

# VICTORIAN BEASTS AND BEAUTIES



Annual Meeting of  
The Northeast Victorian Studies Association

Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
April 7-9, 1995





from Charles Kingsley: *The Water-babies*  
Illustrations by Linley Sambourne

## PRESIDENT'S WELCOME

Dear Fellow Victorians,

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to this twenty-first conference of the Northeast Victorian Studies Association at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The topic for this year's conference, "Victorian Beasts and Beauties", has drawn a wide range of papers and not surprisingly, it looks as if we will discover, as in the fairy tale, that what we thought was "beautiful" could be beastly and what we perceived as "beastly" was only beauty in hiding.

Darwin haunts the margins between beasts and beauties in several papers, as do the Victorian working classes and the "others" of empire. The concepts of the beautiful and the beastly in children and women provide a prism through which to see conflicting constructions of the period. And of course, we will also see (and hear about) some "real" beasts and some famous beauties.

We have four special treats for you this year. On Saturday afternoon at 4:00 p.m. Glenn Everett, University of Tennessee at Martin, and James Paradis, MIT, will demonstrate for us (and perhaps even let us experience) the burgeoning possibilities for teaching and researching Victorian studies on the Internet and the World Wide Web. To accompany the box lunch on Sunday at noon, those who wish can meet informally for our second forum on the teaching of Victorian Studies. Those who can stay Sunday afternoon will be driven to the Isabella Gardner Museum for a special guided tour. And following our banquet on Saturday night, we are indeed privileged to be able to see the American Premier of W.S. Gilbert's *Our Island Home* performed by the Royal Victorian Opera Society. Our thanks are particularly due to Fredric Woodbridge Wilson, curator of the Gilbert and Sullivan Collection at the Pierpont Morgan Library, who discovered the manuscript for this show and who helped bring it to NVSA this year. He will introduce the performance Saturday night.

On behalf of NVSA I want to thank Adrienne Munich (State University of New York at Stonybrook), who served as the 1995 Program Chair, and her committee for the many hours they devoted to putting together this exciting conference. And I also wish to thank Local Arrangements Chair James Paradis and his helpers and staff at MIT for all they have done to make things so comfortable and so efficient for us.

Have a beautiful time at this NVSA conference; it would be beastly to miss a moment of the intellectual exchange, the challenges to old ways of doing things, and the sheer fun of good conversation, good food, and pleasant drink.

Anne Humpherys, *President*  
Northeast Victorian Studies Association



# VICTORIAN BEASTS AND BEAUTIES

Friday April 7

1:00-3:00 p.m. **Registration** - Killian Hall, Science and Humanities Library, 160 Memorial Drive

3:00-3:30 p.m., Coffee and Tea

3:30-5:30 p.m., Killian Hall

## NATURAL SELECTION

Moderator: John C. Hawley, Santa Clara University

*Birds of a Feather?: John Gould's Bird Books and the Visual Response to Darwinism*

Jonathan Smith, University of Michigan - Dearborn

*Tissot's Conservatory*

Margaret Flanders Darby, Colgate University

*The Flirtation of Species: The Victorian Coquette and Darwinian Sexual Selection*

Richard Kaye, Princeton University

5:30 p.m., Dinner on Your Own (Consult Restaurant Guide)

8:00 p.m., Wine and Cheese Reception

## AN EVENING OF VICTORIAN READINGS

Killian Hall, Science and Humanities Library

Saturday April 8

8:00-9:00 a.m., **Registration**, Coffee, tea and muffins - Room 6-120

9:00-9:15 a.m., Room 6-120

## WELCOME TO MIT

Professor James Buzard, MIT Literature Faculty

9:15-11:30, Room 6-120

## RETELLINGS

Moderator: Carole Silver, Stern College - Yeshiva University

*When All the World's a Trap: Charles Kean's Winter's Tale*

John Glavin, Georgetown University

*Wakeful Belles and Torpid Beasts: Retellings of "Beauty and the Beast"*

U. C. Knoepfelmacher, Princeton University

*"Consequential Ground": The Dialectics of Bleak House*

James Buzard, MIT

*Kipling's Lahore and Calcutta: Imperial Cities of Dreadful Night*

John McBratney, John Carroll University

11:45-1:45 p.m.,

## Luncheon and Business Meeting

Legal Seafood Restaurant, 5 Cambridge Ctr, Kendall Square

(Saturday schedule continued over)





2:00-3:30 p.m., Room 6-120

## THE BEASTLY SUBLIME

Moderator: Deborah Thomas, Villanova University

*Dying Beauties and Hermaphroditic Monsters in Sarah Grand's  
The Heavenly Twins*

Melanie Dawson, University of Pittsburgh

*Monstrous Bodies: The Worker and the Crowd in the Fiction of  
Elizabeth Gaskell*

Deirdre d'Albertis, Bard College

*Dickens's Deformed Children and the Hegelian Sublime*

Jonathan Loesberg, The American University

2:00-3:30 p.m., Room 2-105

## BEASTLY PRACTICES

Moderator: George Levine, Rutgers University

*Browning and the Human Beast*

Rowena Fowler, University of Bristol

*Pain Made Perfect: Frictional Aesthetics in Swinburne*

Elizabeth Guzynski, Cornell University

*Women in Labor: Scenes of an Animal Nature*

Susan Walsh, University of New Hampshire - Manchester

*Corpse to Corpus: Victorian Aesthetics and the Body of Sappho*

Yopie Prins, University of Michigan - Ann Arbor

3:30-4:00 p.m., Coffee and refreshments, Room 6-120

4:00-5:30 p.m., Room 2-105

## MONSTROUS BEAUTY: HYPERMEDIA AND THE INTERNET AS INFORMATIONAL SUBLIME

Glenn Everett, Chair, University of Tennessee at Martin  
Charles Blinderman, Clark University

Janet Murray, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

James Paradis, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

A Hands-on Demonstration, Room 14-0637

6:00 p.m., The Marriott Hotel, Kendall Square: **Cash Bar**

7:00 p.m., The Marriott Hotel: **Banquet**

9:15-10:45, Killian Hall

American Premier of

## *Our Island Home*

Lyrics by W.S. Gilbert Music by Thomas German Reed

Royal Victorian Opera Company

Stage Direction by C.V. Berney

Music Direction by Elaine Smith

Introductory remarks by Fredric Woodbridge Wilson

Curator of Gilbert and Sullivan Collection,

Pierpont Morgan Library



from *Punch*



Sunday April 9

9:00-9:30 a.m., Coffee and refreshments - Room 6-120

9:30 to 11:30 a.m., Room 6-120

## KILLING LOOKS

Moderator: Carolyn Dever, New York University

*Nature Red in Hoof and Paw: Domestic Animals and Violence in Victorian Art*

Martin Danahay, Emory University

*"Beautiful Forever": Gender, Money and Crimes of Deception in Nineteenth Century England*

T. Whitlock, Rice University

*The Beauty of Art/ The Art of Beauty: Women's Looks and the Circulation of Aestheticism*

Kathy Alexis Psomiades, University of Notre Dame

*Victorian Feminine Sensations: Christina Rossetti and the Representation of the Male Body.*

Mary Wilson Carpenter, Queen's University

11:30-Noon, Room 6-120

SUMMING UP: NVSA AT 21

Moderator: Anne Humpherys, *President, NVSA*  
General discussion

Noon-1:30 p.m., Room 6-120 - Box Lunch

FORUM ON TEACHING VICTORIAN STUDIES

Will Lee, Yeshiva University

1:30 p.m.: Leave for special guided tour of the  
**ISABELLA STEWART GARDNER MUSEUM**

Meet the bus outside Science and Humanities Library on 160 Memorial Drive



"Observe me well, Princess, before you give me your word," said the Yellow Dwarf." Illustration by Walter Crane, 1875.



CAPSULE HISTORY OF  
THE NORTHEAST VICTORIAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION

The Northeast Victorian Studies Association began with a group of scholars from Amherst, Hampshire, Mount Holyoke, Smith, and the Amherst campus of the University of Massachusetts, who in the late 1960s established the five-College Victorian Seminar to promote interdisciplinary Victorian studies. In April 1971, the group sponsored a conference on "England in the 1870's: A Decade of Conflict." Many of NVSA's most faithful members and many of its officers over the years were part of that conference.

Other conferences sponsored by the Five Colleges followed, and at a meeting on "The Victorian Family" (1975), hosted by Assumption College, NVSA formally organized, adopting as its primary task the sponsorship of a yearly conference. Maurianne Adams became the first president and Robert Keane, the first secretary-treasurer.

The next year's conference, at Ramapo College, explored Victorian "Pasts and Futures" (1976) and was followed by one in 1977 studying Victorian "Crime and Punishment" at Boston College. This year also saw the approval of the NVSA constitution, the genesis of the *Victorian Studies Bulletin*, and the election of Flavia Alaya, Carole Silver, and Robert Keane as the organization's officers.

"Victorians and the World Abroad" (1978), hosted by Hofstra University, pursued an international emphasis, and was followed by "Victorian Mythologies" (1979), sponsored by the University of Rhode Island. The organization's officers changed: Wilfred Dvorak succeeded Robert Keane as Secretary-Treasurer. NVSA itself was recognized as a non-profit corporation by the State of New York.

The 1980 conference, supported by the University of Pennsylvania, investigated "Victorian War and Violence" while the 1981 meeting on "Britain in the 1880's" at the University of Hartford also saw the election of Coral Lansbury as president and Gerhard Joseph as vice president.

With the conference at Drew University on "Victorians and Money" in 1982, NVSA entered its second decade of existence, and began another round of hosting institutions. In 1983 we returned to Boston College to survey "Loss and Failure in the Victorian World" and to Hofstra in 1984 for "Framing the Victorians," a reconsideration of Walter E. Houghton's landmark study, *The Victorian Frame of Mind*, and the issues it raised as seen twenty-seven years after its publication. In 1985 we were back at Rhode Island College at a conference on the "Victorians and the Supernatural", co-sponsored by Brown University, where we had a spiritualist demonstration by a member of the

London Psychical Research Society. New officers were elected: Wilfred Dvorak became president; Judith Wilt, vice president, and Earl Stevens, secretary-treasurer.

In 1986 the conference at the Yale Center for British Art was on "Victorian Work and Workers"; the following year (1987) during a beautiful spring weekend at Wheaton College the topic was "Victorian Pleasures: Food, Fun, and Games." It was at this conference and in honor of this topic that we began one of NVSA's most popular events--the Friday night family readings of Victorian poems, fiction, and songs.

In 1988 at the University of Scranton we looked at "Victorian Others" and climaxed the conference with a descent into a coal mine. Jonathan Rose was elected president and Jacqueline Jaffe vice president. The next year, 1989, we returned to Providence, this time to Providence College, for discussions of "Evolution and Revolution." At this conference we established the "Coral Lansbury Award", in memory of our third president, to help support the travel of a graduate student giving a paper. In 1990 at Princeton University the subject was "Disguises, Dreams and Deceptions" and in 1991 at a conference at the University of Rochester honoring the late and deeply mourned George Ford for a lifetime of contributions to Victorian Studies, we considered "Victorian Endings."

The following year (1992) at Rutgers University we looked at "Victorian Space and Place" and had as Saturday night entertainment a professional production of "Princess Toto" by W.S. Gilbert and Frederic Clay, adapted and directed by Nina Davinci Nichols. Anne Humpherys was elected president. In 1993, after many years of unsuccessful lobbying at the Saturday business lunch where the topics for the next year are chosen, the perennial second choice "Victorian Waters" made it to the top as the subject for a third conference at Rhode Island College. In 1994 NVSA was in New York City for the first time in its 20-year history where we looked into "Victorian Interiors" and after the annual banquet joined hands and hearts in the pleasures of a real Victorian Ball.

This year at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, while we examine "Victorian Beasts and Beauties" through the usual lively formal papers and even livelier informal responses, we will continue both the Sunday box lunch forum on teaching Victorian Studies and the use of the late Saturday afternoon slot for innovative formats. This year Glenn Everett, Vice-chair of NVSA, and James Paradis, Local Arrangements for this conference, will demonstrate to us (and allow us to experience) the new world opening up for teaching and research on the Internet and the Worldwide Web.





#### IN MEMORIAM GEORGE H. FORD (1915-1994)

George Ford was not only one of the giants of Victorian Studies, but he was also one of the oldest and most loyal members of the Northeast Victorian Studies Association. He attended almost every NVSA conference over the last two decades, showering us with the rich resources of his knowledge, and lending to the convivial atmosphere his generous spirit and wonderful sense of humor. Scholars will be forever in his debt for *Keats and the Victorians* (1944); *Dickens and His Readers* (1955), *The Dickens Critics* (with Lauriat Lane, 1961), *Double Measure: A Study of D.H. Lawrence* (1965), and *Victorian Fiction: Second Guide to Research* (1978), as well as for his masterly contributions as editor of two volumes in the Norton Critical Editions series and of the Norton Anthology of English Literature itself. Through these works George Ford lives on for all of us, but NVSA, though it continues to grow as an organization, will never be able to replace either the breadth of perspective that George Ford gave to us or, as important, the joy he contributed to so many of our annual meetings. We will miss him.





## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

### NVSA Officers

Anne Humpherys, *President*  
 Glenn Everett, *Vice-president*  
 Joan Dagle, *Secretary-Treasurer*

### NVSA Program Committee

Adrienne Munich, *Chair*  
 Joan Dagle  
 Caroline Dever  
 Glenn Everett  
 Anne Humpherys  
 Priti Joshi  
 George Levine

Renee Overholser  
 James Paradis  
 Maurenn Reddy  
 Jonathan Rose  
 Pat Saunders-Evans  
 Carole Silver  
 Virginia Walker

Local Arrangements: James Paradis, James Buzard, Alvin Kibel

Friday Entertainment: Nina Davinci Nichols

At State University of New York, Stonybrook: Maria Jerinic

At Rutgers University: Carolyn Williams

At Massachusetts Institute of Technology

School of Humanities and Social Sciences, financial support  
 Philip Khoury, *Dean*  
 Harriet Ritvo, *Associate Dean*  
 Alan Lightman, *Head, Program in Writing and Humanistic Studies*  
 Peter Donaldson, *Head, Literature Faculty*  
 Kimberlie Jones  
 Linda Lynch

Nicholas Altenbernd, Cindy Haverstock, *Administrative support*

Music and Theatre Arts  
 Edward Darna  
 William Fregosi

### The Royal Victorian Opera Company

Artistic Director: Dr. C.V. Berney  
 Music Director: Elaine Smith

Frederic Woodbridge Wilson, Curator of Gilbert and Sullivan Collection,  
 Pierpont Morgan Library





The Science Fairy from *The Water-babies*

## N.B. NVSA on The Internet

NVSA has established a List (NVSA-L) on the Internet. We envision this list as a place for people to exchange responses to conference papers, to share information about conference arrangements (including hooking up with roommates), as well as a place where we can archive the call for papers and the program, and where people can present ideas for future conferences and innovative sessions. To subscribe to NVSA-L, send a message to [LISTSERV@UTMARTNV](mailto:LISTSERV@UTMARTNV) (Bitnet) or [LISTSERV@IBM.UTM.EDU](mailto:LISTSERV@IBM.UTM.EDU) (Internet); leave the subject line blank; on the message line write SUB NVSA-L, your first and last name.