Wilson, John Galt, Susan Ferrier, and Catherine Sinclair. In so doing, it is hoped that this symposium will stimulate renewed interest in these writers and their world, revealing the breadth of Scottish literature in this period.

Possible discussion topics may include, but are not limited to:

- Scottish print culture and journalism
- Diaspora and transatlantic literature
- Writing in an age of religious schism: literary responses to the Disruption and Catholic Emancipation
- Urban vs rural images of Scotland
- Scottish travel writing
- Commerce and the Scottish book trade
- Interactions between fiction and poetry
- Textual editing
- Memoir and reminiscence
- The development of the historical novel
- Romance vs realism

It is anticipated that a selection of papers given at this symposium will be published as a collection of essays.

Please e-mail 200-300 word proposals for papers and brief biographical notes to the conference organisers:

Dr Timothy C. Baker: t.c.baker@abdn.ac.uk  
or Dr Dan Wall: d.j.wall@abdn.ac.uk

**Deadline for proposals: 15 January, 2012**
Reassessing the Dramatic Monologue in the 19th and 20th centuries:
Browning, Before, Beyond.
Royal Holloway, University of London 28-30 June 2012

Organised by the London Browning Society in collaboration with Royal Holloway, University of London, the University of Westminster and the University of the West of England. Supported by the British Association of Victorian Studies (BAVS).

Confirmed Keynote Speakers:
Isobel Armstrong
Daniel Karlin
Tricia Lootens
Cornelia Pearsall

Over the past two centuries, Robert Browning has been hailed initially as the co-inventor of the dramatic monologue, and more recently, as earlier origins of the genre have been proposed, as its most prominent practitioner. To celebrate the Bicentenary of Browning’s birth, the Browning Society (London) is hosting an international conference to reassess not only Browning’s work in what is arguably the defining genre of his oeuvre, but also the broader practice and theory of the dramatic monologue before, after and during his lifetime.

The conference remit of Browning, Before and Beyond proposes, in the first instance, to discuss the dramatic monologue in relation to Browning and other Victorian practitioners of the genre. The conference seeks to explore the reasons behind the rise of the genre during the Victorian era and the extent to which its formal and generic concerns with issues of performativity and spectacle, identity and subjectivity, text and ‘truth’ are illustrative of key concerns of the Victorian age.

Further, the conference hopes to extend critical discussion of the growth, profile, and generic nature of the dramatic monologue. The organisers welcome papers on pre-and post-Victorian poets and poems as a means of exploring the historical limits and reaches of the genre. Similarly, papers that explore the generic and disciplinary reaches of the form – its associations with drama, or connections to the Romantic lyric mode, for example – are warmly encouraged.

20-minute papers are invited on any topic relating to the dramatic monologue. Submissions may include, but are not restricted to:

- new approaches to defining the dramatic monologue and its significance
- reassessments of established approaches to the genre
- the origins/predecessors of the genre
- Victorian variants of the genre
issues of subjectivity and selfhood
- Post-Romanticism and the dramatic monologue
- the dramatic monologue and gender
- the genre’s relation to history
- hybrid versions of the genre
- twentieth-century and twenty-first century uses of the genre
- the dramatic monologue and performance poetry

Conference organizers: Dr Simon Avery, Dr Vicky Greenaway, Dr Britta Martens. Please submit 300-word abstracts to s.avery@westminster.ac.uk by 31 January 2012.

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Call for submissions for a special number of Victorian Periodicals Review on the theme of "Work and Leisure"

Essays of 6,000-7,000 words are sought for a special number of Victorian Periodicals Review on the theme of the 43rd Annual Conference of the Research Society for Victorian Periodicals. Much of the Victorian Press was built on an interdependency of work and leisure. But what was the "leisure" that the press promoted and how different was it from work? Reading the press itself is obviously an insufficient answer: reading could be work for teachers, reviewers or those trying to entertain children or colleagues. To what extent, indeed, was leisure but a ruse? How far did the Victorian press inscribe women's domestic labour as a form of leisure, or male work as pleasurable? More generally, how did the press fit into the wider context of the entertainment industry: the theatre, travel, music, exhibitions, sport - and shopping?

Not all of the press was devoted to leisure and its limits. What of that enormous sector that unashamedly named their focus as work-related: the trade and professional press, newspaper pages devoted to the stock market and commodity prices, articles worrying over women in the workplace, over the masculinity of the civil servant, or over the demands of labourers on strike?

Finally, what of the "cultural work" of the Victorian press? What was the function of the press in and on society? How might that cultural work relate to the pleasures of leisure?

Please submit completed manuscripts by 30 June 2012 (for publication in 2013) in Word (no PDFs please) to andrew.king@canterbury.ac.uk.

In the meantime, informal queries or expressions of interest are welcome.

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Literature Compass: Global Hardy

“The point of cross-cultural comparison is not to reify the reassuring opposition between two distinct identities but to force each side to ask: could we understand ourselves otherwise in the other’s terms?” (908) Hon Lam, Ling and Dahlia Porter. “Hybrid Commodities, Gendered Aesthetics, and the Challenge of Cross-Cultural Comparison: A Response to Moretti’s ‘The Novel: History and Theory’” 7.9 (2010)Literature Compass invites submissions of articles of 5,000 words (excluding notes and bibliography) to a cluster/special issue on Global Hardy. Submissions will be peer reviewed through Literature Compass’s normal scholarly channels. The issue will develop a historical perspective and, in keeping with the Global Circulation Project (http://literature-compass.com/global-circulation-project/), it will focus on areas outside Europe and North America. Exploring the reception and circulation of Hardy it will look at ways in which Hardy's ideas have been received, and circulated, globally - Japan, for example, has a Hardy society older than Britain's - asking why Hardy has been, or is, so popular outside Europe and North America.

Submissions should be sent to Dr Angelique Richardson at A.Richardson@exeter.ac.uk by 1st July 2012, for final submission in December 2012.

The Global Circulation Project is a global map and dialogue on how key Anglophone works, authors, genres, and literary movements have been translated, received, imitated/mimicked, adapted, or syncretised outside Britain, Europe, and North America, and, conversely, how key works from outside these areas have been translated, received, imitated/mimicked, adapted, or syncretised within Anglophone literary traditions. It asks, what forms of intertextuality, reception, etc. are generated through cultural contact? Guo Ting's article on Byron in China http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1741-4113.2010.00727.x/full (contact A.Richardson@exeter.ac.uk for a copy if you are not at a subscribing institution) offers an example of the scope of the Global Circulation project.

All submissions must include full scholarly apparatus for notes (we follow MLA style, with in-text references and a Works Cited). We apologize in advance to the scholarly community that at this time we are only able to consider submissions and responses in English; this may change as the dialogue and network grow. Because our intellectual priority is to promote a global circulation of ideas in the present as well as to study such circulations in the past, we ask our readers to read differently, to welcome the difficulty of reading unfamiliar inflections and entering unfamiliar critical frames. For, even as articles are published in English, we practice an editorial policy flexible enough to foster communication across languages and scholarly traditions. Our goal is to allow differences in style and approach to be heard, as much as is possible, across linguistic and cultural differences, so as to generate new international dialogues. More information on Literature Compass can be found here: http://literature-compass.com/
Simon T.L. Burton

*William Barnes’s Dialect Poems: A Pronunciation Guide*


pp. xx + 288 + 1-hour audio CD. RRP $75 / £50. Available from the Chaucer Studio.

[http://creativeworks.byu.edu/chaucer/](http://creativeworks.byu.edu/chaucer/).

“[This] book is a wonder in the many things it does and in doing them all well ... Burton has made a serious contribution to freeing those [poems] in dialect from a dismissible specialness” (Marcia Karp, *Essays in Criticism* 61.3 (July 2011): 315–17).

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*Six Eclogues from William Barnes’s Poems of Rural Life in the Dorset Dialect (First Collection, 1844): with Phonemic Transcripts by T. L. Burton and an Audio Recording from the 2010 Adelaide Fringe*

(Adelaide: Barr Smith Press, 2011)


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Matthew Rubery (Ed.)

*Audiobooks, Literature, and Sound Studies*

(Routledge, March 2011)

This is the first scholarly work to examine the cultural significance of the "talking book" since the invention of the phonograph in 1877. Bringing together a set of reflections on the enrichments and impoverishments of the reading experience brought about by developments in sound technology, this collection spans the earliest adaptations of printed texts into sound by Charles Dickens, Thomas Hardy, and other novelists from the late nineteenth century to recordings by contemporary figures such as Toni Morrison and Barack Obama at the turn of the twenty-first century.

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Britta Martens

*Browning, Victorian Poetics and the Romantic Legacy: Challenging the Personal Voice*
(Ashgate, August 2011)

‘A subtle, nuanced and original new reading of Browning’s authorial identity and poetics in the wake of Romanticism, Victorian reactions to it, and nineteenth-century changes in the reading public. The author explores the complex contradictions that pervaded the poet’s responses not only to Romantic poetic modes but also to key figures of Romanticism and Victorian poets whom he associated with Romantic self-expression. In the second half of the study especially, a fascinating analysis of Browning’s negotiation of the private/public divide emerges as a significant theme.’
- Marjorie Stone, Dalhousie University, Canada

Taking an original approach to Robert Browning’s poetics, Martens analyses his work in relation to Romanticism and an evolving Victorian poetic culture. She goes beyond reductive interpretations of Browning as a self-effacing poet to reveal a highly self-conscious, self-dramatising and conflicted engagement with the Romantic tradition. Martens’ Browning is a poet of complex contradictions and an illuminating case study in voice, authorial authority and self-reference.

Contents:
Introduction: the search for new identity;
Youthful Romanticism reviewed;
Beyond the Romantic long poem: *Sordello*;
Elizabeth Barrett Browning: model and countermodel;
Reclaiming visionary lyricism;
The poet under pressure: *The Ring and the Book*;
Victorian taste and Romantic imitators;
Conclusion;
Works cited;
Index.

For sample pages, see [http://www.ashgate.com/isbn/9781409423034](http://www.ashgate.com/isbn/9781409423034)

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The Golden Treasury

*Of the Best Songs and Lyrical Poems in the English Language*
Edited by Francis Turner Palgrave

(Palgrave Macmillan, October 2011)

Francis Turner Palgrave’s *The Golden Treasury* was originally published in 1861 and became the standard anthology of poetry for over 100 years. Its original aim was to teach ‘those indifferent to the Poets to love them, and those who love them to love them more’, and in its many editions since then it’s recognized to
be the most popular anthology ever published. To mark the 150th anniversary of its original publication, this facsimile reproduction of the 1861 edition features a specially-commissioned Foreword by Carol Ann Duffy (the current Poet Laureate) which celebrates its heritage and affection in the hearts of poetry lovers worldwide.

http://www.palgrave.com/goldentreasury/

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BECOMING DICKENS

The Invention of a Novelist

Robert Douglas-Fairhurst

(Harvard University Press, 2011)

“Douglas-Fairhurst offers an original perspective on Dickens’s early life and writing as Dickens works through the choices before him in pursuit of a voice and style he could confidently claim as his own.... a fresh and insightful study, moving and exceptionally well-written.” — David Paroissien

“I recommend it highly.” — Harold Bloom

In 1833, Dickens was an anonymous journalist scratching around for a living in London’s crowded literary marketplace. By 1838, the year he started to sign himself as ‘Charles Dickens’, he had become the best loved novelist in the world. How did such an extraordinary change of fortune come about?

From his traumatised childhood to the suicide of his first collaborator and the sudden death of the woman who had a good claim to being the love of his life, Dickens faced powerful obstacles. Before settling on the profession of novelist, he tried his hand at the law and journalism, considered a career in acting, and even contemplated emigrating to the West Indies. Yet with The Pickwick Papers, Oliver Twist, and a groundbreaking series of plays, sketches, and articles, he succeeded in turning every potential breakdown into a breakthrough.

In spite of these early difficulties, Dickens might seem doomed for success when viewed with the benefit of hindsight. But real life is far more unpredictable and this book sets out to investigate not only the life that Dickens led, but also the lives he left unled — the opportunities he missed, the alternative careers he abandoned and the many ghostly alter-egos that continued to haunt him both on and off the page.

For the first time, this book shows how Dickens’s imagination continued to revolve around the alternative futures he managed to avoid, from life as a thief, to death by grinding poverty. Vividly recreating the world in which he moved — the fluid and surprising decade of the 1830s — it reveals a young writer who was far more uncertain and unpredictable than the man we think we know.

Robert Douglas-Fairhurst is Fellow and Tutor in English, Magdalen College, Oxford.

For more information please contact: Rebekah White - Publicity Manager • Tel: +44 (0) 20 3463 2350 • Email: rwhite@harvardup.co.uk
BAVS Funding News

BAVS is committed to supporting scholarship at every level.

The Executive Committee is pleased to introduce a revised funding grants scheme. This new stream, the **BAVS Funding Grant**, replaces the former Open Conference and Postgraduate Conference grants. It is designed to be flexible in its support for members, and the maximum grant amount has been increased from £200 (£250 for the former Postgraduate Conference Grants) to £400.

The Association and its Executive remain committed to the development of postgraduate students, and it is anticipated that two postgraduate organised/led events will be funded each academic session.

**Deadlines**: there will be two deadlines each year (**5pm on November 30th** and **5pm on May 31st**)

**Enquiries**: all enquiries or questions about BAVS Funding should be directed to the BAVS Secretary, Mark Llewellyn ([mark.llewellyn@strath.ac.uk](mailto:mark.llewellyn@strath.ac.uk))

For application forms and further details, please see the BAVS funding pages at [http://www.bavsuk.org/funding.htm](http://www.bavsuk.org/funding.htm)

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Announcing the Launch of a New Project - The Plays of Wilkie Collins: A Digital Archive

A new website has been launched to host a new online archive of Collins' plays, based on the manuscripts and prompt copies that survive in collections in the UK and United States.

The first two plays to be published in the Archive (neither previously available) are:

The Lighthouse: Collins' first original play, produced at Dickens' Tavistock House theatre in 1855 and then professionally at the Olympic theatre in 1857.
Man and Wife: one of Collins' most successful plays produced by the Bancrofts at the St. James's Theatre in 1873

The website address is http://www.wilkiecollinsplays.net

Wilkie Collins wrote 13 plays during his lifetime, between 1850 and 1885, as well as 2 further plays that were never performed. Several of these have never been published, whilst others have only been published from the printed prompt copies that do not represent Collins' final revised texts.

The Project has four main goals:
* to produce accurate texts of all of Collins' plays based on manuscript and printed copies
* to trace Collins' processes of composition of the play texts
* to enable comparisons between printed, manuscript and prompt copies of the plays
* to provide a scholarly resource to promote further work on Collins as a playwright

The Project includes texts from many collections, including the British Library, the Pierpont Morgan Library, NY, the New York Public Library, Princeton University Library, Yale University Library, the Harry Ransom Centre, University of Texas at Austin, the Huntington Library, California, and others.

Professor Richard Pearson, NUI Galway

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National Endowment for the Humanities seminar, "Oscar Wilde and His Circle", UCLA, June-July 2012

Joseph Bristow (University of California, Los Angeles) is directing a National Endowment for the Humanities seminar, "Oscar Wilde and His Circle," at the William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, June 25-July 27, 2012. Applications are welcome from citizens and permanent residents of the US. For further information, go to the following link: http://www.c1718cs.ucla.edu/neh-sum12. This website should go live in late October, 2011.

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Seeking co-organiser for Octavia Hill conference

I'm thinking about organising an interdisciplinary conference next summer to commemorate the centenary of the death of Octavia Hill. Although my own PhD work (on GWM Reynolds) has led me into territory not miles away from Hill and her work (specifically, the London slums) my interest in her is more personal than academic: my dad's the chief executive of Octavia Housing Association. Both for this reason and just from a practical perspective, I'm looking for another graduate student willing to help with the organisation of the conference. I'm based in London, at Royal Holloway, and it's likely that the conference will be held in London;
any collaborator wouldn't necessarily have to live here but it would be helpful if they were in relatively easy reach. However, this is just an idea in its early stages so everything is very flexible!

Any interested parties can contact me by email at jessica.hindes@gmail.com.

Thanks! Jess

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The Cambridge Victorian Studies Group announces the official end of its five-year Leverhulme Trust-funded research programme, ‘Abandoning the Past: Past vs. Present in an Age of Progress’. When people ask us whether the programme was a ‘success’, we point to the fact that all six of our original postdoctoral fellows have ended up with permanent academic posts – Adelene Buckland in the School of Literature, Drama and Creative Writing at the University of East Anglia, David Gange and Sadiah Qureshi in the Department of History at the University of Birmingham, Michael Ledger-Lomas at Peterhouse, Cambridge, Astrid Swenson in the Department of Politics and History at Brunel University, and Anna Vaninskaya in the Department of English Literature at the University of Edinburgh. These successes allowed us to appoint two one-year postdoctoral fellows this year, David McAllister, who is going on to a three-year lectureship in English at Birkbeck, and Daniel Wilson, who will be taking up a fellowship at the Ecole des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales in Paris.

As to our intellectual successes, that will be up to the field to decide. But we feel we have left a mark in raising the profile of hitherto neglected bodies of knowledge which the Victorians took for granted but which we do not, largely because of our different disciplinary map – for example, the significance of classical languages and archaeology, and of Biblical language, culture and history. These themes were highlighted in the joint BAVS/NAVSA conference, ‘Past vs. Present’, that we hosted in summer 2009. In addition to the work of individual members of the team, now pouring off the presses, among our collaborative products are symposia on ‘What the Victorians Learned: Perspectives on Nineteenth-Century Schoolbooks’ (Journal of Victorian Culture, Autumn 2007) and ‘Victorian Epic’ (JVC, Autumn 2009), Cities of God: Archaeology and the Bible in Nineteenth-century Britain, a volume edited by David Gange and Michael Ledger-Lomas forthcoming from CUP, and From Plunder to Preservation: Britain and the Heritage of Empire, a volume edited by Astrid Swenson and Peter Mandler forthcoming from OUP and the British Academy. Time Travellers: Victorian Perspectives on the Past, edited by Adelene Buckland and Sadiah Qureshi, is in preparation for the University of Chicago Press and will represent the combined efforts of the entire CVSG team. We hope to continue our website at www.victorians.group.cam.ac.uk where news of future publications will be posted. Finally, we thank all of our Victorianist colleagues across the disciplines and the continents for the multiple collaborations we have enjoyed over the past five years.

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Professor Peter Mandler, Visiting Professor of Victorian Studies at Leeds Trinity University College for 2011-2012, will be delivering the annual public lecture at Leeds Trinity University College on Monday 28th May 2012 on the topic of ‘Creative Destruction in Victorian Britain’. Everyone is welcome to this free event.

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The Nineteenth Century Studies Association announces the 2012 Article Prize, recognizing scholarly excellence in any discipline focusing on any aspect of the long 19th century (French Revolution to World War I). The winner will receive $500 at the NCSA meeting hosted this year by the University of North Carolina, Asheville, March 22-24, 2012. Articles published between September 1, 2010 and August 31, 2011 are eligible. The author or publisher of a journal, anthology, or volume of independent essays may submit. Send three hard copies and email address to: Professor Maura Coughlin, Bryant University, 1150 Douglas Pike, Smithfield RI 02917. Questions: mcoughli@bryant.edu.

Applicants must provide verification from the editor of the venue documenting date of actual publication. One entry per scholar and three per publisher; note the entry's interdisciplinary focus. Foreign language essays must have English translations.

OIL PAINTING OF CHARTIST ARTHUR O’NEILL DISCOVERED!

Pastor of the Birmingham Chartist Church, Arthur O’Neill (1819-96) was imprisoned for using seditious language in 1842; after his release he became a Baptist minister and an indefatigable lecturer across the midlands for peace and international arbitration. In recognition of his work for reform and peace, O’Neill was presented with an oil painting of himself at Birmingham town hall in November 1885.

When working, with Dorothy Thompson, on Images of Chartism (1998), and later on The Chartist Prisoners (2008), I tried to locate this painting, but presumed it had been lost. Now it has turned up deep in the stores of Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery. This large portrait is believed to have not been on public view since the early twentieth century, and the frame is now damaged. O’Neill is depicted, by the artist Jonathan Pratt, in the traditional black and white of a dissenting minister and clutching a copy of the People’s Charter.

It really was a great thrill to see this painting. I am arranging for the portrait to be deframed, deglazed and photographed – and hopefully historians of Chartism will soon again be able to see this most interesting portrait at www.thepeoplescharter.co.uk.

Stephen Roberts, Senior Research Fellow in Victorian History, School of History & Cultures, University of Birmingham
BiblioLabs and the British Library Announce British Library 19th Century Historical Collection App for iPad

Charleston, SC & London, UK - BiblioLabs, LLC and the British Library are proud to announce their British Library 19th Century Historical Collection App for iPad is now available on the App Store. The app takes advantage of the form and function of iPad, bringing a renewed sense of wonder to the discovery and enjoyment of antiquarian and historical books.

Currently the app features over a thousand 19th Century books, but it will provide access to more than 60,000 titles by later this summer when details on pricing for the service will be announced. The 60,000 books, which are all in the public domain, are part of the British Library’s 19th Century Historical Collection and span numerous languages and subject areas including titles such as 'Frankenstein' by Mary Shelley and 'The Adventures of Oliver Twist' [with plates] by Charles Dickens. The British Library 19th Century Historical Collection App forms a treasure trove of classics and lesser known titles in fields ranging from travel writing and natural history to fiction and philosophy. The app represents the latest landmark in the British Library’s progress towards its long-term vision of making more of its historic collections available to many more users through innovative technology.

“We are excited to bring this historical book project of this nature to iPad users around the world,” said Mitchell Davis, a founder of BiblioLabs. “iPad allows for a level of intimacy with these antiquarian books that evokes a sense of engagement and curiosity that is not possible in a browser based experience.”

“We are delighted that the Library’s partnership with BiblioLabs is going to make this remarkable collection of 19th Century books available to iPad users, making them visible and accessible to a much wider audience than could ever be possible through our reading rooms,” said Caroline Brazier, the British Library’s Director of Scholarship and Collections. "These books provide a wealth of historical, scientific and cultural content for the researcher and more general enthusiast alike, and this project helps bring them to life."

Users can experience the British Library 19th Century Historical Collection App for free from the App Store on iPad or at www.itunes.com/appstore/.

For more information contact:
Carolyn Morris, BiblioLabs carolyn@bibliolabs.com

Lucy Anderson, Copenhagen and its environs; a guide for travellers, 1887.

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