

VICTORIAN BREAKDOWNS



The Break-Down

Ph.D. Program in English,
The Graduate Center of the City University of New York and
Stern College for Women, Yeshiva University
New York City
April 14-16, 2000

The Northeast Victorian Studies Association Annual Meeting

PRESIDENT'S WELCOME

Millennial madness must have seized NVSA this year, for never in our twenty-six year history have we engaged in behaviors such as throwing stones, breaking and entering, mentally breaking down, or blowing anything up! Nevertheless, a quick look at our conference program for NVSA 2000 verifies that we are engaged this year in examining Victorian breakdowns of various kinds, from acts of violence to disciplinary and genre boundary transgressions. In short, welcome to another exciting NVSA conference weekend!

In addition to our six intriguing panels, we are proud to present special events throughout the weekend that we hope will engage you both intellectually and emotionally. On Friday afternoon, two groups of us will participate in a guided tour of the Morgan Library, and Friday night's wine and cheese reception will include a tour of the Fales Collection at NYU's Bobst Library. On Saturday, we will convene for a special panel discussion with invited speakers Amanda S. Anderson, Lynda Nead, and Judith Walkowitz, speaking about interdisciplinarity. Then, Saturday night, we all stand to learn new steps at the NVSA banquet, aided by the Victorian Dance Troupe of Terry and Jim. And don't forget to arrive early on Sunday to participate in our continuing roundtable on pedagogy, this year considering generic breakdowns, in the Forum on Teaching Victorian Studies. Along the way, don't miss our fabulous business meeting, where you'll have a chance to help us choose next year's theme, and Jonathan Rose's fabled summary at conference end.

We worked very hard to achieve our goal of celebrating NVSA 2000 in New York City, and couldn't have done it without our beloved immediate past President, Anne Humpherys, who stepped forward to serve this year as Site Committee Chair. I'd like to offer my particular thanks to Anne for helping in so many ways over the years, from hosting the Program Committee meetings in New York year after year, to advising all of us with grace and keen intelligence. For this year's conference she has been aided by Carole Silver, who graciously stepped forward to offer the facilities of Stern College for Sunday's events, and who also hosts Program Committee meetings. I'd like to celebrate them both, for they have

been among NVSA's most loyal and hard-working members over many years, always ready to step in and help those of us who follow in their footsteps. A special tip of the Presidential hat to Anne and Carole. Thanks, too, to Rob Jacklosky, this year's Program Committee Chair, and to his able committee, who were responsible for every detail of our excellent program. Lastly, but not least, my thanks for the assistance and support of NVSA's Vice Presidents Jim Buzard and Glenn Everett, and our Treasurer, Joan Dagle.

We all wish you intellectual challenges, collegial camaraderie, and the ability to put everything back together after we experience this weekend of Victorian Breakdowns! I look forward to greeting every one of you this weekend.

Professor Rhoda Flaxman
Brown University



67. H. K. Browne, 'Our Housekeeping'.

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 1870s: A Decade of Conflict." Many of NVSA's most faithful members as well as a number 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.

A conference in 1977 at Boston College on "Crime and Punishment" 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 1880s" 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*. 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 had the first of 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 missed 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. In 1995 at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, we examined "Victorian Beasts and Beauties," while Glenn Everett and James Paradis demonstrated multimedia projects in Victorian studies and resources for Victorianists on the Internet and the World Wide Web, including our very own NVSA Homepage, set up by Glenn Everett.

In 1996 we met at Villanova University to look at and talk about "Victorian Spectacles." At that conference we initiated a new feature of our conference, a Sunday morning roundtable discussion of pedagogical issues in Victorian studies, which continues to the present day. In 1997 NVSA returned to the University of Hartford to contemplate "Victorian Anxieties," and Rhoda Flaxman was elected President. In Hartford, special events included a viewing of Ernst Lubitsch's 1925 *Lady Windermere's Fan* and a program on Death and Sex in Conversation, Literature, and Popular Song. We concluded with a tour of the elegant Hill-Stead Museum, designed by Stanford White.

1998 found us back at Smith College (NVSA's geographical roots) to consider "Victorian Worlds: Anthropologies, Ethnicities, Geographies." Excellent panel discussions of these incipient disciplines were enhanced by special presentations on "Frazer and the Sacredness of the Image" by Christopher Herbert, a discussion and guided tour of "Victorian Gardens Lost and Found," a roundtable discussion on the pedagogy of integrating issues of difference into Victorian studies, and a Sunday afternoon visit to Michael Wolff's Victorian collection. And last year, we celebrated our first quarter century with a conference entitled "Victorian Memory" at Yale University. Highlights of that gathering included tours of the rare book and art holdings of the British Art Center, a panel discussion of Victorian critical directions with James Eli Adams, Isobel Armstrong, Herbert Tucker, and Helena Michie, and banquet entertainment by the superb Yale Gilbert and Sullivan Society. And this year, our tradition of wonderful NVSA conferences continues at CUNY and Stern College, as we contemplate Victorian Breakdowns.

Friday, April 14

Registration 1:00-4:00
Graduate Center-CUNY Recital Hall, 365 Fifth Avenue at 34th Street

Guided tour of the Morgan Library 1:30 & 2:30
29 E. 36th Street

Welcome 3:30
William Kelly, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs,
Graduate Center of the City University of New York

Throwing Stones at the Crystal Palace 3:45-5:15
CUNY Recital Hall
Chair: Terri Hasseler, Bryant College

Laura C. Berry, University of Arizona: "Breaking Down the Body:
'Telescopic Peepshows' and the Great Exhibition"

Andrea Hibbard, University of Pittsburgh: "Distracting Impressions
and Rational Recreation at the Great Exhibition"

Margaret Flanders Darby, Colgate University: "On the Edge of
Breakdown: The Late Victorian Glasshouse"

Wine and Cheese Reception 6:00-7:30
Bobst Library, New York University, 70 Washington Square South

With a guided tour of the nineteenth-century holdings in the Fales
Collection by Marvin Taylor



Saturday, April 15

Registration and Continental Breakfast
CUNY Recital Hall

Breaking and Entering 9:30-11:30
CUNY Recital Hall
Chair: Jonathan Loesberg, American University

Mary Elizabeth Leighton, University of Alberta: "The Critical
Project of Romance: Matthew Arnold, Andrew Lang, and the
Institution of English Literature"

Carol-Ann Farkas, University of Alberta: "Aesculapia Victrix:
Medical Women and the Breakdown of Educational and Professional
Barriers, 1870-1900"

Eileen Gillooly, Columbia University: "Where the Animal Begins
and the Vegetable Ends": Chaos, Classification, and Mrs. Beeton"

Business Luncheon 11:45-1:30
CUNY Dining Commons, 8th floor

Session A: Breaking Down Class and Race 1:45-3:15
CUNY Graduate Center, 9205
Chair: Cannon Schmitt, Grinnell College

Michele H. Champagne, University of Michigan: "The Gypsy and
the Nation: Breaking Down the Rural and the Domestic in Wuthering
Heights"

Lauren M.E. Goodlad, University of Washington: "Dueling
Pastors: The Break-Up of the New Poor Law and the Breakdown of
Character, 1889-1909"

Jennifer Holt, Oxford University: "'Breaking Down the Will':
Education, Discipline, Punishment"

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Session B: The Victorian Crack-up

1:45-3:15

CUNY Graduate Center, 9206

Chair: Tricia Lootens, University of Georgia

Laura E. Franey, Millsaps College: "Mutilated Bodies, Fractured Meaning: Transformations in Victorian Imperial Discourse"

Natalka Freeland, University of Alberta: "Broken-Down Matter: Rubbish in the Victorian Imagination"

Rowena Fowler, University of Bristol: "Blougram's Wager, Guido's Odds: Browning, Chance and Statistics"

Interdisciplinarity at its Breaking Points

4:00-5:30

CUNY Recital Hall

Moderator: Adrienne Munich, SUNY-Stony Brook

Amanda S. Anderson, Department of English, The Johns Hopkins University

Lynda Nead, History of Art, Birkbeck College, University of London

Judith Walkowitz, Department of History, The Johns Hopkins University

Cocktails (Cash Bar)

5:30-7:00

CUNY Dining Commons

NVSA Banquet

7:00-8:30

CUNY Dining Commons

Entertainment: Victorian Dancing (demonstration and instruction) by

"Terry and Jim: Historical Dancing, 1840-1925"

8:30-10:00



51. H. K. Brown, *Hugh dancing*

Sunday, April 16

Continental Breakfast

8:30

Schottenstein Hall, Stern College for Women, 119-121 East 29th Street (between Lexington and Park Avenues)

Forum on Teaching Victorian Studies: Generic Breakdowns

9:00-10:30

Schottenstein Hall, Deiner Dining Room

Moderator: Paula Krebs, Wheaton College

Richard Dellamora, Trent University

Glenn Everett, University of Tennessee-Martin

Lucretia Flammang, US Coast Guard Academy

Molly Hillard, University of California, Davis

Vincent A. Lankewish, Penn State University

Catherine Robson, University of California, Davis

Session A: Mental Breakdown

10:45-12:15

Schottenstein Hall, Ivry Student Center

Chair: Will Lee, Yeshiva University

Desmond Dewsnap, University of Southern California: "Broken Homes and Publishing Scoundrels: A Late Victorian Myth"

Felicity Callard, The John Hopkins University: "Groundless Fear: Accounts of Agoraphobia in Late Victorian Medical Psychology"

Kathy Alexis Psomiades, University of Notre Dame: "Give Him a Kiss with a Vengeance: Savagery, Madness and the Breakdown of Marriage in *The Eustace Diamonds*"



24. John Leech, "The Roman walking off with the Savage Woman" (wood engraving for Gilbert & Sullivan's *Corn Law Bazaar*)

Session B: Blow-up

10:45-12:15

Schottenstein Hall, Deiner Dining Room

Chair: Frederick S. Roden, University of Connecticut

Carolyn Dever, Vanderbilt University: "The French Connection: Agents Provocateurs and The Victorian Guilty Conscience"

John E. Luebering, University of Chicago: "The Effect of Powder: Dissolving Irish Identity after Clerkenwell"

Tanya Agathocleous, Rutgers University: "London Mysteries and International Conspiracies: James, Conan Doyle and the Aesthetics of Cosmopolitanism"

Conference Summary

12:30

Schottenstein Hall, Ivy Student Center

Jonathan Rose, Drew University



SONYA RUDIKOFF NVSA BOOK AWARD

The Northeast Victorian Studies Association is accepting nominations for the Sonya Rudikoff Award for the best Victorian book by a first time author. The Sonya Rudikoff Award was established by the Robert Gutman family in honor of Mr. Gutman's late wife. Ms. Rudikoff was an active member of the Northeast Victorian Studies Association and a recognized scholar. Her book, Ancestral Houses: Virginia Woolf and the Aristocracy, was just published posthumously.

A text nominated for this award should be the author's first book. The subject should address Victorian literature and/or culture. Our focus is on Victorian Great Britain and the Empire, though we will consider texts that are transatlantic in focus. We will not, however, consider texts that are strictly American Victorian. Books must have been published during 1998 or 1999. The award winner will receive a cash prize. The winning author will be announced at the April 2001 conference of the Northeast Victorian Studies Association and in Victorian Studies.

If you wish to have your book considered, please have your publisher submit five copies for review to the awards committee. The deadline for submissions is June 1, 2000. Submit nominated books to Terri Hasseler, Bryant College, 1150 Douglas Pike Road, Smithfield, Rhode Island, 02917. If you have questions, contact Terri Hasseler at thassele@bryant.edu or (401) 232-6926.

NVSA WEB SITE

The NVSA web page (<http://fmc.utm.edu/nvsa/>) contains information about the Association and includes links to previous conference programs and calls for papers. The annual NVSA call for papers and conference information appear first here. Directions for joining NVSA and subscribing to the NVSA-L list are included. In addition, you will find a list of current conferences relating to nineteenth century Britain and links to an extensive number of Victorian web sites.

NVSA Officers

President: Rhoda Flaxman, Brown University

Vice President: James Buzard, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Secretary-Treasurer: Joan Dagle, Rhode Island College

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Maria Frawley

Local Arrangements: Anne Humpherys, Carole Silver, Daniel Senes

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Michael Wolff for his suggestions.

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At College of Mount St. Vincent, Ms. Myrna Cruz for her help in coordinating correspondence; Ms. Arlene Kaplan in clerical services; and department chair, Denis Mahoney for his support.