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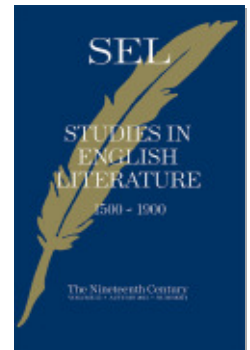
## Recent Studies in the Nineteenth Century

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# Recent Studies in the Nineteenth Century

JANE STABLER

## EDITIONS, STUDENT GUIDES, BIBLIOGRAPHY

Many of the tendencies that my eminent predecessors have observed over the last few years have continued: apart from series published by Cambridge University Press and Edinburgh University Press, relatively few books arrived from the other major British and American university presses, and the vast majority of new monographs or edited collections came from Ashgate and Bloomsbury. Evidently still awash with money from Harry Potter, Bloomsbury is reprinting its “Great Shakespeareans” additions to what used to be the Arden Shakespeare along with classic monographs from the 1960s, ’70s, and ’80s from other imprints such as Coral Ann Howell’s *Love, Mystery, and Misery: Feeling in Gothic Fiction* (ex Athlone). While it is lovely to be presented with shiny hardback editions of such works, it would be wrong to review them in an annual survey when the volume of new material produced and the overall word limit allow approximately 140 words per new book. So I merely note the commercial wizardry of reproducing Barbara Hardy’s classic collection, “*Middlemarch*”: *Critical Approaches to the Novel*, for \$128—presumably for “the institutional purchaser”—when one can still find the 1967 Athlone Press edition in secondhand bookshops for around £10. “Profitoutoffus!” as the source/sorcerer of this media power might say. The magisterial *Reception of British and Irish Authors in Europe* series (formerly Continuum, now Bloomsbury) continues under the tireless general editorship of Elinor Shaffer. This year saw

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volumes 3 and 4 of *The Literary and Cultural Reception of Charles Darwin in Europe*, edited by Thomas F. Glick and Shaffer. While many of the essays deal with material aspects of translation, publication, and reception, there is also space for probing single-author assimilations such as Céline Surprenant's essay on Darwin and Marcel Proust and Travis Landry's discussion of Darwinian sexual selection in late nineteenth-century Spanish literature, revealing the unexpected ways in which translations of Darwin infused novels of courtship at a time when "the very citizenship of women was in question" (4:621). The tracking of intellectual legacies across vast geographical and temporal expanses was a striking feature of reception studies received this year.

In this sort of overview, it is particularly difficult to do justice to edited collections. The consistently excellent Cambridge Companion series produced strong volumes on *Women's Writing in the Romantic Period*, edited by Devoney Looser, and Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, edited by Janet Todd. Amid a wealth of intelligence and model exposition, particular highlights were Andrew Elfenbein's essay on "Austen's Minimalism" and Looser's essay on "Age and Aging," both of which prove that student guides don't have to stick to the same predictable topic headings.

Other student guides appearing this year include Trey Philpotts's *The Companion to "Dombey and Son"* in the Dickens Companion series by Liverpool University Press, which devotes a whole volume to what most editions cram into a few pages at the back of the book. Keyed to each chapter of the novel, but not tied to any particular edition, the generous quotations illustrating names, place names, allusions, proverbs, and unusual phrases make this a comprehensive guide to mid-Victorian life quite apart from the light thrown on details of the plot. In *Charles Dickens's "Great Expectations": A Cultural Life, 1860–2012*, Mary Hammond has produced what will surely be one of the definitive accounts of the critical heritage of Dickens's thirteenth novel. Beginning with the underwhelmed response of the *Morning Post* in 1861, Hammond tracks the protean survival of *Great Expectations* through various print editions with competing illustrators, stage dramatizations, the school curriculum, translation, and the new media of radio, film, and television. I suspect that, along with the very helpful appendices (listing adaptations and quoting from contemporary reviews), this media section will be one of the most frequently consulted; it shrewdly allocates extra space for discussion of the relative merits of the most recent performances of Miss Havisham by Gillian Anderson and Helena Bonham Carter. Hammond's

meditation on what makes a classic or “heritage commodity” (p. 187) links up with H. J. Jackson’s study of the mechanisms of posterity (considered below).

The Open University Press guide *Romantics and Victorians*, edited by Nicola J. Watson and Shafquat Towheed, covers the nineteenth century through a male-dominated, Romantic-Gothic lens. Percy Bysshe Shelley and William Wordsworth dominate the set readings for poetry while Emily Brontë, Arthur Conan Doyle, and Robert Louis Stevenson are selected as the representative prose authors. Looking at the impact of the Romantic author on constructions of the Victorian reader, this guide offers an intensive induction into the treatment of self and other (but mainly self) in the nineteenth century. If it presents what feels like a partial view, it is important to remember that the guide is designed as the second of three volumes spanning Elizabethan drama to the contemporary novel.

Evoking the material contexts of late Victorian life, Robert Eighteen-Bisang and Elizabeth Miller’s *Bram Stoker’s Notes for “Dracula”: A Facsimile Edition* allows us to peer into the specially made box in the Rosenbach Museum that holds the notebook, diaries, newspaper clippings, and typed research for *Dracula*. It will be interesting for students to see how the energy of data collection within the novel replicates Stoker’s own labor (although this manuscript does not deploy shorthand and we do not know who typed up his transcriptions of epitaphs from Whitby tombstones). The holograph manuscript of Stoker’s stage version of *Dracula* and a vampire-slaying kit from the Royal Armouries at Leeds are two of many handsomely produced illustrations in Dale Townshend’s collection, *Terror and Wonder: The Gothic Imagination*, produced to complement the major 2014 exhibition at the British Library. Eight densely packed and lucidly written essays lead the reader from eighteenth-century architectural plates to fashion at the annual Goth weekend at Whitby. Skillful use of artifacts alongside text turns this into a fabulous repository of teaching materials. Crossing the border even more sumptuously between academic and coffee-table book, the Belknap Press of Harvard University Press has issued *The Annotated Wuthering Heights*, edited by Janet Gezari. Not so much annotated as illuminated, the book includes hundreds of color plates that locate Brontë’s novel in a contemporary nineteenth-century context, including historical material such as the title page of John Polidori’s *The Vampyre* (1819), delicate engravings of birds, and classic portraits of Victorian writers. Modern interpretations of the

novel are also illustrated with stills from recent film productions and Kate Bush's vocal performances. For anyone who is going to read the text as well as browse through the pictures, Gezari offers paratextual glosses of Joseph's speech and neat explications of symbolic significances, but this is probably not a book that most students will carry into class. Other editions asking to be judged by their covers are the Penguin Classics edition of Austen's "*Love and Freindship*" and *Other Youthful Writings*, edited by Christine Alexander (bound in a startling hardback fabric decorated with pink shoes), and the Abbeville Press facsimile edition of Austen's juvenilia—*Volume the First: In Her Own Hand*, *Volume the Second: In Her Own Hand*, and *Volume the Third: In Her Own Hand*—edited by Joan Strasbaugh. Carefully recast in color to the same size and the same paper-and-ink tone as the originals, the edition has an authoritative introduction by Kathryn Sutherland and reading (rather than diplomatic) transcriptions at the back. The high-quality production means that these volumes lack the fragility of Austen's notebooks; nevertheless, this edition will help student readers to understand Austen's earliest jokes about book making.

Building on its growing reputation for niche subject areas, Edinburgh University Press brings a new genre into prominence with *The Decadent Short Story: An Annotated Anthology*, edited by Kostas Boyiopoulos, Yoonjoung Choi, and Matthew Brinton Tildesley. Cleverly mixing stories from a range of Little Magazines with a number of more familiar works by Oscar Wilde, H. G. Wells, and Vernon Lee, this anthology provides a new configuration of literary form with fin-de-siècle social and cultural issues. The Edinburgh University Press edition of Samuel Taylor Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria*, edited by Adam Roberts, is a single-volume alternative to the two-volume Bollingen edition. The three layers of the page (Coleridge's text, his notes, and the editor's notes) are slightly less clearly distinguished in this new format, but Roberts has performed a valuable service in tracking down many previously undetected sources, particularly in scientific pamphlets. Having "tied up pretty much every loose end, annotation-wise" (p. clxiv), Roberts devotes less space than James Engell and W. Jackson Bate to the biographical contexts and does not retain the dialogue with Coleridge's notebooks which was a feature of the earlier edition, but as a scholarly edition to accompany our insatiable appetite for new contexts accompanied by an up-to-date survey of Coleridge criticism, it will be an essential tool for the advanced student reader.

The recent takeover of Pickering and Chatto by Routledge might change the flow of hardback reprints from that quarter in the future, but this year they were still going strong with *The Selected Works of Margaret Oliphant, Part 4: Chronicles of Carlingford*, edited by Muireann O'Cinneide, Lyn Pykett, Joanne Shattock, Joseph Bristow, and Elisabeth Jay. This impressive team provides a generous number of endnotes to guide student readers through a range of potentially baffling allusions, from the identity of Lady Macbeth to the different observances of various sects within nineteenth-century Protestantism. Each volume stands independently, so reading across them all, one is treated to a range of subtly different and skillfully brief summaries of English dissenting history and Oliphant's favorite poetic references, such as Coleridge's "Ancient Mariner" (1798–1828) and the myth of Adonis.

*The Travel Writings of John Moore*, edited by Ben P. Robertson, adds an economical scholarly apparatus to the 1820 Robert Anderson edition, including Moore's *Life* by Anderson, Moore's account of his Continental tours (1779 and 1781), and *View of the Causes and Progress of the French Revolution* (1795). Introductions to each volume offer concise guides to and highlights of the contents under scientifically descriptive subheadings. The endnotes convey essential information to help the reader through passages that Robertson admits some might find "rather tedious" (2:x), and the prime purpose of the edition is simply to get Moore's writing back into circulation. Sharing the same aim, the Pickering and Chatto *Women's Travel Writings in North Africa and the Middle East* recovers Sarah Wilson's *The Fruits of Enterprize Exhibited in the Travels of Belzoni in Egypt and Nubia* (1825), edited by Carl Thompson; Barbara Hofland's *The Young Pilgrim, or Alfred Campbell's Return to the East and His Travels in Egypt, Nubia, Asia Minor, Arabia Petraea &c* (1826), edited by Lois Chaber; and "Miss Tully"'s *Narrative of a Ten Years' Residence at Tripoli* (1816), known to Lord Byron as "Tully's Tripoli," edited by Francesca Saggini. All three volumes are facsimile reprints supplemented with a section of endnotes, combining the advantages of being able to encounter the texts as first readers did, but with the support of modern geographical and other cultural glosses. Another part of the energetic Pickering and Chatto mission to recover lost writers is the Chawton House Library Series: *Women's Novels*, which this year issued Mrs. S. C. Hall's *Sketches of Irish Character*, edited by Marion Durnin. With a full editorial apparatus and detailed notes

(discussing, for example, the subtle nuances of Hall's quotation of P. B. Shelley's *The Revolt of Islam* [1818], alert to the controversial circumstances of the source text's publication), this is a major contribution to the evolving canon of nineteenth-century studies, attending to a work first released in the same year as the Catholic Relief Act and topical enough to go into seven editions between 1829 and 1876. Durnin locates Hall's writing in relation to the regionalism of Maria Edgeworth and English writing about Irish politics and religious issues by authors such as the Brontës. Making a strong case for the relevance of the outsider's voice, Durnin allows a narrator that was once much better known to emerge from decades of obscurity and neglect. Gathering the work of another household name strongly associated with a particular region, volume 28 of *The Collected Works of James Hogg, Songs by the Ettrick Shepherd*, edited by Kirsteen McCue with Janette Currie, brings together all versions of these song collections. Hogg made his first selection of songs for Blackwood in eleven weeks in order to pay off debts; the editors use the same 1831 edition as their copy text, but the detailed annotation to each song provides a full creative context (including manuscript details), a publication history (often complex), and a musical context along with the usual explanatory glosses on the lyrics themselves. This will be the standard edition of Hogg's works and a valuable reference point for anyone researching nineteenth-century musical intertexts.

By far the heaviest books received this year were the two volumes of Barbara J. Becker's *Selected Correspondence of William Huggins 1859–1889 and 1890–1915*, another Pickering and Chatto production. Each volume contains well over 600 pages; the letters were obviously widely dispersed and this immense task of collation allows the origins of astrophysics to swim into our ken. The edition reproduces Huggins's sketches and charts his unflagging researches into the best optical equipment for clear observation. The letters are full of wonderful specialist terminology: "Of the two forms Gregorian & Cassegrain I should prefer the latter, but for the observations which I wish to make *both* are exceedingly inconvenient ... An inverted Newtonian would meet the requirements of the observations, but the practical difficulties in its construction & mounting I suppose insuperable" (1:89). Technical terms are not glossed in the footnotes, but there is a biographical glossary and index and a separate subject index. To read through the clusters of letters that Huggins fired off as he pursued his quest for an accurate view of the universe is one of



the best introductions to nineteenth-century science that I can imagine.

Standing apart from the hurly-burly of the textbook market and outside the time frame of UK research assessment exercise cycles, it is deeply reassuring to see the stately progress of those works of traditional bibliography and editorial scholarship that are rightly described as monumental. Mark L. Reed's *A Bibliography of William Wordsworth 1787–1930* is a landmark work of bibliographical rigor, detailing the material publication of Wordsworth's poems up to 1930 and allowing us to see at a glance the changing order of poems in collections Wordsworth prepared for the press himself as well as the selections that were made by other editors for children in 1893, for example, or for adult readers during the First World War. With those hypnotic descriptions of bindings and embossed foliage that give bibliography its unique aesthetic, this is unquestionably an outstanding work of scholarship that passes the bibliographical baton on to other Wordsworth scholars who now only need to start in 1931. *The Cambridge Edition of the Poems of Rudyard Kipling*, edited by Thomas Pinney, is also a new standard edition. Kipling has sometimes been treated reductively in postcolonial studies, standing for the pith-helmeted straw figure whose jingoism throws into relief the startling perspicuity of the critic (the gift of hindsight as discussed in Simon Dentith's volume also reviewed here). The publication of Kipling's collected poems makes it much more difficult to typecast him as such an unconditional spokesman for empire. Evidence of Kipling's Browningsque ventriloquism of British insufferability in India can be found in his published work, but the appearance of a whole volume of uncollected poems brings to light some of Kipling's pithiest satire: "The Stumbling-Block of Western Lore" (not published in its original setting by *The Times*) and "The Immigitable Anti-Macassar" (a parody of W. E. Henley from a private letter) are surely 1892 anticipations of postcolonial critique. Supplying the textual and publishing history for Kipling's prolific corpus, Pinney has painstakingly tracked and dated all known variants, uncovered lost poems, and provided an appendix on doubtful and mistaken attributions. The gathering of globally dispersed material into three elegant volumes is an immense achievement.

Historians as well as literary scholars will be delighted to see the tenth volume of *Benjamin Disraeli Letters: 1868*, edited by Michel W. Pharand, Ellen L. Hawman, Mary S. Millar, Sandra den Otter, and M. G. Wiebe. This University of Toronto Press edition



sets a gold standard for typographical clarity and organizational order; on these parian pages, every aspect of the apparatus is precisely defined and accessible. Annotation at the foot of the page provides the other side of the correspondence, where possible. Disraeli's intimate friendship with Queen Victoria (who, in this volume, receives more letters than any other recipient) can be traced and enjoyed, especially his simultaneously restrained and fulsome responses to her *Leaves from the Journal of Our Life in the Highlands*. Sadly, Disraeli did not mention Robert Browning's *The Ring and the Book*, which also appeared in 1868. As a source of detailed information about the formation and maintenance of the British establishment, this is a glorious scholarly resource.

#### SINGLE-AUTHOR STUDIES, GROUP STUDIES, INFLUENCE STUDIES, AND BIOGRAPHIES

I begin with a formidably prescient, thoughtful book that helped to make sense of the whole field: in *Those Who Write for Immortality: Romantic Reputations and the Dream of Lasting Fame*, H. J. Jackson takes on the question of how reputation works over time. Focusing on the Romantic period, she compares the relative fame of Wordsworth set against George Crabbe and Robert Southey; what it was that allowed Austen to rise over Sir Walter Scott and Mary Brunton; and why John Keats attained the immortality he sought but Barry Cornwall did not. Literary quality, of course, comes into this, but Jackson's concern is really with the other variables that make or mar posthumous life. With the simple, brilliant thesis "fame is a condition of being talked about" (p. 60), Jackson shows that to be talked about consistently for over 200 years, it helps authors to write in different genres so that they remain in view as different literary modes come in and out of fashion; to have friends who will publish memoirs and thus keep the name alive; to be born or live in a pretty place that can be visited by tourists; and to write works that are short enough and safe enough to get onto the school curriculum. These attributes, among others, Jackson argues, increase the rewards from different groups of public readership. Rather than rely upon a binary divide of readership into the educated, critical reader (trusted by Horace and Wordsworth) or the common reader (embraced by Shakespeare and Samuel Johnson), Jackson builds a much more flexible and dynamic theory of different modes of knowing that ebb and flow and, thus, cumulatively build canonical status.

Authoritative, compelling, and wonderfully pertinent, this book is a remarkable explication of the mystery of Romantic afterlives—although Jackson's checklist also works magically with every other author who appears on this year's list. For academics, she provides a stringent critique of the contemporary academy and book trade. And for creative-writing students who have time to evolve their practice (and cultivate their friends), she gives solid advice about how not to be forgotten.

In Robert O'Kell's new biography, *Disraeli: The Romance of Politics*, the mixture of romance and realpolitik evident in Disraeli's epistolary relationship with Queen Victoria is deftly interwoven with, for example, his manipulation of public opinion over Russian imperialism. O'Kell accords equal attention to Disraeli's participation in literary and political cultures; compelling psychological portraiture traces Disraeli's conflicting senses of superiority and of deprivation, assertiveness and passivity, heroic fantasy and satirical deflation. This truly interdisciplinary study illuminates the way that drama and narrative art infuse the practice of nineteenth-century politics.

Robert J. Mayhew's *Malthus: The Life and Legacies of an Untimely Prophet* reopens discussion of Thomas Malthus's *An Essay on the Principle of Population*, which caused an outcry upon its publication in 1798. Mayhew narrates the intellectual history and the biographical circumstance that led up to the *Essay*, then tracks its reception across the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Mayhew makes a case for Malthus as an early environmental economist, although he points out that his work was always widely misunderstood and misrepresented. Judicious and far-reaching, the book provides an anatomy of the cultural reception of environmental warning and a salutary reminder of the ease with which ideas can be travestied by the media. Moreover, Mayhew's book is a useful counterweight to passing Malthusian allusions in many ecocritical studies.

*Clare's Lyric: John Clare and Three Modern Poets* by Stephanie Kuduk Weiner bases its comparative investigation on the concept of mimesis. Beginning with Clare's middle-period poems, Weiner traces Clare's mimetic lyric reciprocity in the asylum period and analyzes the related linguistic and formal strategies of Arthur Symonds, Edmund Blunden, and John Ashbery, situating these twentieth-century writers firmly within a Romantic aesthetic. Consciously echoing the patient and precise descriptive accuracy of her subject, Weiner's study revitalizes ideas of mimesis and fidelity through a sensitive poetics of listening.

Clare's fragile subjectivity finds no place at all in Gary Schmidgall's *Containing Multitudes: Walt Whitman and the British Literary Tradition*, which singles out Shakespeare, Milton, Robert Burns, William Blake, and Wordsworth among the other "fraters" (p. 118) in whom Whitman found reflections of himself (Scott, Thomas Carlyle, Alfred Tennyson, Wilde, and Algernon Charles Swinburne are seen as more peripheral). Discussing Whitman's professed identification with these national prophet figures alongside the biographical and textual kinships noted (such as the fact that phrenological examinations of Burns and Whitman provided evidence of equally well-developed organs of self-esteem), Schmidgall reveals that Whitman's proudly independent grandiloquence is tied to the British literary tradition, and also (if we needed further proof) that there is a decidedly masculinist New World swagger in Harold Bloom's visionary company.

The only book devoted to Blake this year was G. E. Bentley Jr.'s *William Blake in the Desolate Market*. This impressive work of scholarship gathers the accumulated evidence of Blake's lifetime of failure as a businessman. Bentley points out, of course, that Blake never wanted to be rich: his personal proverb was "desire of gain deadens the genius of man" (p. 6). Nevertheless, Blake wanted regular employment, and this book calculates the sum total of earnings from all his various modes of work. Bentley shows that, after a period of moderate prosperity as a commercial engraver, Blake found ever more inventive ways of losing money: teaching for free, working for years on images without a commission, working for years on commissions that yielded only a flat fee, neglecting to distribute his works when salons were set up to support him, and inventing his new form of engraving on copper plates at a time when the cost of copper rocketed. The book is studded with informative tables of Blake's earnings as an engraver, printer, teacher, and painter; an appendix listing Blake's patrons; and fascinating comparative columns that tell us how many copies Blake needed to sell of the illuminated books in order to cover the cost of his copper. Six sales were needed to pay for *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, for example, and by 1793 Blake had printed three. *Visions of the Daughters of Albion* just broke even and only the early books, *Thel* and *Innocence*, made a profit for Blake because of the rising cost of copper (it was needed at the time to sheathe warships). Blake's stubborn reliance on a material that placed him in direct competition with arms manufacturers is the sort of revelatory detail that will make this a vital supplement for teaching, criticism, and biographical work in the period.

As the context section below reveals, it was a very good year for dogs. Beryl Gray's *The Dog in the Dickensian Imagination* is a full-length study on a topic that also forms several chapters in the more general surveys of canine influence. Like Philip Howell (whose *At Home and Astray: The Domestic Dog in Victorian Britain* I discuss in more depth later), Gray dismisses the idea that Dickens was sentimental about dogs, quoting from an aside in one of his letters about breaking off to "whop" his dog, Timber, who was making persistent efforts to mount "an insignificant, drivelling, blear-eyed little tame rabbit of the female sex" (p. 31). After a full biographical survey of Dickens's own dogs, Part 2 deals with dogs in Dickens's texts, accompanying illustrations, and dramatic adaptations. Arguing that Pip's perception of Magwitch as a hungry old dog does not "reduce the convict to canine status, but [helps] affirm his humanity" (p. 231), Gray's close readings support Howell's contention that Dickens's dog imagery leads readers to question any easy pity for the underclass that denies them equal rights as citizens.

Dealing with a different aspect of domestic commodification, Claire Wood's *Dickens and the Business of Death* examines Dickens's ambivalence about the commercialization of funerals and mourning, exploring his fascination with London as a necropolis stuffed with all the new technologies of death (including taxidermy) alongside his promotion of nonmaterial values and relationships. Mixing thing theory with Arjun Appadurai's revision of Marxist commodity theory, Wood is especially attentive to moments between leaving and being left behind. Her chapter on "Parts and Partings in *Our Mutual Friend*" brilliantly salvages the paper mill as an image of spiritual transformation in which waste rags are recycled to become the stuff of literary immortality.

Aeron Hunt's study, *Personal Business: Character and Commerce in Victorian Literature and Culture*, is not solely concerned with Dickens, but it makes sense to mention it here as a startlingly clear-sighted and revelatory discussion of the business of business. Reading Dickens's *Dombey and Son* (1848) alongside Anthony Trollope's *The Way We Live Now* (1875), George Eliot's *The Mill on the Floss* (1860), and Oliphant's *Hester* (1883), Hunt offers a detailed account of the role of personal character and credit in the intimate environment of the family firm and the more unpredictable arena of the investment markets. Analyzing issues of hereditary talent, trust and reliability, and moments when characters fall short of expectations, this is a completely

fresh take on the idea of character and notions of interest and disinterestedness.

Dickens's bicentenary in 2012 was marked by a number of conferences, which are still emerging in their paper afterlives. The 2012 symposium at Leipzig University generated *Dickens on the Move: Travels and Transformations*, edited by Stefan Welz and Elmar Schenkel. This was an engagingly loose collection, roaming across geographical investigations of Dickens as nightwalker in London and tourist in Italy to Disney adaptations of *Oliver Twist* and *A Christmas Carol*. Various interpreted, the "idea of movement" (p. vii) proved to be an effective way of catching Dickens's continuing relevance to an outward-looking and globally aware academic community. Another bicentenary conference bore fruit in *Dickens and the Imagined Child*, coedited by Peter Merchant and Catherine Waters. Ranging over considerations of the Dickensian child, childhood memory, and child readers, this collection is a model of how to shape a tightly focused book from conference proceedings. Building on what Laura Peters calls "the continued critical investment in the concept of the child" (p. 6), this international team of contributors turns the topic of childhood through the prisms of biography, psychoanalysis, intertextuality, and affect theory. Well crafted and well indexed, this collection will help to invigorate considerations of a popular, but yet-to-be-exhausted, theme.

The 2014 *Dickens Studies Annual: Essays on Victorian Fiction*, edited by Stanley Friedman, Edward Guiliano, Anne Humpherys, Natalie McKnight, and Michael Timko, provides a lively collection of fourteen essays on Dickens plus two on other Victorian fiction. Themes of legacy, commodity, celebrity, and globalization are much to the fore in the wake of 2012. The commodification of the body, for example, receives fresh attention in Erin D. Chamberlain's study of the representation of the servant's body in advertisements and texts, which (like the household pet) might function as an index of the productivity of the Victorian home. An exceptional essay in this collection is Matthew P. M. Kerr's "Floating Fragments: Some Uses of Nautical Cliché in *Dombey and Son*," which discusses ocean imagery in the novel as a supplement to the usual material focus on boat building and fitting. Arguing persuasively for a poetics of fluidity and vagueness, which draws its strength from the repetition of sea clichés, Kerr's beautifully written essay finds a new way to address Dickens's art of reviving "what at first appears inanimate" (p. 168).

Unlike Dickens, George Eliot had only one book devoted entirely to her, although her bicentenary in 2019 is bound to result in a blossoming of critical reassessments. Wendy S. Williams concludes her study *George Eliot, Poetess* by sketching possible future avenues for further work on the relatively unexplored area of George Eliot's poetry. As a preliminary investigation, Williams's monograph offers four eminently sensible and serenely methodical essays on George Eliot as a Victorian poetess—each with its own neatly tabled conclusion—drawing out George Eliot's verse evocations of the important themes of sympathy, female community, and motherhood. In an academic environment that tends to prioritize left-of-field readings of canonical figures, it was good to find Williams's study along with Elizabeth Ludlow's *Christina Rossetti and the Bible: Waiting with the Saints*. This is a sophisticated, well-read, and theologically attuned account of Rossetti's assimilation of the Bible and devotional writing. Quietly correcting some of Jerome McGann's assumptions about Rossetti's religious context, Ludlow deftly traces the strands of the Reformed Protestant meditative tradition within Rossetti's Anglo-Catholic experience of worship. Locating a critique of Romantic individualism with nineteenth-century resistance to the Higher Criticism, Ludlow builds a compelling case against the simple equation of religious obedience and a poetics of renunciation. The chapters on Rossetti's poetics of affect and her understanding of Julian of Norwich's view of the Virgin Mary's participatory synergy in God's plan inform a strong, intelligently theological vision with which to counter views of Rossetti as passively devout.

There was never any danger of passivity being associated with John Henry Newman, but Lawrence Poston's *The Antagonist Principle: John Henry Newman and the Paradox of Personality* gradually discloses the intellectual coherence of Newman's awareness of himself and God, following the way that a ceaseless metaphorical exchange informed Newman's dialogue with two communions. Basing his analysis on the consistency of *Apologia pro Vita Sua* (1864), *An Essay in Aid of a Grammar of Assent* (1870), and *The Idea of a University* (1852), which are set against the background of turbulent and fractured Anglicanism, Poston explains Newman's "disproportionate place in the historiography of the English Church" (p. 235) through his strong sense of personal agency and his rhetorical performance of a contemplative vocation that has proved to be a source of comfort for Protestants and Catholics alike. Among many telling contextual vignettes is Poston's account of the conversion of Newman's contemporary, F. W. Faber, who



“renounced his Anglican orders publicly and quite theatrically at an evening service at his parish in Eldon without advance notice, leaving his bereft parishioners weeping and confused” (p. 162). Such details remind one that, despite the recent religious turn in literary studies, many students are still baffled by the trauma surrounding choices about religious identity in the nineteenth century.

Diane Long Hoeveler explores the origins of this trauma in *The Gothic Ideology: Religious Hysteria and Anti-Catholicism in British Popular Fiction, 1780–1880*. Hoeveler has toiled devotedly through a vast collection of Gothic chapbooks and noncanonical novels, distilling her comprehensive knowledge in order to lead us in turn through the nightmares of the British Protestant imaginary. Although the Catholic clergy had been driven out of British public life over two hundred years earlier, Hoeveler reveals the startling extent to which perverted nuns, sadistic monks and priests, and the devilish machinery of the Inquisition continued to haunt picturesque abbey ruins throughout the nineteenth century. Gently insisting that the Gothic is both an aesthetic and an ideology, Hoeveler returns us to the historical contexts of Gothic discourses. Her scholarly exhumation of hundreds of lurid anti-Catholic narratives authoritatively lays bare the fluxes and refluxes of pornography and paranoia which mark works such as Matthew Lewis’s *The Monk* (1796) and Wordsworth’s *Ecclesiastical Sonnets* (1822). Summarizing the concerns of this febrile genre in admirably calm, clear prose, with an immensely helpful bibliography, Hoeveler has produced what will become a standard reference work on the sectarian energies of Gothic Romantic literature.

The visual expression of religious concerns was explored in Caroline Ings-Chambers’s *Louisa Waterford and John Ruskin: “For You Have Not Falsely Praised.”* After reading *The Stones of Venice* in 1854, Waterford sought out Ruskin as an art tutor. Because she had been trained in accomplishment painting, Ruskin’s expectations about accuracy (“the literal texture,” his letters boomed, “namely the bloom, down gritty surface—silky—furry—vitreous &c.” [p. 38]) were difficult to meet, especially as Ruskin also issued conceptually challenging demands that her paintings should manifest “Justness—and therein—nobleness” (p. 38). Waterford’s dedication to the worthier form of art exhorted by Ruskin culminated in her work on the murals at Ford, which manifest precisely the intersection of aesthetic and religious principles. This is the right place, then, to mention two other books



that examine different religious traditions: Nadia Valman's edited collection on *Jewish Women Writers in Britain* is mainly about twentieth-century writers, but the first two chapters on Victorian Jewish women novelists and Anglo-Jewish women poets cover the whole of the nineteenth century and present a stimulating view of one of the traditions of religious writing that lay outside Christian poetics. Kelsey L. Bennett's *Principle and Propensity: Experience and Religion in the Nineteenth-Century British and American Bildungsroman* examines the connection between eighteenth-century evangelical conversion theology (renewing the self in the image of God) and self-formation in the novel. Alert to different national inflections of Protestantism, Bennett ranges over *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship* (1795–96), *Jane Eyre* (1847), *David Copperfield* (1850), *Pierre* (1852), and *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881) to reveal the diverse ways in which aesthetic and religious experiences share the ontological concern with a "self-perpetuating inner life": it is this, Bennett argues, that separates the "valuable work of art ... from other objects of cultural production" (p. 145).

Walter Savage Landor's life spanned the Romantic and Victorian periods, and, as a result, he is usually read by researchers in neither field. Reversing decades of disregard, Adam Roberts somehow found the time while reediting Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria* to produce *Landor's Cleanness: A Study of Walter Savage Landor*. Using the concept of "cleanness" to address Landor's unfashionable Latinate polish, Roberts demonstrates that the author's fastidiousness with words, pared-down forms, and classical philosophy was endlessly polluted by biographical strife. Elegantly restrained chapters on Landor's different generic experiments are poised between offering an authoritative summation and an opening-up for further consideration of the full complexity of Landor's achievement. Linguistic reticence emerges as a shared attribute in W. David Shaw's *The Ghost Behind the Masks: The Victorian Poets and Shakespeare*, which defines with nuanced sensitivity and tact the characteristics of Shakespeare's influence on Matthew Arnold, Browning, Arthur Hugh Clough, Christina Rossetti, Thomas Hardy, Gerard Manley Hopkins, George Meredith, Swinburne, and Tennyson. Shaw finds his way nimbly through this host of voices, uncovering different aspects of a myriad-minded Shakespeare in each Victorian. Above all, however, he nominates "classical restraint" or "simplicity" as the most pervasive Shakespearean legacy. This is not a book about stage history—Shaw is frankly glad that Browning did not continue to "prostitute" (p. 2) his poetic gifts to theatrical popularity—but the

study offers a different way of historicizing Shakespeare. Shaw traces the way that the cosmic weariness and sexual disgust of Hamlet or Lear, for example, emerge in the cadences of writers who were trying to come to terms with Charles Lyell or Darwin. What is it, Shaw asks, that makes Thomas Hardy's "During Wind and Rain" Shakespearean? Is it the verbal echoes of the fools' songs in *King Lear* and *Twelfth Night*, or is it a more indefinable "beautiful sadness of acceptance" that might call hauntingly across two very different cultures (p. 105)?

With the advent of digital repositories of nineteenth-century newspapers and journals, the pursuit of verbal resonances across the centuries has become very much quicker. Recent editions of Austen's novels have been increasingly aware of the rebirth of eighteenth-century namesakes and plot arcs in her fiction. While working in his edition of *Emma* (1816), Richard Cronin once remarked wryly that it was unlikely that a new manuscript would turn up in which the heroine was called "Molly." That Austen's characters' names seem to indicate a secret code is often noticed by students who puzzle over the coexistence of two Elizas in *Sense and Sensibility* (1811) or the multiple Charleses of *Persuasion* (1818). Margaret Doody's book *Jane Austen's Names: Riddles, Persons, Places* explains the reason for this as well as for all those lackluster Charleses. In a work of immense, but simultaneously gleeful, erudition, Doody plots the manner in which names inform Austen's geographical and historical consciousness such that her writing is "dense with allusion, thick with multiple sensations and meanings" (p. 389). Delving into the mottled history of the English language as well as its monarchs, Doody traces the way that "before they have thought and agency, all characters emerge from Britannia's whirling and colliding histories" (p. 393). Immersing us in this word hoard, Doody reconnects Austen not just with her reading, but also with a deeply intuitive feeling for England, rooted in place names and the etymological changes that work across generations, channeling the fine social calibrations that Austen's novels realize so sharply. A labor of love and a work of scholarship that will stand for ages, *Jane Austen's Names* is one of those rare studies that rightly treats Austen as a poet.

Any single chapter of Doody's book would be a far better introduction to Austen's world for undergraduates than any or all of the recent screen adaptations, but for those that only come to her via the screen, *Fan Phenomena: Jane Austen* edited by Gabrielle Malcolm poses intelligent questions about readerly identification with Austen's heroines and other forms of "adap-

tational experiences" (p. 163). Unlike Austen's names, there are some uniquely hideous words here ("Mash-ups," "Darcy Mania," "the Blogosphere"), but with guides to further reading for each aspect of Jane fandom covered this will be a useful way of getting students already lost in Austen to think more critically about what they are doing.

Staying for a little while longer on the topic of Englishness—David Higgins's fine study on *Romantic Englishness: Local, National, and Global Selves, 1780–1850* asserts the relevance of Englishness to Romantic studies: "Englishness remains a powerful form of identity in the Romantic period, a fact that has not been sufficiently recognised by scholarship over the last two decades" (p. 9). To address this lack, Higgins looks at the ways in which nine male writers (William Cowper, William Wordsworth, Coleridge, William Cobbett, Samuel Bamford, Clare, William Hazlitt, Charles Lamb, and Thomas De Quincey); one woman, Dorothy Wordsworth; and one artist, Thomas Bewick, construct localized visions of Englishness through autobiographical writing. Meshing an ecocritical reading of the self in relation to place with the postcolonial theory of Homi K. Bhabha, Higgins examines the ways in which heterogeneous local selves interact with (or retreat from, in the case of Bewick) broader conceptualizations of the nation and the rest of the globe. Higgins's sensitivity to different discourses of space and place allows him to bring the miniaturist woodcuts of Bewick into dialogue with the vertiginous fantasy of De Quincey's "The English Mail Coach" (1849). Although he makes no claims on this score, he has produced a fascinating array of English masculinities at a time of accelerating imperialism, and he steers his multidimensional, multiauthor project to successful completion with great brio, allowing sufficient room for each one of the distinctively different voices of his protagonists.

Addressing the same period as Higgins, but also in dialogue with the formal concerns of Ewan James Jones's book on Coleridge (discussed later), Yasmin Solomonescu's monograph *John Thelwall and the Materialist Imagination* assimilates and advances the growing body of scholarship on Thelwall's literary, political, and elocutionary writings. Although some of Thelwall's writings—such as his "animal vitality" paper and his *Poems Chiefly Written in Retirement* (1801)—have been regularly discussed over the last decade, Solomonescu seeks to correct the neglect of Thelwall's natural philosophy by extending discussion of his works across all four decades of his career and across all genres, including his marginalia in Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria*; his

contributions to the *Imperial Magazine* and other periodicals; and his Arthurian drama, novel, and unfinished epic poem. Her book shapes a valuable intellectual biography, tracing Thewall's intertwining of materialist and idealist ideas and making a convincing claim for Thewall's textually embodied trains of perception and association as deeply relevant to current work on Romantic-period neuro-cognition and affect theory.

Taking up the issue of how affect could be determined by reviewers, Tim Fulford's *The Late Poetry of the Lake Poets: Romanticism Revised* is a major contribution to the growing body of work on the overlooked poetry of the 1820s, '30s, and '40s. Analyzing formal strategies of recollection, revision, and disconfirmation, Fulford considers the way that Southey, Coleridge, and Wordsworth wrested their public identity back from Francis Jeffrey's humiliating "Lake School" tag. At the center of the book, Coleridge's 1816 poetry appears "as if Coleridge had shaped himself as a typical self-damaging Byronic hero" in order to desynonymize himself from Wordsworth (p. 116). Blending book history with attention to the cadences of incantation, Fulford subtly inflects his usual new-historical approach with formal analysis to produce a searching account of poetic maturity. Shuffling the pack of the first and second-generation Romantics in a different way, Andrew Warren's *The Orient and the Young Romantics* begins with Southey, who performs here (as for Jeffrey) the role of the egotistical older poet. Warren examines the various ways in which Byron, P. B. Shelley, and Keats tried to imagine political solutions that did not follow the imperious and solipsistic mental projections of the "Lake School." Focusing on the Byronic verse tale *Lara* (1814); Shelleyan dream visions, especially *The Revolt of Islam*; and Keatsian romance, Warren concludes that the perplexed involvement of art and lived reality in a work such as Keats's *Lamia* (1820) points to a pressing problem in postcolonial theory: how to define the border between Orientalism and Islamic reality in a world where, as Edward Said argues, "every domain is linked" (p. 256). Critically and conceptually far-reaching, and informed by scrupulously attentive close reading, this is a book which tells us a great deal about the Romantics, but which also quietly interrogates every treatment of Victorian imperialism that arrived this year.

Reversing the tendency of recent years to reevaluate Wordsworth the Victorian, John Worthen's *The Life of William Wordsworth: A Critical Biography* firmly reinstates the creative precedence of early Wordsworth. The years 1787 to 1807 receive

eighteen chapters while 1815 to 1850 pass in just five. The chapters themselves are divided into smaller sections punctuated by a flourishing serif as though the publishers were worried that our attention span might not last for longer than half a dozen paragraphs. Recreating the growth of the poet's mind in a series of sensitive sketches and maintaining a penetrating dialogue with manuscript deletions and revisions, Worthen's life history of Wordsworth is a shrewd but sympathetic account of a career that was haunted from the beginning by what is seen no more.

Circling around another crisis of confidence in masculine Romanticism, Mary O'Connell's study of *Byron and John Murray: A Poet and His Publisher* makes the first full use of Andrew Nicholson's seminal work on the John Murray letters. Adding new insights from the John Murray archive and combining the strengths of astute research with a natural flair for narrative, O'Connell situates the conversation between Byron and the man who made him famous in a sparkily drawn Regency context, explaining that Murray was not, as so often assumed, an anomalous choice of publisher. O'Connell's vivid prose identifies the multiple tensions that led to the dissolution of the business relationship, but not, in the end, the friendship, and her study allows us to understand the personal and emotional stresses and strains that are rarely so well articulated in book history.

O'Connell's research is a stringent counterpoint both to Aeron Hunt's investigation of the family firm (discussed earlier) and Clara Tuite's monograph on Byron's fame, *Lord Byron and Scandalous Celebrity*. Whereas previous accounts of Byron's celebrity have examined the technologies and economic impact of authorship, Tuite follows O'Connell in tracing the human relationships involved in the readership's manufacture of a popular and then unpopular idol. Building on Jacqueline Rose's view of our murderous relation with celebrity, Tuite analyzes the imbrication of fame and notoriety in scandals across post-Waterloo Europe. Interlinked case studies of Byron's personal and textual relationships with Caroline Lamb, Stendhal, Napoleon, and Lord Castlereagh build up a picture of the multiple networks of semi-public disclosure and surveillance that seemed to make scandal more opulently textured in Byron's time than in Wilde's.

For Wilde, "History is merely gossip, but scandal is gossip made tedious by morality" (*Lady Windemere's Fan*, Act III). Anything but tedious, the prehistory of Wilde's personal scandal is narrated in Antony Edmonds's *Oscar Wilde's Scandalous Summer: The 1894 Worthing Holiday and the Aftermath*. Usually

passed over in a few sentences, this period of Wilde's career is brought to life with breezy immediacy as Edmonds draws Wilde's last careless season in the provincial English world of regattas, fetes, and house parties. Most poignantly drawn is the character of Constance Wilde, deformed in Wilde's eyes, "'with all the vile cicatrices of maternity'" (p. 12), deeply in love with another man who did not have to try to be kind to her, but prevented by sheer goodness from doing anything about it. The book is a carefully researched account of the context in which Wilde composed *The Importance of Being Earnest* (1895), but it shares the thrill of an English murder mystery in which placid surfaces are about to be shattered. Edmonds provides the local newspaper reports about Wilde's local celebrity appearances before wryly observing that the sensational trial of the next year was simply never mentioned.

Looking at morality from a more epistemological angle, the chapter on Wilde in *Puritanism and Modernist Novels: From Moral Character to the Ethical Self* by Lynne W. Hinojosa emerges from a deeply meditated and tenaciously argued discussion of the reception of the Puritan tradition. Challenging the emptier projections of Puritanism that arise in writers from Newman to new ethical theory, Hinojosa examines the way in which *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1891), for example, dismantles certain Puritan hermeneutics while reinforcing what could be seen as a Puritan quest for the reconciliation of aesthetic and ethical elements.

Also investigating Wilde's eighteenth-century influences, *Oscar Wilde's Chatterton: Literary History, Romanticism, and the Art of Forgery*, edited by Joseph Bristow and Rebecca N. Mitchell, provides a multidimensional investigation of Wilde's interest in the Romantics' iconic "marvelous boy," Thomas Chatterton. Built around a scholarly edition of Wilde's "Chatterton Notebook" (held in the Wilde collection at the Clark Library, California), the reconstruction offers both a reappraisal of Chatterton's place in literary history and a dialogue with Chatterton's role in Wilde's imagination. Unlike many of Chatterton's Romantic readers, Wilde was alert to Chatterton's versatility as a satirist, but it is his skill as a counterfeiter that receives most attention. This fascinating study of literary legacies and the aesthetics of posed identity excavates the extensive strata of Romantic-period literature underlying Wilde's insights about art and reality.

In *Lewis Carroll: The Man and His Circle*, Edward Wakeling writes a fresh assessment of Lewis Carroll's relationships with other professional adults. Instead of albums of pale, dreamy pre-pubescent girls, the illustrations of this book throng with beards



and heavy desks. Wakeling details Lewis Carroll's association with teachers, artists, illustrators, businessmen, and Queen Victoria. One of the book's revelations was Lewis Carroll's compassionate interest in the "fallen woman," Ellen Terry, and his outspoken (for the time) determination that she should be accepted in society. The single volume of *The Collected Letters of Ellen Terry*, edited by Katharine Cockin, that arrived for this review reveals Terry's awareness of audience responses to her as a remarried woman in 1908; to George Bernard Shaw she shared her amusement that "I am able ... to play a love-part *without offence*" (p. 104). Meanwhile, Charles A. Carpenter's edition of Shaw's selected correspondence, *Bernard Shaw and Gilbert Murray*, provides an excellent, abbreviated account of the friendship between Shaw and the regius professor of Greek at Oxford, interspersed with a dry, witty biographical narrative to fill in the gaps of what else they were doing between the late 1890s and the 1940s. The epistolary exchanges, many of which are printed for the first time, reveal the cross-fertilization of literary and social criticism—"Sophocles was the sort of man the English like, just as Euripides was the sort of man they loathe" (p. 93)—as well as the evidence that these towering intellects could be both judicious and dogmatic with equal style.

Professionals also loom large in David Gillott's *Samuel Butler against the Professionals: Rethinking Lamarckism, 1860–1900*, in which we learn why and how Butler detested the sham cultural authority of the professional and trace the development of his argument that one must unlearn cultivation and see with the eye of the layman. Gillott contends that Butler's hostility to the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood evinces his contempt for those who adhere to academic rules rather than painting for pleasure. Although Butler's critique sounds superficially like Max Nordau's attack on the PRB, Gillott demonstrates that Butler offers an optimistic defense of art evolving from desire rather than Nordau's vision of enervating decline and artistic degeneration.

One of the most moving biographical studies of the year was Barbara Johnson's *A Life with Mary Shelley*, which contains Johnson's last writing on Mary Shelley's circle as well as some of her earlier essays and conference papers. The work features a forward by Cathy Caruth and an introduction by Mary Wilson Carpenter, and includes essays by Judith Butler and Shoshana Felman. The editors weave the painful context of Johnson's chronic neurological disease into their discussion of the manuscripts. Knowledge of Johnson's condition sharpens our appreciation of her approach to



Mary Shelley via the recalcitrant realm of the physical and the idea of writing against time. The importance Johnson always ascribed to a narrative group of listeners lends added significance to the sensitive editorial essays that accompany these last fragments of research, participating in a thoughtful and delicate dialogue with Johnson's vanishing voice.

### CONTEXTUAL STUDIES

While the posthuman was represented by Justin D. Edwards's edited collection, *Technologies of the Gothic in Literature and Culture: Technogothics*, in which Romantic-period Gothic makes fleeting, tantalizing appearances with film, social media, and digital technologies, the year was dominated by works on the nonhuman in nineteenth-century literature. Bringing animal studies and queer theory into dialogue, Monica Flegel's *Pets and Domesticity in Victorian Literature and Culture: Animality, Queer Relations, and the Victorian Family* investigates the way that domestic pets highlight the dysfunctionality of Victorian households. Focusing on the presentation of spinsters and their cats, aberrant bachelors and their dogs and waifs and strays and, well, strays, Flegel challenges the perfunctory treatment of pet-owner narcissism by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, offering a far-reaching examination of the positioning of animals in fictional analyses of social ills and familial relations. The book presents fresh readings of moments such as Gilbert's "but I continued caressing the dog" in Anne Brontë's *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* (1848), a moment wherein Gilbert asserts a paternal connection with Helen's son, whose hair he will be able to caress once he has secured the role of *pater familias* (pp. 44–5).

Philip Howell's previously mentioned *At Home and Astray* takes its bearings from the animal turn in geography and produces a tremendously readable cultural history of the way that dogs (specifically unlike cats) partake of our political relationships. Howell uses Dickens as the literary marker of social tensions that are also legible in the economy of dog-napping, the founding of Battersea Dogs' Home, the inscriptions on headstones in the Dog Cemetery in Hyde Park, and the Dogs Act of 1871. Resisting any simplistic Foucauldian view that Dickens's texts endorse the work of the muzzle and the leash in the interests of disciplined modernity, Howells traces a canine critique of domestic ideology in Dickens's writing that accords with the concurrent movements

of dissenting Christianity, antivivisection, feminism, and spiritualism to realize a nascently less anthropocentric ethics.

Serendipitously in dialogue with these studies of the non-human denizens of Dickens's London, David Floyd's *Street Urchins, Sociopaths, and Degenerates: Orphans of Late-Victorian and Edwardian Fiction* argues that whereas the orphan figure in the earlier nineteenth century buttressed the family as an ideal unit while offering a critique of industrialization, the later period sees family structure itself coming under pressure. Floyd examines the way Bram Stoker's Renfield and Mina, for example, formulate provisional and hybrid social relationships and defeat the "emotionless, self-serving anti-father," Count Dracula (p. 60). Evading all the distress of their predecessors, Floyd's fin-de-siècle orphans revel in the license of castelessness and find self-definition beyond the context of the family. Dealing with social stains of another kind, Eileen Cleere's *The Sanitary Arts: Aesthetic Culture and the Victorian Cleanliness Campaigns* considers the cooperation of art with sanitation as cultural critics advocated a move away from the dirt of old art, such as Ruskin's Venice and shadowy Old Master paintings, into the brighter, cleaner colors of realist fiction and Pre-Raphaelite works. In a refined analysis of the discursive collisions between Arnoldian culture, Havelock Ellis on health, and New Woman Fiction, Cleere threads aesthetic and scientific revelations together in a sparkling interdisciplinary work.

Unclean air and mental stagnation loom up again as central concerns of Charlotte Brontë's *Villette* (1853) in *Picturing Women's Health*, a wide-ranging collection of essays on medical and literary discourses about feminine well-being edited by Francesca Scott, Kate Scarth, and Ji Won Chung. Including work from a robust number of early-career researchers, this book covers familiar topics such as sensibility, anorexia, conduct, dress, and female madness along with the travel memoir of a missionary nurse among Siberian lepers and the feminist dimensions of food reform. Intersecting with the cultural history of anorexia, Kathleen Frederickson's *The Ploy of Instinct: Victorian Sciences of Nature and Sexuality in Liberal Governance* assesses the ways that Victorian pornography, economy, and ethnology engage with Darwinian and Lamarckian ideas of hunger as the prime survival instinct. At a moment when alienating labor defines modern subjectivity, Frederickson argues that the suffragette hunger strikes turn instinct into a kind of labor, thus undercutting the newly formed instinct-based theories of sexual difference. Many cultural

critics have discussed the colonial implications of discussions of women's bodies that emerge from *Picturing Women's Health* and *The Ploy of Instinct*, but few, as far as I am aware, have previously broached the topic of Anna Despotopoulou's study of *Women and the Railway, 1850–1915*. Despotopoulou modestly points out that the railway is relatively unexplored as a gendered space, and her book is a very readable, well-researched, and, in places, humorous exploration of the way locomotion brought in new rules of circulation for men and women. The threat of the "fast woman," traveling alone, smoking, and indulging in brief encounters is linked with the subversive effect of Flora Annie Steel's short fiction, which "challenges the rationale of imperialism and questions the progress and enlightenment of the imperial civilising mission by suggesting that the traditions of the supposedly benighted peoples are planted firmly and permanently in the space that the railway officials see as barren and empty" (p. 133). With a lovely coda on the contingency of railway female identities, Despotopoulou points to the liberating potential of this newly defined subject position.

Anthropological anthologizing and the domain of the curio and the cabinet continue to exert an imaginative hold on scholarship concerning the formation of nineteenth-century culture: *Romanticism and the Museum* by Emma Peacocke plants the institution of the British Museum at the heart of Wordsworth's *The Prelude* (1805–50), Scott's *Waverley* (1814), and Edgeworth's *Harrington* (1817). Beginning with British self-consciousness about not having anything like the Louvre, Peacocke introduces the idea of museum space to Wordsworth's poem and gallery-going in the novels. The final chapter, more pragmatically, looks at things that were eventually deposited in the British Museum, such as the Elgin Marbles. Peacocke probes Byron's and Horace Smith's responses to the marbles, although they were cargo/plunder rather than exhibits when Byron wrote his satire. As with the best new-historicist studies, however, the mental agility of the critic disarms quibbles about chronology, and Peacocke's resourceful expansion of exhibition space to encompass geological excavation allows her to adumbrate the totality of past, present, and future as cultural artifact. Extending her headline metaphor with a similar virtuoso reach, Deborah Lutz's *Relics of Death in Victorian Literature and Culture* catalogs the Victorian passion for keepsakes. Beginning with the physical remains of P. B. Shelley and Keats that were preserved and sacralized by their friends, Lutz traces relic worship from Christian medieval times into the Romantic investment of the ordinary with emotional significance.

The fluidity of life-death boundaries is tracked across the writing of Emily Brontë, Dickens, Tennyson, and Hardy, punctuated with photographs of objects such as horsehair sofas and hair bracelets, and leading to a discussion of photography itself as participating in a spectral play of presence and absence that only ended, Lutz suggests, when medical science impoverished our sense of the vitality of mortality.

Human and animal hair provide an altogether more unsettling view of the Victorian passion for collections in Ann C. Colley's *Wild Animal Skins in Victorian Britain: Zoos, Collections, Portraits, and Maps*. Beginning with displays of animal hides, Colley examines the visitor's urge to touch animal skins in zoos or museums as a form of contact with human wildness at a time when evolutionary theories were questioning the boundaries between human and animal. Analysis of the erotics of "haptic visuality" in portraits of women on animal skin rugs leads to a suggestive account of G. M. Hopkins's interest in cartography as the earth's epidermis (p. 137). Drawing on recent theoretical studies of touch as the site of perception, Colley's idea of the skin as historical repository permits an imaginative recuperation of the trophies of empire. A less aesthetically composed aspect of death is addressed in Bridget Walsh's *Domestic Murder in Nineteenth-Century England: Literary and Cultural Representations*. Exploring elements of melodrama in real and fictional murder trials, Walsh's gruesome but captivating study interrogates constructions of the domestic sphere and turns to reflect on the fact that our shared fascination with violent dismemberment points to our need to find reassuring disintegration in the ideal of Victorian family life. Combining analysis of the haptic and the medical humanities, Jeremy Davies's *Bodily Pain in Romantic Literature* is a searching, keenly intelligent study of the significance of pain in the history of sensation in relation to selfhood and the political. Davies builds on Elaine Scarry's paradoxical definition of physical pain as an experience that at once devastates language but also demands new forms of expression and, working with the writings of Jeremy Bentham, the Marquis de Sade, Coleridge, and P. B. Shelley, he explores the alien and intimate nature of pain as a "sense of sensing" that might incite new and daring conceptions (p. 27). One such idea, Davies concludes, is the development of anaesthetic, which had to be imagined before it could be realized. Bold in its conceptual venturing and sensitive in its close reading, this book represents (appropriately) the cutting edge of interdisciplinary work on literature, philosophy, and medicine.

Two other groundbreaking studies of the early nineteenth century provide complementary critical perspectives on the ways in which literary culture might flourish in times of political regulation and repression. David Sigler's *Sexual Enjoyment in British Romanticism: Gender and Psychoanalysis, 1753–1835* reads five Romantic-period authors in dialogue with Lacanian theories of anxiety and jouissance. Austen, he claims, “sought to corral the excessiveness of sexual enjoyment” by articulating the unaccountable cause of desire and charting its progress into the thoroughly accountable subject of psychoanalysis (p. 56). By contrast, Sigler contends, Mary Robinson, Charlotte Dacre, and P. B. Shelley experiment with different modes of pleasure and sexual identity that evade the protocols of the two-gender system. Sigler sees these escapes as only provisional and fleeting; all alternative Romantic sexualities in the end, he suggests, either capitulate to normative Oedipal sexuality or succumb to self-annihilation.

Jeffrey N. Cox's eagerly awaited study of forms of creative resistance treats some of the same subjects, but evades Sigler's rather subdued conclusion. *Romanticism in the Shadow of War: Literary Culture in the Napoleonic War Years* argues that while the British establishment battled Napoleon overseas, it waged a war against sociability on the home front. Cox shows how, in the face of various proscriptive measures, Romantic writers such as Thomas Holcroft, Anna Barbauld, Byron, the Shelleys, and Leigh Hunt turned resourcefully to antimelodrama, translation, hybrid satire, prophecy, proto-science fiction, history, and romance to shape an antiwar message and consolidate an intellectual vanguard that might “keep hope alive during dark times” (p. 137). Bringing into print the rich results of years of dedicated research, conversation, and reflection, Cox's study tells us new things about the diversity and global awareness of Romantic culture and kindles the hope that the survival of Romantic studies in its present diversity is de facto an affront to establishment efforts to contain radical protest.

While Cox traces the energy that went into different literary experimental attempts to defeat custom, Ann Andrews looks at the energy flow out of print culture and into the reading public. *Newspapers and Newsmakers: The Dublin Nationalist Press in the Mid-Nineteenth Century* charts the impact of journalism on the development of Irish nationalism between 1842 and 1867. Helped by the gradual removal of taxes and the growing literacy of the population, newspapers were more able than before to shape public opinion about British governmental failings over the Great Famine and the Crimean War in this critical period. Deftly identi-

ying the shades of constitutional and revolutionary nationalism that fluctuated in intensity across the period, Andrews analyzes the blend of emotive language and rational argument that underpinned, for example, nationalist arguments in favor of the use of violence. Andrews's research covers some of the same ground as the collection of essays *Fictions of the Irish Land War*, edited by Heidi Hansson and James H. Murphy, which also considers the links between popular media and popular protest in the decades after 1879. This collection's short, tightly focused essays on children's literature, drama, short stories, and novels yield a comprehensive round-genre perspective on the way in which traditional plot lines of intergenerational conflict are inflected by a specific set of historical circumstances.

Ireland and India were at the center of several studies of colonial space this year, but Siobhan Carroll's study *An Empire of Air and Water: Uncolonizable Space in the British Imagination, 1750–1850* turns to the unmapped regions that posed even more of a challenge to the technologies of empire. Carroll begins by carefully defining four "atopias," natural regions potentially within reach of travel but resistant to efforts to turn them into habitable space (p. 6). Intersecting with discourses of the sublime in Romantic studies or "planetary space," in Gayatri Spivak's terms, Carroll considers polar, oceanic, atmospheric, and subterranean realms. Her bands of nineteenth-century authors exhibit different responses to atopic space: Coleridge, Mary Shelley, and Captain William Parry, for example, articulate wariness about human incursions in the polar wilderness whereas Dickens enjoys participating in the spectacle of Sir John Franklin's heroism in the extremity of the frozen north. Carroll's study concludes by returning to the blank space of London and suggesting that textual efforts to escape from the city into atopic wildernesses disguise the extent to which sprawling urbanized modernity and disorientating global capitalism are our most alienating spaces.

#### STUDIES OF FORM, AESTHETICS, AND READING

Jonathan Ellis's edited collection, *Letter Writing among Poets: From William Wordsworth to Elizabeth Bishop*, developed from a lecture series rather than a conference and was, perhaps not coincidentally, one of the most satisfying essay collections that arrived this year. Providing a deeply thoughtful meditation on the form of the letter and a stellar range of essays from the Romantic period and well into the age of the telephone (when letter writing



is supposed by some estimates to have faded), the fifteen contributors provide joyful explorations of the relationship between poets and readers of their letters which, it turns out, are always “something like poetry” (p. 12). Provocative, varied, and impossible to encapsulate in a survey, the book is itself a love letter to nearly palpable authorial presence. An equally specialized form comes under expert critical scrutiny in *Portrait Stories* by Michal Peled Ginsburg, who examines the questions about representation that are raised by nineteenth-century short stories and novellas about portraits. Noting that critics tend to conflate painted and verbal portraits, Ginsburg argues that the inclusion of the painter in portrait stories calls attention to the fact that “no portrait is simply a portrayal of its subject” (p. 5). Mixing well-known works such as *The Picture of Dorian Gray* with relatively undiscussed examples by Honoré de Balzac and George Sand, Ginsburg defines a new corpus and isolates the multiple ways in which subject and representation are entangled with each other and the act of readerly interpretation.

John Harvey in *The Poetics of Sight* takes up another aspect of visualization. For a work on the poetics of visual art and vivid sights in fiction and poetry, this is only partly richly illustrated (9 color plates out of 36 images), but it is densely thought-provoking throughout. Beginning with a beguiling tour around the optical curiosities of his childhood memories, Harvey brings together cognitive psychology and art history to interrogate the role of sight in the mind’s eye. His case studies range from Shakespeare to the Pre-Raphaelites and early Modernism, while a particularly strong chapter on Blake poses acerbic questions such as “Where is Urizen’s right hand?” (p. 72), and notes that Blake seemed to have difficulty “in drawing, or even imagining, the pelvis” (p. 79). Opening up the issues of Blake’s “blind bigotry” (p. 78), but also his “eloquent strengths” (p. 95), this unusual book permits readers to enjoy meditative yet laconic insights that have been distilled from years of enthralling lectures.

Beginning with Paul Ricoeur’s view that if forgiveness had a genre, it would be the hymn, Richard Hughes Gibson’s *Forgiveness in Victorian Literature: Grammar, Narrative, and Community* makes a cogent and persuasive claim for Victorian narrative as an exemplary formal testing ground and site of resolution for different religious ideas of forgiveness. Cleverly chosen texts by Dickens, Trollope, George Eliot, Hardy, and Wilde complicate the view that forgiveness is a conventional and banal topic. In working out that the past cannot be erased or forgotten, but that



psychological healing is possible through both extraordinary and everyday acts, Gibson's incisive analysis of the plot arcs of Victorian fiction casts light on more modern quests for effective reconciliatory processes.

*Second Person Singular: Late Victorian Women Poets and the Bonds of Verse* by Emily Harrington is a refreshing discussion of the Victorian lyric as an intersubjective genre rather than one that immures the self in isolation. Attending closely to prose prefaces, letters, and essays as well as the verse of Christina Rossetti, Augusta Webster, Alice Meynell, A. Mary F. Robinson, Dollie Radford, and Mary Coleridge, Harrington describes vital, sometimes contentious modes of address and forms of intimacy. Placing ideas of relationship at the core of the nineteenth-century lyric, Harrington shows that, very frequently, these poets overturn expectations about the social limitations of gender and song.

The richly complicating effect of a gendered reading of form was also evident in Amy Culley's *British Women's Life Writing, 1760–1840: Friendship, Community, and Collaboration*. Culley builds on recent work that has expanded our idea of life writing away from the coherent prose account of personal development (a notion that inclined heavily toward Romantic individualism) and toward a more provisional, fragmented, and hybrid genre, embracing more than one subject and a range of interpersonal relationships. The tremendous variety of material that is opened up by this new, wider understanding of the form is illustrated by Culley's ranging over writing by eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Methodist women, courtesans, and historians of the French revolution. While some of the works in the third category are well-known ones by Mary Wollstonecraft and Helen Maria Williams, much of the material in this study is relatively unknown and some of it is still only in manuscript. Sustaining a lively critical dialogue with other scholars in the field, this study cleanses the doors of perception, usefully taking stock of what has been achieved to date, adding new insights, and pointing the way for further work.

Donelle Ruwe's *British Children's Poetry in the Romantic Era: Verse, Riddle, and Rhyme* has something in common with the two previous studies by expanding our understanding of Romantic-era children's poetry as a distinct genre, with a rational-moral tradition that is often at odds with Romantic-period ideas of childhood as the home of unbiddable imagination. Focusing on secular poems (the nonhymn), Ruwe's thorough and thought-provoking formalist study tracks metrical patterns and evaluates the fre-

quency of dramatic, narrative, and lyric modes by authors such as Adelaide O'Keeffe and Sara Coleridge. Detailed, perceptive, and crisply written, Ruwe's case studies identify and define an area that, thanks to her scholarship, will attract much more attention in years to come. As Ruwe points out, inquiry into children's fiction has been underway for some time; complementing her study, Teresa Michals's *Books for Children, Books for Adults: Age and the Novel from Defoe to James* aims to fill a gap in our understanding of the nineteenth-century novel readership. Michals argues that while there is a significant amount of research on child readers, working class readers, and women readers, almost nothing has been written on the construction of the adult reader. Monitoring the way that adventures, such as Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) and Scott's novels, became children's books while stories with a sexual theme, such as Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* (1740–42), turned into adult literature despite being addressed originally to the youth of the day, Michals advances the possibility that adulthood is a demographic category, invested with moral and aesthetic ideals of maturity, that gradually replaced the mixed or family audience envisaged by Defoe and Dickens.

The Pickering and Chatto series *Poetry and Song in the Age of Revolution* sets out to examine the ways that lyric was used to explore and disseminate political ideas. With clear relevance to Celtic studies as well as literature and musicology, the two studies from the series this year were Carol McGuirk's *Reading Robert Burns: Texts, Contexts, Transformations* and Carol Baraniuk's *James Orr, Poet and Irish Radical*. Both scholars situate their work in relation to recent political reevaluations of vernacular poetry and note that one obvious problem with using postcolonial theory to talk about Scottish literature is that much of the British empire was run by Scottish administrators. Baraniuk registers the irony that while Orr regarded himself as an Irishman, the native Irish viewed him as a colonizer, and McGuirk does not tiptoe around Burns's early plan to emigrate to Jamaica where he expected to die a "poor-Negro-driver" (p. 36). She tracks Burns's complicated creative relationship with two languages and his outward-looking interest in revolution. In connection with "Scots Wha hae," for example, McGuirk notes that readings "mainly attuned to nationalism ... will tend to miss the way that these stanzas march ahead in time" and point to struggles "of the same sort" outside Scotland (p. 142). Tracing Burns's awareness of different layers of audience, this book explains his appeal to a public that was all for heroic rebellion as well as to those who remembered the suffering

of the past and warned against renewed insurrection. Mingling biography with detailed notes on the circulation of individual songs, McGuirk provides an authoritative account of the significance of Burns's poetic craftsmanship for his contemporaries and imitators. She devotes a whole chapter to Wordsworth's kinship with Burns, examining the value that both poets placed on the insignificant, the awkward, and the specific. After castigating Anglo-centric views of Romantic culture, Baraniuk similarly brings Wordsworth into her assessment of Orr's contribution to songs in the Scots vernacular. Despite his exciting life (he took part in the 1798 rebellion before fleeing to America), Orr remains under the shadows of both Burns and English Romanticism. Baraniuk excavates his identity as an Irish Romantic poet, although she does so in terms that reinscribe rather fixed views of Romanticism and Irish identity, placing his radical aspirations in line with a tradition that combined sympathy for the melancholy outcast with a nostalgic yearning for lost or distant places. Baraniuk concludes with a forthright challenge to Celtic studies: "Only an outmoded essentialist construction of Irishness could fail to embrace the Scotch poetry produced in Ulster" (p. 192). Her compelling account of Orr's place in the Irish literary history will make it much harder to overlook him in the future.

After these works on the political force of poetry, the philosophical side of things comes into view in Ewan Jones's study, *Coleridge and the Philosophy of Poetic Form*. As his title indicates, Jones takes his theoretical bearings from Kenneth Burke, whose ideas—along with those of the philosophers Nicolas Malebranche and Johann Herder—are revisited in the course of the book. Arguing that Coleridge does his best thinking in verse rather than prose argument and that his philosophy usually lags behind the intellectual struggles of verse, Jones offers a dense and rewarding engagement with the texture of Coleridge's poetry. Through a series of philosophically informed close readings, he moves from analysis of the hemistich in the conversation poems to the question of whether philosophy itself might be subject to a "rhythm of interruption" (p. 22). Each chapter allows the intricacy of Coleridgean formal technique—apostrophe, rhythm, the pun, the symbol—to radiate out into Coleridge's philosophy and wider discussions of Romantic form. Intelligent and invigorating throughout, Jones's finely pitched discussion of how we place metrical stress in "Christabel" and the relevance of this decision for Coleridge's theory of organic form is just one of many treasures.

Moving into a more neglected genre, Amanda Adams's *Performing Authorship in the Nineteenth-Century Transatlantic Lecture Tour* argues that research into oral culture in American literature has overlooked the role of the public lecture, its unique projection of embodied authorship, and its crossover between art forms and cultures. Discussing the celebrity appearances of Dickens, Mark Twain, and Wilde alongside some of the less flamboyant public speakers, Adams is particularly illuminating on the constraints faced by the women lecturers Harriet Martineau and Harriet Beecher Stowe, whose audacious straying into overt support for the abolitionist movement challenged ideas of female silence in the public sphere.

In a less intricately verbal performative sphere, three very different books from theater studies initiate us into the secrets of the green room. Jeffrey Richards's *The Golden Age of Pantomime: Slapstick, Spectacle, and Subversion in Victorian England* offers a capacious study of pantomime's emergence in the 1840s from the harlequinade, the extravaganza, and the burlesque before continuing in a semipermanent state of transition throughout the nineteenth century. Richards maps the development of the genre by focusing on a small group of writers, J. R. Planché and E. L. Blanchard; the scene painter, W. R. Beverley; and the impresario, Sir August Harris. After surveying the ruthless competition that brought Harris to prominence, Richards concentrates on pantomime at the Drury Lane theater as a barometer of political and cultural concerns until it was superseded by the genre of the musical in the twentieth century when pantomime was relegated to the provinces. Packed with astonishing accounts (in all senses: some expenses were enormous) of visual display, make or break reviews, and evidence of what Byron called "a hate / Found only on the stage" (*Don Juan*, 4.93), *The Golden Age of Pantomime* creates a fascinating picture of the professional toil that went into popular culture.<sup>1</sup> From the evolution of pantomime to evolution in pantomime, Kirsten E. Shepherd-Barr's *Theatre and Evolution from Ibsen to Beckett* is a series of interconnected studies of various stage manifestations of evolutionary theory including three chapters on the nineteenth century. Mercurial and eclectic, the book examines a wide range of Darwin-influenced plots from references to fossils and blushing to the broader plot dynamics of celibacy, maternal love, self-sacrifice, and the extinction of family lines. The book provides a sprightly counterview to the more somber engagements with Darwinian theory that tend to dominate the genres of poetry and the novel.

In the last of this pantomime cluster, connections between melodrama and the imperial project are considered in Neil Hultgren's *Melodramatic Imperial Writing: From the Sepoy Rebellion to Cecil Rhodes*. Hultgren supports Cox's view mentioned earlier that nineteenth-century melodrama was often used to help manage information in times of national/imperial crisis by providing accessible binaries, but he traces the alternative ways in which writers such as Wilkie Collins and Olive Schreiner used melodrama to expose the injustices of British imperialism. Hultgren also usefully complicates views of the pantomime audience as mindless consumers of ideology, arguing that jingoism could often coexist with ironic detachment or a readiness to champion resistance to tyrannical rule. In a diverse field, the constant features of pantomime are defined as plotting, emotionality, and community; Hultgren maintains, however, that pantomime ought to be recognized as a mode and not as a rigid genre. His pellucid and well-informed study is equally revealing about the prequel and sequel to its immediate period, taking a long and erudite view of its subject from the Romantic period to the 2002 film *Dirty Pretty Things*.

A number of books on various aspects of the reading experience testify to continuing growth in this area of literary studies. *Reading and the Victorians*, edited by Matthew Bradley and Juliet John, is a superlative collection of essays on the material aspects of reading in the nineteenth century and the present day. Contributions cover library records and the likely effects of reading by tallow candles; the enhanced awareness candles might provide of "money, time, waste, and death—and ... a real threat to life and property" (p. 30); William Gladstone's "tolerant" marginalia in his edition of Byron (p. 142); and the experience of looking at Dickens's holograph revisions to the manuscript of *David Copperfield*, where following the authorial revisions of a single sentence allows us to see the evolution of pained consciousness on the page. *Reading and the Victorians* is packed with new insights and surprising nuggets of information, and is a collection that warrants far more detailed attention than is possible to give here.

The late Simon Dentith's *Nineteenth-Century British Literature Then and Now: Reading with Hindsight* investigates the tension between our historicizing attempts to reconstruct the alterity of the past and our awareness of our own present moment. Dentith begins his book by sketching the problem of how to read Victorian fiction without being immensely condescending about topics such as Victorian sexuality. Hindsight, he argues, should remind us of the contingencies of history, and such alertness to contingency is

exemplified in chapters on the ironical perspectives of *The Mill on the Floss* and *David Copperfield*, Ruskin and Trollope, historical pastiche and critical theory. Salvaging a way of reading in which it is still possible to identify with the struggles of Victorian characters, Dentith's study sheds new light on their ability to speak to our unimaginable future.

Melissa Shields Jenkins's *Fatherhood, Authority, and British Reading Culture, 1831–1907* examines the formulation of patriarchal authority (male domination) in relation to paternal authority (historically specific parent figures) in texts by Elizabeth Gaskell, Meredith, William Makepeace Thackeray, George Eliot, Samuel Butler, and Hardy. With an almost tender attention to detail, her case studies trace the way that models from conduct guides, prayers, political speeches, and scientific writing filter across into the voices of father figures in novels and biography. Jenkins provides an essential corrective for those students who assume that patriarchy is culturally static.

Taking a long view of critical enquiry, James Ley's *The Critic in the Modern World: Public Criticism from Samuel Johnson to James Wood* scrutinizes the role of the critic over 300 years and asks how men who position themselves as "more knowledgeable, insightful, cogent, sensitive and articulate" than other readers manage to attract such a sizeable nonspecialist audience across many generations (p. 2). Ley considers the prose style of Samuel Johnson, Hazlitt, Arnold, T. S. Eliot, Lionel Trilling, and Wood to elucidate the qualities that guarantee the posthumous survival of a public critic (although Wood, of course, is still with us). Part of the reason for their success, Ley believes, is their belonging to a tradition of descriptive criticism that is opposed to theoretical discourse, though, he insists, these critics are all theorists in their questioning of assumptions and their development of ideas that "have political and philosophical ramifications beyond what might be described as narrowly literary concerns" (p. 213). Interesting tangential discoveries in Ley's discussion include the form and social role of the book review and the links between the book reviewer and the cultural critic or teacher who are forever poised between subjective, emotional responses and the need to render these responses objective and rational.

Arnold's disinterestedness appears in a different guise when he forms the third of three investigations into heirs of Immanuel Kant in Kevin McLaughlin's *Poetic Force: Poetry after Kant*, with Charles Baudelaire and Friedrich Hölderlin representing French and German lines of inheritance. McLaughlin uses Walter Ben-



jamin and Paul de Man to elaborate a Kantian theory of communicability existing under the threat of incommunicability. His chapter on Arnold focuses on the dialogue between Arnold's "Resignation" and the philosophical "something" in Wordsworth's verse, which de Man diagnosed as uniquely threatening to the Victorians. Scrutinizing the moments of caesura and turn in poetry by Wordsworth and Arnold (though not attending to the "rhythms of interruption" detected by Jones in Coleridge's poetry, discussed previously), McLaughlin concludes that: "'Tintern Abbey' and 'Resignation' are fundamentally concerned with junctures at which the communicability of the 'world' fails—due, not to natural limits (the physical power of nature), but to the unforce or incommunicability that is internal to communicative force as such" (p. 104). This account of why Arnold turned to the life of a public man of letters offers a vigorously theoretical counterview to the professional trajectory elaborated by Ley.

The bridge between aesthetic form and social context is the central concern of Caroline Levine's *Forms: Whole, Rhythm, Hierarchy, Network*. Levine advocates a new formalist method, applying the rich terminology of formalist criticism such that it includes patterns of socio-political expression. While recent critical schools, Levine argues, have prioritized resistance, rupture, liminality, and hybridity, she makes a compelling case for attending to bounded wholes. Levine shrewdly points out the ways in which New Criticism (represented by Cleanth Brooks) is not sufficiently attentive to formal intricacy while antiformalists (represented by Mary Poovey) rely to a surprising extent on unifying concepts and bounded forms. Trying to get the two sides to overlap and pool their resources, Levine launches a dynamic investigation of the wholes, rhythms, hierarchies, and networks in which political and aesthetic forms jostle together in works as diverse as *Jane Eyre*, Dickens's *Bleak House* (1853), Elizabeth Barrett Browning's lyrics, and, finally, the television series *The Wire*. Provocative, fresh, and ingenious, Levine reinvigorates the possibilities for new formalism.

## GLOBAL, ECOCRITICAL, AND POSTCOLONIAL STUDIES

One of the most sizeable groups of books received for review continues to be from the various branches of postcolonial studies. Eddy Kent's *Corporate Character: Representing Imperial Power in British India, 1786–1901* explores the ethos of institutional integrity in the East India Company and its later manifestation



in the Indian Civil Service. Kent examines an eclectic group of writers, including Malthus and Kipling, alongside the East India Company's training college and its fascinating examination process to reveal that corporate notions of virtue depend on the self-disciplined discharge of administrative duties as much as conceptions of race or nation. Colonial consciousness, he argues, is shaped above all by the challenges of managing one's own agents at a distance. This insight connects Edmund Burke's speech on the impeachment of Warren Hastings with Donald Rumsfeld's response to the Abu Ghraib scandal in an original and disconcerting view of the relations between discourses of government, community, and capitalism.

*Ten Books That Shaped the British Empire: Creating an Imperial Commons*, edited by Antoinette Burton and Isabel Hofmeyr, is a tightly focused collection of essays on imperial and anti-imperial affect in literary texts ranging from *Jane Eyre* and Robert Baden-Powell's *Scouting for Boys* (1908) to F. W. Reitz's *A Century of Wrong* (1900) and Totaram Sanadhya's *Fiji Mein Mere Ekkis Varsh* (1914). The contributors pay particular attention to the processes of entering culture and the ways that pamphlets and newspaper serials are turned into books as they circulate in and through the agency of empire. Interrogating imperial fictions from another angle, Rachel E. Johnson's study *A Complete Identity: The Youthful Hero in the Work of G. A. Henty and George MacDonald* finds that there is much more than "sheer pluck" in Henty's narratives and that his ideals of heroism in unknown geographical territories speak in surprising ways to the exploration of psychological territory in the work of MacDonald. Johnson singles out passages where Henty's narrator or characters display "insight into the position of the occupied, the colonized, the marginalized and the oppressed" because such moments, she observes, "are rarely mentioned in the ... view of Henty as a stereotypically insensitive propagator of the imperial myth" (p. 185). The juxtaposition with MacDonald's moments of empathy, such as his description of the "mortifying hand of the conquerors" in *An Invalid's Winter in Algeria* (1864), suggests that we still have much to discover about the perspectives of so-called apologists for empire in the ripping yarns of Victorian imperialism (p. 194). Aaron Worth's *Imperial Media: Colonial Networks and Information Technologies in the British Literary Imagination, 1857–1918* examines the relationship between imperial media technology and literature, considering, for example, the role of the telegraph operator in Kipling's Indian fiction and the circulation of information in John Buchan's spy

novels. Interested in media “as prostheses of thought” (p. 8), Worth suggests that Queen Victoria’s love of Marie Corelli’s *A Romance of Two Worlds* (1886) as bedtime reading can be explained by seeing the novel as “a kind of cyberfantasy of female participation in the vicarious pleasures of imperialist expansion,” although one contemporary critic suggested that Corelli’s fiction also worked “by way of a soporific” (pp. 40–1).

Moving from India to the Atlantic rim of empire, Elizabeth A. Bohls’s *Slavery and the Politics of Place: Representing the Colonial Caribbean, 1770–1833* deploys her well-established expertise in the aesthetics of travel to consider the geographical sites of slavery. Bohls interweaves six case studies of different prose variety from the Caribbean, encompassing picturesque description, natural history, geohistory, travel narrative, journal entries, and autobiography. The voices of the enslaved and the slave-owning class are brought into dialogue as, for example, Bohls argues that the autobiographical *History of Mary Prince, A West Indian Slave* (1831) takes up the theme of domesticity from the unpublished diary of the Scottish Janet Schaw and the New Jersey-born Maria Nugent. Bohls compares the ways these women deal with the unhomely—the bite of tropical insects or the licks of a drunken slave master—and their heavily freighted use of the word “home”; her sensitive close readings build a cumulatively powerful account of place making amid experiences of jarring dislocation. Another contribution to the burgeoning field of Atlantic studies is Cynthia Schoolar Williams’s *Hospitality and the Transatlantic Imagination, 1815–1835*. Informed by the Derridean notion that hospitality lies at the heart of all ethical behavior, Williams explores rituals that negotiate the relationship between individual and collective in works by Mary Shelley, Walter Scott, James Fenimore Cooper, Washington Irving, and Felicia Hemans. Firmly Anglo-centric in its series of threshold encounters, this book nonetheless looks forward to the point when America becomes a nation in its own right “as its own host” (p. 97).

Meanwhile, from the other side of the world, Peter J. Kitson’s *Forging Romantic China: Sino-British Cultural Exchange, 1760–1840* examines the vexed ceremonial aspects of encounter between British embassies to China. Voluminous original research into diplomatic, missionary, trading, travel, and imaginative accounts of China feeds into a reconsideration of some of the key dramatic moments in Romantic period literature: Manfred’s defiant rhetoric to Arimanes, for example, is presented as “an encounter between a free-spirited European and an Asiatic despot over the issue

of ritual prostration" (p. 159). Drawing on years of painstaking research, this is a seminal work on the influence of Qing China on the literature and culture of the Romantic period, one that suggests a significant revision of new historicist attention to the Oriental Other. Rather than insisting on dark allegories and absences in Romantic texts, Kitson points out the extent to which China is as consciously embedded in literary texts as it was in British domestic and political life.

In last year's *SEL* autumn review, Adela Pinch recognized an "engaged presentism" as the leading trend in Romantic and Victorian literary research. A good number of this year's books were also sharply focused on contemporary problems, particularly anthropogenic influences on climate, and attested to the relevance of nineteenth-century debates to today's issues of environmental despoliation and sustainability. Mayhew's biography of Malthus (above) was one of them, though Allen MacDuffie's *Victorian Literature, Energy, and the Ecological Imagination* takes issue with Malthus. He was, MacDuffie says, "wrong about quite a lot" (p. 3), especially his conception of the earth as a single totality or closed system. Espousing the view that the biosphere is open, but our industrial system is not (while acknowledging that "the nineteenth century had trouble with this distinction" [p. 8]), MacDuffie sets out to examine the representation of energy in "*alternative thermodynamic narratives*" (p. 15). Dickens, Ruskin, Robert Louis Stevenson, Joseph Conrad, and H. G. Wells are mined efficiently for metaphors of energy, work, waste, and transformation in the modern city. Greater understanding of Victorian fantasies and critiques of boundless extension would, MacDuffie argues, help us recognize a similar pattern of (overly) optimistic faith in contemporary utopian claims about the imminent discovery of cleaner energy sources—the Wilkins Micawber view that "something will turn up."

Anahid Nersessian returns us to the idea of the closed system in *Utopia, Limited: Romanticism and Adjustment*, suggesting that we ought to think about utopias in the same way that some of the Romantics thought about aesthetics: as a bounded realm within which human energy might operate through a series of responsive adjustments to limitation. This playfully allusive book sustains a running dialogue or dance with other philosophers and with films in between readings of Romantic writers who aim, Nersessian suggests, not for transcendence, but a nuanced, pragmatic acceptance of impediments as lending shape to social existence. In this light, the sacrifices of P. B. Shelley's Laon and Cythna

"are made in the name of helping to create an environment that nonetheless holds out the promise of breathing room for less avaricious creatures" (p. 109), and Hazlitt's final, occluded view of his former idol, Sarah, in the crowded London street enacts the obliteration of individualistic desire that makes him better able to fit into a collective structure. Nersessian's reevaluation of the romance genre, therefore, accords with Cox's sense that, in the Romantic period, visionary possibility learns to live with modes of ordinariness.

In *Dancing with Disaster: Environmental Histories, Narratives, and Ethics for Perilous Times*, Kate Rigby places Mary Shelley's novel *The Last Man* (1826) at the center of an investigation into the storytelling of environmental disaster ranging from the Great Lisbon Earthquake of 1755 to contemporary fictional responses to hurricanes, cyclones, and volcanoes. Rigby borrows Barbara Johnson's phrase "ardently timely" (p. 69) in her interpretation of Shelley's vatic account of anthropogenic climate change and its epidemiological implications, while her reading of Adrian's ethic of care in the novel adumbrates the ethics and politics of decolonization for which Rigby calls in her conclusion. Less ready than Rigby to conjoin contemporary and nineteenth-century attitudes to the natural world, Dewey W. Hall sees Romantic writers as early environmentalists, rather than proto-ecologists, in *Romantic Naturalists, Early Environmentalists: An Ecocritical Study, 1789–1912*. Refocusing attention on two of the usual suspects, William Wordsworth and Ralph Waldo Emerson, and their eighteenth-century predecessor, Gilbert White, Hall argues that British natural history is not identical with the ecology of our own day, although it did succeed in raising consciousness about the interrelationship of life in the biosphere and the importance of preserving open space. Patiently correcting critics or theorists who have de-emphasized the scientific accuracy of descriptions in Wordsworth's poetry in favor of political or psychoanalytic readings, Hall traces the significant parallels and lines of influence between Emerson and Wordsworth, stoutly relocating Wordsworth's dissemination of White's meticulous observations as the inspiration behind campaigns for the National Trust in England and the National Parks in America.

Finally, J. Hillis Miller's *Communities in Fiction* is a magnificent repondering of the Victorian novel's ability to render consciousness of self and other. Lucid and urbane, the book is a model of theoretical investigation that would be perfectly accessible to a nonspecialist reader. Always quoting *in extensis*, Miller sinks us

deep into the rhythms of Trollope's *The Last Chronicle of Barset* (1867), Hardy's *The Return of the Native* (1878), Conrad's *Nostromo* (1904), and Virginia Woolf's *The Waves* (1931)—with particularly full chapters on Trollope and Conrad—as a way of teasing out their models of community in relation to those proposed by Raymond Williams and Martin Heidegger. Williams's ideal was involvement in the organic community whereas Heidegger's was the withdrawn self-possession of the lone individual; what was alienation for Williams was detached and authentic selfhood for Heidegger, and on the continuum between these positions, Miller plots the standpoints of his chosen nineteenth-century narrators and their characters, demonstrating a capacity both for generous, empathetic insight and dry, witty asides. For its command of breadth and detail, the chapter on Hardy should be issued to all the high-school students for whom *The Return of the Native* is a set text, and the final chapter on the way in which Miguel de Cervantes encompasses all the narrative experimentation of postmodern fiction would be a good place to send undergraduates who feel sure that narrative sophistication begins and ends in contemporary fiction. I finished Miller's book wanting to go back and reread *The Return of the Native*, which had been one of my school set texts in the mid-1980s. At the moment, I cannot actually get to my bookcase of Victorian fiction because of the *SEL* boxes, but the end is in sight and the pleasure of slow reading this summer is richly anticipated in *Communities of Fiction*.

If there could be said to be a recurrent theme this year, it would be the one at the heart of Miller's book—that of what P. B. Shelley calls “the before unapprehended relations of things.”<sup>2</sup> And if, at times, it felt that academics were being driven into ever more minute and specialized research topics within an insipidated Swiftian academy, the best works exemplified breadth of vision together with depth of questioning, and kept a steady eye on changing relationships within and without the literary field. Discovering that sense of shared endeavor and integrity in the incremental advance of scholarship for the yet undiscovered good of reading citizens was the single greatest reward of being invited to write this review.

## NOTES

My thanks to Becky Byron, Rachel Conrad, and Jennifer Hargrave for their expert packaging of books and heroic compilation of the “books received” lists (the office here enjoyed passing on parcels from “Byron”!). My thanks to

my son, Matthew, for his help with the carrying, counting, and ideas about what to do with all the boxes.

<sup>1</sup>Lord Byron, *The Complete Poetical Works*, ed. Jerome J. McGann, vol. 5 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), p. 233.

<sup>2</sup>Percy Bysshe Shelley, *The Major Works*, ed. Zachary Leader and Michael O'Neill (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 676.

## BOOKS RECEIVED

Adams, Amanda. *Performing Authorship in the Nineteenth-Century Transatlantic Lecture Tour*. Ashgate Series in Nineteenth-Century Transatlantic Studies. Series eds. Kevin Hutchings and Julia M. Wright. Farnham UK and Burlington VT: Ashgate, 2014. Pp. x + 174. \$104.95. ISBN 978-1-4724-1664-3.

Albright, Daniel, ed. *Berlioz, Verdi, Wagner, Britten*. Great Shakespeareans 11. Gen. series eds. Peter Holland and Adrian Poole. 2012; rpt. London and New York: Bloomsbury Arden Shakespeare/Bloomsbury, 2014. Pp. xii + 244. \$39.95 paper. ISBN 978-1-4725-1851-4.

Andrews, Ann. *Newspapers and Newsmakers: The Dublin Nationalist Press in the Mid-Nineteenth Century*. Liverpool: Liverpool Univ. Press (distributed by Oxford Univ. Press), 2014. Pp. x + 286. \$110.00. ISBN 978-1-78138-142-7.

Austen, Jane. *"Love and Freindship" and Other Youthful Writings*. Ed. Christine Alexander. London and New York: Penguin, 2014. Pp. lxiv + 448. \$24.00. ISBN 978-0-140-43334-0.

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