

# Bulletin of the Midwest Victorian Studies Association

O.S. 19, N.S. 2; Summer, 1994

D. J. Trela, editor

*Officers and Executive Committee of the Association: Debra Mancoff, Beloit College, President; Mary Burgan, Indiana University, Vice-President and President-Elect; D. J. Trela, Roosevelt University, Executive Secretary; Lawrence Poston, University of Illinois at Chicago, Founding Member.*

*Members-at-Large: (Terms expiring 1996) William Gatens, Church of the Good Shepherd, Rosemont, Pennsylvania; Susan Thach Dean, University of Colorado, Boulder; (Terms expiring 1998) Joseph Lamb, Ohio University; Jeffrey Cox, University of Iowa.*

*Arnstein Committee Members: Walter Arnstein, University of Illinois; Joan Perkin, Northwestern University; Kristine Garrigan, DePaul University; Nicholas Temperley, University of Illinois; Lawrence Poston, University of Illinois at Chicago.*

## Conference Wrap-Up

We wish at the outset to thank those individuals who made the 1994 conference at Washington University in St. Louis such a great success: Keith Welsh, Webster University, for his organization and direction of Friday evening's entertainment, 'Shaw and Wilde on Work'; and Barbara Quinn Schmidt, Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville, for her supply of willing graduate students to aid in conference registration and her willing supply of information on entertainment and cultural attractions in the St. Louis area once the conference was over.

A special and enlarged thank you to Richard Davis, Washington University, who made all local conference arrangements and secured funding for the conference from Dean Martin Israel of the College of Arts and Sciences at Washington University. Richard's assistance was invaluable, constant and self-effacing and contributed mightily to yet another wonderfully successful conference.

We and are indeed fortunate to have Keith, Barbara and Richard as active members of MVSA.

We invite all of you to join us in Chicago,  
Roosevelt University, for

The Victorian Frame(s) of Mind:  
Canons and Anti-Canons  
21-22 April 1995

What were the Victorians' canons? What were their anti-canons? After decades of study, advances in critical theory, new investigations in history, art and music, how

well do we know the Victorian 'frame of mind'? - or would it be more accurate to ask how well we know the Victorian frames of mind? What are late 20th century Victorianists' canons about the Victorians?

In recent years, scholars have stormed the sacred precincts of the Victorian canon. No area of study has been spared the assault. In the fields of literature, history, and the arts, the old standards, the old conventions, and the so-called 'masterpieces,' the standard, received assumptions have all been besieged. New categories of investigation - raising formerly neglected issues of race, class and gender - revise our view of our fields, and even our view of the Victorian world.

This conference seeks a closer look at the conflict of the canon and the anti-canon in literary, historical and artistic investigation. It asks what canons the different categories of Victorians held dear and how they varied and developed in different classes, time periods, regions of the country or empire, or how they differed between men and women. Papers dealing with broad, evaluative, or methodological approaches that span the disciplines will be of special interests. Submissions from all fields of British Victorian studies - and an interdisciplinary focus - are encouraged.

Send 7 copies of abstracts by 15 November to D. J. Trela, Executive Secretary, Box 288, Roosevelt University, 430 S. Michigan Ave., 60605-1394. Phone inquiries: 312-341-3710.

## Announcements

\* Call for Papers: The Fourth Annual Conference on 18th and 19th Century British Women Writers is soliciting paper proposals for its conference on 2-4 March, 1995, at the University of Notre Dame, Indiana. Send proposals or inquiries by 1 October to Donelle Ruwe or Margaret Stein,

356 O'Shaughnessy Hall, English Department, University of Notre Dame, IN 46556.

The conference is 'devoted to expanding the literary canon and to developing critical and theoretical understanding of women's writing traditions in literary, political, legal, medical and scientific discourses.'

\* For those of you on the west coast or with connections west, Kathleen C. Peck, new MVSA member and 1994 conference attendee, is launching the Victorian Interdisciplinary Studies Association of the Western United States. Professor Peck advises that 'I and like-minded Victorianists at the University of Washington and Mesa State College are gathering names of those interested in membership.' She asks interested parties to contact her directly at 1095 Leonard Avenue, Pasadena, CA 91107; her phone number is 818-351-0864; e-mail, KPECK@CITHEX.CALTECH.EDU.

\* Professor Rodger L. Tarr has become editor of the Carlyle Studies Annual. Issue 14, due in late Autumn, will consist of the last six Strouse Lectures delivered at the University of California at Santa Cruz. The Annual will also contain book reviews, regular reviews of Carlyle scholarship and refereed articles on the Carlyles and their circle. A three-year subscription is \$25.00. For further information, write to Professor Tarr, English Department, Illinois State University, Normal, IL 61790-4240.

\* Keen-eyed, mathematically-alert Victorianists will have noted that 1995 is the bicentenary of Carlyle's (as well as Keats's) birth. A conference on the former, 'Carlyle at 200,' is a-brewing, in scenic Newfoundland, from 10-14 July, 1995. Proposals for papers on Thomas and Jane Carlyle are welcome, and should be sent to Mark Cumming, Department of English, Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada A1C 5S7.

\* One good conference on Victorian work deserves another: The Dickens Project's 1994 conference is also on Victorian work. It will be held from 4-7 August. Information can be had from John O. Jordan, Director, The Dickens Project, University of California, Santa Cruz, CA 95064; 408-459-2103.

\* The Research Society for Victorian Periodicals 1994 27th conference is set for 16-18 September in Tampa, Florida. Sessions have been arranged on children's periodicals, art, theater, teaching the Victorians, and a featured address by Carol Martin on 'George Eliot's Middlemarch: Serialization Revisited.' I count at least seven MVSA members on the program (so we know it'll be a good conference!)

Registration forms and further information are available from Professor William H. Scheuerle, SVC 2002, University of South Florida, 4202 E. Fowler, Tampa, FL 33620-6920.

\* The 1995 RSVP conference will take place in July in

Edinburgh, Scotland. It will dovetail with a corresponding conference organized by the Society for the History of Authorship, Reading and Publishing (SHARP, for short), an organization devoted the study of 'the creation, diffusion, and reception of the written and printed word.' One year membership in SHARP is \$15.00, 2 year membership is \$25.00. Further particulars can be had from Membership Secretary Linda Connors, Drew University Library, Madison, NJ 07940. SHARP 'actively supports teaching and research in book history' and is also 'working to establish a network of region centers for the history of the book throughout the United States.'

\* One final RSVP/Victorian Periodicals Review note: D. J. Trela will serve as guest editor of a special issue of VPR on the topic of 'Women as Critics and Editors of Victorian Periodicals.' Publication of the special issue will likely occur in Fall or Winter of 1995. Individuals engaged in research on women who served as editors or prominent house critics of journals who wish to propose an essay for possible inclusion in the special issue should contact Trela with a preliminary proposal at the School of Liberal Studies, Roosevelt University, Box 288, 430 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60605-1394. Submission deadlines will be March 1, 1995.

\* Three notes on Medievalism:

1) Debra Mancoff, our illustrious President, is seeking proposals for a panel titled 'The Modern Return: Arthur's Comings in the 19th and 20th Centuries' for the 1995 International Medieval Congress. She does not list a proposal cut-off date, so it is advisable to contact her directly. Her call for papers notes that 'while much has been written on Arthur's passing in the modern era ... the form and circumstances of the construction of his coming have been neglected.' Papers on art, music, film and popular culture are encouraged. Papers on the Kennedy family, presumably, are not encouraged.

2) Studies in Medievalism's 1996 issue (volume 8), will deal with 'Medievalism in Europe.' Inquiries may be directed to Leslie J. Workman, Editor, Department of English, Hope College, Holland, MI 49423 (616-394-7626; fax: 616-394-7922; e-mail: workman@hope.edu)

3) Finally, the 9th International General Conference on Medievalism will be held at Montana State University, Bozeman, Montana, from 28 September to 1 October. Information is available from Gwendolyn Morgan, English Dept., Montana State University, Bozeman, MT 59717-0230.

\* Stop PRESS!!!! We are pleased to report that selected papers from MVSA's 1993 conference on 'Victorian Urban Settings,' have been accepted for publication by Garland Press. The volume will be edited by Debra Mancoff and D. J. Trela and should be published in mid to late 1995. This is the second conference to be turned into a book in five years and speaks well of the high quality of papers the conference generates. Congratulations to all contributors!

\* 1994 Arnstein Award winner: Ms. Brenda Assael. Walter Arnstein graciously made the third award to Ms. Assael, who could not be present in St. Louis. As we go to press, her dissertation abstract is not available for printing. Her award-winning topic, however, is 'The Rise of the Respectable Circus in Victorian Britain.' We hope to print the abstract entire in our next number.

\* 1994 Arnstein Raffle: We thank the following who donated to the 1994 raffle and thus helped raise another \$143.00 for the Arnstein Fund: John Reed: a copy of his book, Victorian Will; Richard Davis, a copy of his book, Disraeli; Julie Codell, two subscriptions to Journal of Pre-Raphaelite Studies plus copies of special issues; Debra Mancoff, a William Morris address book and stationery; Mary Burgan, a charming print of a bed; Jane Stedman, an equally charming Victorian print of a theater exterior; Walter Arnstein, a copy of his history of the Victorian period.

### 1994 Board and Business Meeting: Summary

The Board recommended that Joseph Lamb (art history) and Jeffrey Cox (history) be nominated and elected to four year terms as Board Members to replace the retiring Richard Davis and Barbara Schmidt. D. J. Trela was elected to a second term as Executive Secretary. An Arnstein Committee was formed, with the task of evaluating nominations for the award, publicizing the award and engaging in fund-raising activities. It was further determined by the Board the MVSA Vice-President should coordinate Arnstein fund-raising activities.

The Board further discussed the relative merits of blind versus semi-blind reading and ranking of abstracts submitted. While there would be some merit in a completely anonymous reading of proposals, the Board ultimately felt that the current practice of 'semi-blind' reading was working well and ought to be retained. This also imposes less of a burden on the executive secretary, who can simply distribute abstracts received without being forced to obliterate names and addresses from them - and also keep good records of who submits what.

While there are good arguments on both sides of this issue, the Board felt that in a collegial group there is some value in knowing names of potential presenters. In the case of a 'tie' in rankings, it is probably better to give the nod to a longtime member than a non-member, or to be aware of potential speakers' reputations. The Board would certainly entertain any comments or suggestions members care to offer on this point.

The Board further determined that the burden placed on the Executive Secretary was growing increasingly heavy and needed in some manner to be alleviated. It was determined that fund-raising duties should be the province of the Arnstein Committee, co-ordinated by the organization's Vice President. It may become necessary in the near future to divide the duties of the Executive Secretary, especially

separating financial from secretarial functions.

In final action at the Business meeting, Lawrence Poston was named MVSA Historian. [Since the Annual Meeting your editor has taken the opportunity to glance through some of the early files of MVSA taken from its formative years in the mid- and late-1970s. Even a brief survey suggests how instrumental Larry Poston was in getting this organization off the ground and well-established. Long time members will undoubtedly know this without being told. Members of somewhat more recent vintage (Nouvelle Victorianists?) will probably not. There ought to be an award!]

### Financial and Membership Notes

The appeal to lapsed members noted in last year's Bulletin went out in the summer and generated 17-20 renewals from sheepish Victorianists now returned to the membership fold. Paid-up membership is at approximately 150, slightly down from last year's paid-up rate, and happily includes a number of new members and also students members.

The new issue of the Directory is considerably more slender (slenderer?) than the last one because of the removal of nearly all unpaid individuals from our membership list.

The organization continues in sound financial condition. Membership fees pay the majority of our costs and help subsidize the annual conference and to absorb, for the time being, the expenses of the annual Arnstein Award. This allows all funds donated to this fund to go towards the \$10,000 endowment we are seeking.

Also assisting the balance sheet's maintenance in our favor is the continuing generous support by gifts in kind of Roosevelt University. The University currently houses MVSA records, donates stationery, other supplies and a substantial amount of postage and printing expenses annually. This sort of expense could easily run into the hundreds of dollars. We are extremely grateful that in a time of general financial exigency, Roosevelt can see its way clear to support so worthy a scholarly organization.

1993-94 donations and raffle ticket proceeds have amounted to \$1075.50. Late last summer, \$3,000.00 in Arnstein money was taken from the General Fund and put into CDs whose total value is now approximately \$3,100.00. The 1994 donations will be similarly shortly segregated and bring the total in the fund to approximately \$4,200.00. We still have a long way to go, but the current rate of gifts should see us reaching our goal by the turn of the century. As this Bulletin goes to press, the Executive Secretary has suggested to the Board that an additional sum, to be determined by the Board, but in the neighborhood of \$500.00 to \$1000.00 from the treasury be transferred to the Arnstein fund. This seems warranted since 1) the treasury is in a healthy enough condition to sustain this additional demand on it. 2) The 1995 conference has already been assured a donation of meeting space and a subsidy of at least

\$500.00, courtesy of Roosevelt University. 3) The slight recovery in interest rates suggests this is a better time to invest money. It is thus possible, with Board approval, that by the end of summer the Arnstein Fund may hold well over \$5,000.00, bringing us more than half-way to our goal of a \$10,000.00 endowment.

#### Finances—30 June 1993–1 July 1994

Balance on hand, 30 June 1993	5,328.86
<u>Income</u>	
Dues	2,480.00
Arnstein Donations	1,075.50
Conference Registration Fees	2,463.00
Interest (- month of June)	<u>66.47</u>
Total Income	6,084.97
 Grand Total	 11,413.83
<u>Expenditures</u>	
Conference Expenses	2,140.85
1994 Arnstein Award	500.00
IRS Tax Exempt Filing Fee	150.00
Arnstein Transfer to CDs	3,000.00
Postage	205.00
Typesetting	<u>659.65</u>
Total Expenditure	6,655.50
 Balance on Hand, 1 July 1994	 \$4,758.33

Tax Exemption: MVSA has sought tax-exempt status for the Society primarily so that donations to the Arnstein Fund can be legally deducted on income tax returns. This would presumably make donating a more attractive proposition. The completed application was prepared by Lawrence Poston and submitted to the IRS in late winter. Shortly thereafter it was slightly revised by D. J. Trela at the IRS's request. Larry had not quite dotted every 't' or crossed every 'i' as our all-wise government requires. No word has been received regarding its final status, but we look forward to a favorable result.

#### Victorian Worlds of Work Being Abstracts of Papers Presented at the Eighteenth Annual Meeting of the Midwest Victorian Studies Association

##### Session One: "The Dirty Pen"

"The hour of wise and well-chosen leisure":  
Eliza Cook's Journal, "Literary Philanthropy,"  
and the Model Woman of Letters

Solveig C. Robinson

In an 1854 leader in Eliza Cook's Journal, poet-editor Eliza Cook declared: "It is our ambition and our purpose to store these pages still more profusely with all that makes the hour of wise and well-chosen leisure compensate for the hours of actual world-battling." Like many Victorian periodicals, Eliza Cook's Journal offered reading as an antidote to the pressures of the working world, characterizing reading as the only leisure activity "in which time is gained, not lost; the only pleasure in which the powers we all need, whatever be our calling, are strengthened, elevated, and enlarged, instead of being warped or enervated or debased." What was unusual about Eliza Cook's Journal, however, was that it simultaneously offered this antidote to two classes of readers not often grouped together at mid-century - women and the working classes - and that it also featured a successful woman of letters as editor-publisher of a non-traditional women's periodical.

Published from 1849 to 1854, Eliza Cook's Journal was founded in order to perform a kind of "literary philanthropy," to provide inexpensive, quality intellectual fare to readers who might not have ready access to such materials. For her working-class readers, Cook served up a "course of 'Common Things'" that offered educational and self-improvement opportunities. For women, Cook served up a hearty portion of essays and reviews advocating equal social, professional, and political opportunities for women - a dramatic contrast from the material offered in the prevalent more "domestic" women's magazines of the 1850s.

This paper examines how Cook's "literary philanthropy" proposed to transform Victorian worlds of work by providing upward mobility to the working classes and opening the public sphere to women. I suggest that while Cook's occasional nervousness about challenging dominant class and gender ideologies sometimes resulted in an unevenness of tone, Eliza Cook's Journal ultimately proved that a woman-published periodical addressed to a broad audience could openly embrace progressive politics and a feminist agenda and still thrive, and that it thus provided inspiration for the emerging mid-century women's movement. Through her Journal, Cook modeled what women of letters could achieve with presses of their own and opened the door to other progressive women journalists.

Nancy Metz

Given the climate of opinion prevailing when Dickens was composing Martin Chuzzlewit, architecture was as natural a choice for the rascally Pecksniff as schoolmastering had been for Squeers five years earlier. Drawing on the evidence of contemporary architectural journals and of more generally accessible newspaper and magazine accounts, this paper will explore the public perception of architecture at a particularly fluid and problematic moment in time, and in so doing shed new light on the historical context of Dickens's novel.

The first half of the nineteenth century was a formative but troubled period for architecture for a variety of reasons. With the end of the Napoleonic wars, building activity skyrocketed, offering lucrative opportunities for a new generation of practitioners. The early Victorian reform period created a demand for different kinds of buildings - hospitals, asylums, prisons, schools, and workhouses - commissioned by a whole new class of clients. The influence of the aristocratic patron waned, and architects found themselves answering to the businessmen, merchants, manufacturers, and lawyers who served on building committees for local councils or boards of directors (Jenkins 1961 188). In 1818 a million pounds set aside to build churches under the sponsorship of the Church Building Society set off a flurry of building activity and launched the Gothic Revival. In the meantime, controversial and highly publicized competitions, such as those for the new House of Parliament (1835) and the Royal Exchange (1839) riveted public attention. The third and fourth decades of the nineteenth century saw the proliferation of professional journals, among them The Architectural Magazine (1834), The Transaction of the R.I.B.A. (1835), The Civil Engineer and Architect's Journal (1837), and The Builder (1842). But it was a measure of architecture's newly perceived centrality to the spirit of the age that developments in the field were regularly featured in the lay press as well, accompanied by wood engravings and learned disquisitions on such subjects as improved dwellings for the poor, London shop fronts, and the design of key handles and knockers.

But for all the popular interest in architecture during the 1830s and 1840s, the reputation of the professional architect plummeted. A period of brisk and largely unregulated building invited unscrupulous practice, and the frequently overlapping roles of surveyor, contractor, and builder, and designer made it all too easy for the dishonest to manipulate figures and cheat unwary clients. The general standard of work was shoddy and derivative, if not frequently fraudulent - or at least it was considered so by a skeptical and disillusioned public. Architects, after all, had lost the patina shed by their noble patrons in an earlier age without as yet achieving full status as professionals. Worse, they damaged themselves in the public eye continually through bitter infighting carried on in the pages of profes-

sional journals (and increasingly in lay periodicals as well). The profession was racked by controversy in the 1830s and 40s; critics decried, among other abuses, the system by which architects were educated, their employment of 'ghosts' and assistants, nepotism and ignorance in the awarding of prizes. Even art criticism and intellectual debate frequently degenerated into acrimony. Recently commissioned public buildings were regularly trashed by reviewers who lamented the passing of genius and the advent of 'slavish copying.' By common consent, architecture was admitted to be 'the only branch of human ingenuity which remains an exception to this century in its intellectual advancement' (quoted in The Builder, rev. of Robert Kerr's 'Architecture: the Art, the Science and the Profession,' 4 November 1846, 542). Some feared its ultimate extinction as a new generation of decorators and civil engineers subsumed architecture's 'ancient and proper' functions ('The Spirit of Architecture,' The Civil Engineer and Architect's Journal, 3 August 1842, 246).

In a highly specific way, these topical concerns inform the account of young Martin's apprenticeship, his vague architectural aspirations, and his exploitation at the hands of Pecksniff. And interestingly, few insiders took issue with the unflattering representations of their profession Pecksniff made instantly famous. The broad dash of caricature with which he invests the portrait... has no harm in it,' concluded The Builder, 'since it is directed against vicious practice, which deserves the strongest reprobation' (2 February 1843, 26). The Civil Engineer and Architect's Journal was more severe on Dickens, but not for obvious or predictable reasons. Admitting that 'there are Pecksniffs in all grades of the profession,' the reviewer took Dickens to task for stopping far short of the 'full delineation of the Quack Architectural' the novel had at first appeared to promise. The deficiency he spent the rest of his essay remedying in a tongue-in-cheek survey of episodes Dickens must have 'omitted,' 'misaid,' or 'forgotten' in haste or preoccupation. That 'Pecksniff' and 'architect' had become equatable terms - 'synonymous with whatever is imbecile, contemptible, an absurd' evoked neither surprise nor significant protest from a profession struggling to position itself with respect to its own tarnished image ("Epistle to Charles Dickens," 7, October 1844, 375).

"The Political Economy of Art:  
Valuing Victorian Artists' Labor"

Julie F. Codell

One of the most compelling questions asked of James McNeill Whistler at the infamous Whistler-Ruskin trial was how long it took the painter to complete one of his nocturnes for which he charged 200 guineas, a comparatively large sum. Asked if it took him a few hours, Whistler responded that it took him a lifetime. The question and response are emblematic of one of the most debated subjects in the art press, in popular artists' biographies and

memoirs, and in the marketplace - the exchange and surplus values of artists' labor. In this debate on artists' labor, its worth and measure, the issues were not only economic, but also social and moral. The work ethic was a fundamental part of middle class ideology about social roles, authority, and power. Anxieties over the valuation of artists' labor, addressed, for example, in Henry Ewart's Toilers in Art or Ruskin's A Joy Forever, the Political Economy of Art, surfaced in biographical anecdotes about artist-patron relations and stirred artists' impeccable records of their long hours in the studio. Added to the problem of measuring the economic worth of their labor, artists had to contend with judgments of quality by laypersons, unlike other professions. Indeed, whether art was a profession or not was a debate embedded in the political economy of artistic production and consumption. In this paper I would like (1) to examine some comments on the labor of artists culled from the art press, biographies, memoirs, (2) interpret the interweaving of economics and the new aesthetics articulated in catalogues of professional societies serving to distinguish artists from artisans and thus price their labor differently, (3) contrast artists' discursive attempts to control the market value of their work with Ruskin's suggested subordination of artists to patrons, and (4) suggest a poetics of the depictions of work in paintings which signified other labor's similarities to, and differences from, artistic production (e.g., Brown's Work, Redgrave's The Sempstress, paintings of laborers).

The Bohemian artist has evolved as the most prominent artistic type. In recent years art historians have examined the lives and careers of successful academic artists more conventional in their life habits. The art press presented artists as hard-working family men, who struggled in their early years and later gained deserved popularity and wealth. Their large studios, drawn or photographed in periodicals such as The Graphic, The Magazine of Art, and in artists' biographies, signified lucrative careers, wealth and property. The studio as a work site located often in the home, however, was neither clearly work nor home, and thus was a potential site of confusion and pollution of the work ethic, as well as of domestic tranquility. The studio threatened the order of gendered spaces and social functions (the "female"/private home and "male"/public workplace). Studios were open to the public on Studio Sundays, as much to reveal the studio as a workplace and to demystify it as a site of sexual liaisons or domestic activity, as to market art.

The image of the professional artist could not simply be modeled on other, older professional images of lawyers and doctors. Artists recognized that whereas in these professions practitioners are judged by other experts in the field, artists' judges are non-specialists, the general public, as well as specialists (other artists, critics, connoisseurs). Out of artists' antagonism to the Royal Academy, new professional societies emerged, which partitioned the market into smaller segments offering intimate relations between artists and consumers (no longer patrons) and artis-

tic control over production and consumption. These societies redefined artistic work in both economic and aesthetic terms. A new entrepreneurial class of buyers after mid-century preferred the works of living artists to those of Old Masters. Living artists could offer assurance of labor to help them gauge the marketable worth of their art commodities. Public assurances about the amount of work spent on a painting shaped the public's assessment of aesthetic worth. Catalogues written by the societies to accompany their exhibitions often referred to artists' hard work and toil, reflecting not only the Victorian emphasis on work, but also the desire to assure buyers that artists were ethical and that the costs of art works were calculated in relation to the amount of labor invested (exchange rate) and the conceptual evocations (surplus value) only art could provide.

The new aesthetics of the 1880s, enunciated by the professional societies, renegotiated economic worth and re-measured artistic labor with an entirely new vocabulary distinct both from academic and from Bohemian aesthetics, as well as from artisanal measures of exchange value. What the artist sold was not only the art work, but also the artist himself or herself - creativity is internal and non-quantifiable, one of the issues raised at the Whistler-Ruskin trial. Focusing on the issue of work and its economic and social significations, I hope to demonstrate that the artist was a site of considerable tensions and conflicts. Inscribed by concepts of originality and genius, artists were both creators and the products of their own creation. Aligning artists with the work ethic, and away from Bohemian pleasure and desire, improved their relation with clients, and also clarified the material exchange value of their products. Yet, this alignment raised other issues about the uncategorized studio workplace and the unsupervised exclusivity of artistic production. Neither clearly professional (able to determine their own labor's worth) nor artisanal (orienting the exchange value toward the product), the Victorian artist became a site of conflicted debate over whether artistic work done alone in the studio was really work at all.

"George Henry Lewes, Man of Letters:  
Working Victorian"

William Baker

"Literary Receipts" are a neglected area of information. George Henry Lewes seems to have kept careful financial records of how much he received for his work. His "Receipts" record financial sums against individual items, what those items specifically were, and other comments. His fluctuating income and interests, the very diverse literary forms he turned to, what paid and didn't pay, are found in his "Literary Receipts". Placed within the context of his earnings during the first five years of the 1850's, his involvement with the editorship of a radical newspaper such as The Leader makes sound financial sense. His

editorship secured something of a regular monthly income, although perks such as free theatre tickets are not noted in his "Receipts" which represents incoming income. Plays proved lucrative. The years in which Lewes records receiving the most remuneration for his own labor belong to those when he joined his life with his significant other - George Eliot/Mary Ann Evans. From 1858 until his death she far out earned him. Books paid more than articles but they were not an easy way of earning money. His payment per 100 words was minuscule. His was indeed slave labor.

Why did he do it? The basic answer is for money. There are other motives: vanity; the desire to establish a literary reputation; to impress and be noted; the need to say something; the desire to influence opinion. Using his letters as primary materials, placing his labor in the context of his life and family pressures, mixed motivation is evident. The primary motive is the necessity for money. A habit was formed during those days of struggle which even in subsequent years of relative financial security Lewes found impossible to shrug off. He became a work addict: editing and writing were habit forming addictions - a drug, and escape from, to paraphrase George Eliot, a harsh everyday world of angular chairs and tables. Words on the page no longer meant cash in the bank necessary for survival. Yet they were necessary for his psychological well-being. Work was initially a means of survival, but ultimately a therapeutic exercise.

#### Session Two: "Women for the Hearth"

##### "Work as Freedom: Elizabeth Gaskell's Life of Charlotte Brontë"

Clyde de L. Ryals

Elizabeth Gaskell conceived of one's chief obligation as 'doing the duty that lies nearest at hand,' a notion that she early derived from a reading of Sartor Resartus. For women this meant, in her estimation, attending to domestic matters before all else. Yet even though she energetically managed her household, aided her husband in his work, and devoted much of her time to her daughters, she still felt the pull of her imagination, which in her case could be satisfied only in the writing of fiction. When she set out to write the biography of her friend Charlotte Brontë, a woman who also faithfully administered her household duties and turned to the writing of fiction as a release from daily routine, she either consciously or unconsciously conceived of it as an apologia for herself and other women who could find emotional and intellectual freedom only in the exercise of imaginative writing.

##### "From Blue Collar to Blue Stocking: Victorian House-keeping and the Manuscripting of Manual Labor"

Monica Cohen

Ms. Cohen did not submit an abstract of her paper in time for its appearance in this issue of the Bulletin. We hope to include it in a future issue.

##### "Work Fit for a Woman: Elizabeth Gaskell and Working Women"

Laura W. Yavitz

The working woman represented a certain kind of threat to central Victorian ideals and social structures. In Victorian writing, work for women and women who work, were often depicted through language and plot structures emphasizing the problem of sexuality. Such a symbolic strategy became a persuasive representation and moral metaphor.

Stereotypical character descriptions and highly predictable plot lines often described common, conventional tales which linked the fall of feminine virtue to work. Writers and readers recognized the occupational tropes and easily interpreted the significance, and anticipated the predictable conclusion, of such formalized narratives. So powerful was this common vocabulary that presenting even a part generated the whole range of expected conclusions. In Mary Barton, published in 1848, Elizabeth Gaskell's important and controversial first novel, the narrative begins with a discussion of the fall of a working woman. John Barton, Mary's father, says, "That's the worst of factory work, for girls... [t]hey maintain themselves any how.... You see Esther spent her money in dress, thinking to set off her pretty face; and got to come home so late at night..." (43). We know what will follow; Esther lands on the street-an alcoholic prostitute.

Gaskell uses such conventional narrative tropes to construct two exemplary figures of the working woman in Mary Barton: Esther, who falls, and Margaret, who doesn't. Both examples influence the young dressmaker Mary Barton as she learns to negotiate the sexual economy inherent in the occupational economy. Esther is a factory girl and the story of her ruin is highly conventional. Margaret is a seamstress-a "distressed needlewoman"-who goes blind. Even after Margaret becomes a public performer, she is somehow immune to the danger of seduction that Esther and Mary in their exposed work situations. Her blindness protects her.

Gaskell in this novel sees female work in terms of visibility. This concept can "safely" describe the unspeakable dangers of sexual temptation as it is produced in the workplace. Both Esther and Mary are described as pretty and vain, and are marked by their intense awareness of being objects of (male) observation. Margaret, by contrast,

is absolutely unselfconscious (a phrase which, like selflessness, rings through many Victorian depictions of idealized females).

The particular nature of the working woman's visibility is exposed by the protective role Margaret's blindness plays once she enters a stage career. Previously, her plain appearance and private working situation in her home keep from receiving undue flattery, as Mary does. Margaret is sheltered from the exigencies of the public working world. But her defenses are reinforced by her final removal from the visual arena of female employment. She is not made invisible, but her blindness keeps her from seeing others looking at her. The gaze of the public man or the public audience are equally unthreatening because she cannot respond to their attention. She can expose herself on stage without sacrificing feminine modesty or unselfconsciousness.

Obviously, then, the problem of working women is not in being looked at, but in sensing the attention of men and responding. Contrary to melodramatic cliché, sexual danger comes not from an overpowering, silver-tongued enemy from without, but the voice of desire within, ready to be unleashed at the slightest loosening of its constraints.

Mary Barton moves between the two exemplary figures in the course of her experience, facing Esther's dangers, and finally embracing Margaret's ideals. Mary rejects publicity and chooses Margaret's solution to the difficulty-domestic labor within marriage and the home. In the pre-industrial world of Canada to which their families emigrate, Margaret's ideal values are made material. As final evidence for the symbolic importance of visibility as a vocabulary for female sexuality, Margaret gets her sight back (through a cataract operation known as "couching") once she's married.

#### "Female Factory Workers and Sunday School"

Julie Melnyk

Male Victorian workers could turn to Working Men's Associations and, eventually, trade unions to help them organize and empower themselves, individually and collectively, but female workers had few such institutionalized outlets. Lingering prejudices about women's position in the public world made the establishment of such organizations a difficult and suspect endeavor. Nevertheless, some Victorian working women found the opportunity to establish such a support network in an unlikely place: Sunday School.

While women's attendance at other public gatherings might raise suspicions, no one complained about religious organizations. Thus, an adult Sunday School class (common among Dissenters and some Low-Church Anglicans) provided the perfect venue for mutual support. Since the classes were segregated by sex and age, a large group of women with similar needs would meet at least once a week.

Talking about the difficulties of their lives, they moved easily from spiritual consolation to more practical solutions.

In A Working Woman's Life, Marianne Farningham narrates in detail the story of one such dissenting Sunday School class, which evolved from a small, exclusively religious meeting of a few single factory girls to a huge, full-service support group, including both married and single women. The group met several times a week for mutual support; maintained a fund to support the female workers when they went on strike; lent money for capital investments to women who would have been laughed out of conventional banks; and even took vacations together at a jointly owned cottage in Wales. The kind of spiritual, psychological, and financial support that these women workers derived from their Sunday School class empowered them to take control of their public and private lives.

Institutionalized religion, which generally opposed women's efforts to gain more independence and more rights, here, ironically but appropriately, furthered the independence of working women by providing the public space where they could meet and the motivation to love and support one another.

Session Three: "In the sweat of thy brow  
shalt thou eat bread"

"Victorian Views of the Nature of Work  
and Its Influence on the Nature of the Worker"

David Mitch

John Stuart Mill in his Principles of Political Economy written in 1848 emphasized the presence of distinctively human, intellectual elements in even the most menial of laboring tasks. In contrast, Alfred Marshall in his Principles of Economics, written in 1891 asserted that many menial laboring tasks involved little more than muscular strength. This shift in emphasis in the description of common labor reflects fundamental differences in the role of work experience as such versus broader influences of nature and nurture in shaping the character of the worker.

Mill's view of common labor can be seen as having roots in Adam Smith's notion of the homogeneity of human nature and hence of all workers. Smith assigned a distinctive role to work experience as such in bringing about differences in character, skill and intellect. This notion was echoed in various types of early and mid-Victorian social commentary. Marx and Engels recognized the central role of work itself in shaping the character of the worker. The influence of the work environment on the intellect of the worker was also evident in contrasts between agricultural and industrial workers presented in reports of Assistant Commissioners for the Newcastle Commission Report on Popular Education. One theme in some of these reports was

that a rural environment provided more intellectual stimulation than an urban environment because of the greater variety of working conditions faced by the rural worker, a theme that clearly echoed Adam Smith.

If the malleability of human nature and the prospect that work could develop the worker's capabilities was evident in some early and mid-Victorian social commentary, a line of analysis emphasizing the presence of innate differences in the worker was in increasing evidence from the early Victorian period onwards. A tendency in this direction is evident in Charles Babbage's version of the division labor principle which focuses on the benefits of specialization stemming from taking advantage of inherent differences among workers in skills and abilities. Later Victorian commentators showed increasing interest in the reasons why workers would differ in skills and abilities. One important concept in this regard was the notion of non-competing groups, the idea that the labor market was segmented into various groups of workers who did not compete with each other because of lack of mobility between segments. Mill's exposition of this notion at mid-century allowed for the removal of these barriers due to the increased openness he saw occurring in Victorian society. But Cairnes' exposition of the same notion in 1874 indicated far more diminished possibilities for the prospects of mobility between segments.

The presence of inherent differences in ability among workers was increasingly stressed by late nineteenth century writers on political economy and social conditions more generally. One can attribute some of this influence to Darwin and acknowledge the role of the principle of natural selection. But other narrower intellectual influences were at work as well. One such influence was the so-called marginal revolution in Economics associated with William Stanley Jevons among others. The key notion of marginal thinking was to consider the impact of unit changes in amounts of goods consumed or in amounts of labor or capital utilized by the producer on changes in value, output, and costs. In considering labor, marginalist writers gave little attention to the actual worker. Instead labor was defined much more abstractly. Jevons defined labor as "any painful exertion of mind or body undergone partly or wholly with a view to future good." Margaret Schabas has argued that Jevons thought of labor in terms of exertion in order to define units of measurement precisely because labor differs "infinitely in quality and efficiency."

In late nineteenth and early twentieth century political economy, differences in labor quality were recognized, but were increasingly treated as statistical distributions rather than in comparison with the nature of the lowest quality of labor. A key influence pointing to differences in the quality of labor, even within the working classes was the work of Francis Galton. Galton was notable as a central figure in the late Victorian Eugenics movement, which emphasized the primacy of heredity over environment. An important step in the development of Galton's ideas both in statistics and in eugenics was his recognition that variation in labor

quality could be treated as true variation in the fundamental qualities of workers and not simply as deviations from an ideal mean. This was an important step because previous mathematical treatment of variation had been based on its treatment in astronomy which treated variation primarily as measurement error. The notion of underlying variation in the basic characteristics of workers rather than simply viewing variation as deviance and the rise of the eugenics movement led to increased emphasis on nature over nurture in development of capabilities of the worker.

The notion of the centrality of work experience in shaping the capabilities of the worker by no means disappeared from late nineteenth and early twentieth century social commentary. This notion was especially evident in early twentieth century concerns with the so-called blind alley labor problem - the perception that increasing numbers of the more able adolescents in urban areas were being attracted into transport and distributive occupations such as van and messenger boys, offering relatively high wages for adolescents but offering no opportunities for later entry into more skilled adult occupations. The critical role of adolescent work experience in shaping later adult capabilities of the worker was often stressed by these commentators.

Despite such early twentieth century views of the decisive influence of adolescent work experience, the notion of innate variation in ability as opposed to the role of nurture increasingly came to dominate mainstream economics. Thus, Arthur Pigou, the immediate successor to Alfred Marshall as Professor of Political Economy at Cambridge, considered wage levels in terms of variation around some normal levels of wages, where the normal was defined in terms of compensation for average levels of training and ability. This notion became especially prominent in such landmarks of twentieth century economics as John Hicks' first major book, the *Theory of Wages*.

Thus, the increasing emphasis over the Victorian period in the presence of innate variation in capabilities of the worker can be seen as providing underpinnings for current notions of the sources of labor market inequality. This muting of emphasis on the possibility of work experience in shaping capabilities of the worker along with increased emphasis on the innate basis of inequality should be viewed as reflecting not just actual changes in the Victorian economy, but changes in intellectual methods for thinking about economic affairs, in particular the more abstract view of labor implied by the marginal revolution with the consequent diminution in attention to concrete experience in shaping the capabilities of the worker and to increased interest in the analysis of statistical variation in the labor market. This suggests in this line of development putting more emphasis on the independent role of ideas than on the underlying forces of production in shaping Victorian views of the nature of the worker and of worker inequality.

"Representing Victorian Labor:  
The Art of Thomas Kennington"

Joseph A. Kestner

While the social realist art of such painters as Herkomer, Fildes, and Holl has received considerable critical attention (particularly in the exhibition Hard Times of 1987), the work of one of the strongest artists in this tradition has not been much examined. Thomas Kennington (1856-1916) was the first secretary of the New English Art Club, and his major subject throughout his brief career was labor, whether employed or unemployed, male or female. Kennington's art is particularly interesting for its construction of genders even as it concentrates on the condition of workers during the nineteenth century in Britain.

Kennington's canvases of male laborers are especially significant if one considers the theory of the dominant fiction as enunciated by Kaja Silverman in Male Subjectivity at the Margins. In Silverman's conception, the dominant fiction of masculinity rests on the "phallus/penis equation," the idea that physical maleness perforce inscribes men into dominant patriarchal ideology of masculinity. As Silverman demonstrates, however, for many men this equation was untenable and constituted a meconnaissance, "the misrecognition upon which masculinity is founded." She notes:

The male subject's aspiration to mastery and sufficiency is undermined by the traumatically unassimilable nature of certain historical events which dramatize the vulnerability of conventional masculinity and the larger dominant fiction to 'historical trauma.'

Men who were unemployed became marginalized, outcast, and demasculinized, excluded from the dominant fiction of patriarchal masculinity.

From this perspective, Kennington's canvases become more powerful constructions of the falsity of this dominant ideology of masculinity, for his unemployed laborers cannot subscribe to this ideology. Rather, Kennington's canvases brutally expose the meconnaissance and fallacy of the penis/phallus equation. In The Battle of Life (1887), Kennington depicts a carpenter father unable to find work, the ruination of the entire family; a wife, older daughter, and infant register his despair. Slumped in a chair, he is the very icon of marginalization. In The Curse of the Family (1889), a drunken man, after a brawl, lies on the floor next to an overturned chair, as his wretched spouse, forced to take in laundry, caresses her arms after being beaten by her husband. Not only is the male devoid of economic security. His inability to realize the dominant fiction, to be incorporated into the masculine paradigm, has bestialized him. The subject of the battered wife is so rare in Victorian art that the image is a turning point in the representation of work during the nineteenth century.

Kennington also focuses on the women and children suffering from the conditions of work. In Daily Bread (1883), Kennington shows a street urchin holding a grimy

crust. In Orphans (1886), a girl tends her brother and sister in a filthy garret. In Widowed and Fatherless (1888), a woman takes in sewing as one of her children lies ill in a top floor room. The Pinch of Poverty (1889) shows a woman sitting near a street corner as her daughter attempts to sell a daffodil, while the even more harrowing Homeless (1890) depicts a woman picking up her exhausted son from the street pavement. In The Widow (1905), a woman serves food to her two small children in a shabby room. Adversity (1890) shows two toiling sisters attempting to live by sewing.

In all these canvases, Kennington shows the destructive force of the dominant fiction under historical trauma, in Silverman's conception: adult males are marginalized, women are excluded, and young male working class boys are forever outcast. Although less known than the images of Herkomer, Fildes, and Holl, Kennington's canvases are crucial and original representations of work during the Victorian period.

"A Working Distinction: Vagrants,  
Industrious Workers, and Middle-Class Norms"

Laura Sagolla Croley

The first volume of The Autobiography of the Working Class, the 1984 bibliography compiled by Burnett, Vincent, and Mayall, offers titles and descriptions of over 1000 autobiographies written by working class authors born between 1790 and 1900 alone. Interestingly, Burnett and his co-editors define "working-class" rather loosely, including, along with pieces authored by bakers, miners, and domestic servants, those authored by vagrants, tramps, and beggars. This paper grows out of a reaction to these bibliographers' and other critics' inclusion of vagrants in the category "working class," for that inclusion obfuscates a distinction absolutely vital to the Victorians: the distinction between the working and the non-working poor, between the truly working class and the vagrants, beggars, and tramps against whom the industrious defined themselves.

The paper examines the differences between how mid-century commentators describe vagrants, and how vagrants describe themselves. Examining parliamentary papers on vagrancy, articles in newspapers and quarterlies treating the social "residuum" in general and vagrants in particular, and Henry Mayhew's now well-known London Labor and the London Poor (1851), the paper demonstrates how various social commentators in the late forties and fifties carved out a chasmal, almost biological, distinction between the industrious worker and the idle vagrant. Vagrant autobiographies such as Josiah Basset's Life of a Vagrant (1850) and James Dawson Burn's Autobiography of a Beggar Boy (1855) bore an ambivalent relationship to the writings of these social commentators. Registering their ultimate rejection of wandering and all it entails - promis-

cuity, deceit, lack of domestic virtues, and, most importantly, idleness, these autobiographies in many ways endorse the middle-class norms so thoroughly informing Mayhew's and others' attitudes toward vagrancy; indeed, this endorsement of middle-class norms may explain the marketability and popularity of Burn's and Basset's texts. At the same time, however, these narratives unravel the exaggerated distinction between worker and shirker so important to middle-class commentators, showing that vagrants are not as depraved, nor working men as noble, as they are made out to be. Finally, the paper looks at the political stakes middle-class commentators on the one hand and vagrants on the other have in the representations of vagrancy they choose. While the middle-classes have a strong incentive to "divide and conquer" a social group fighting together for political franchise, vagrants have an incentive to blur the distinction between themselves and the working man in order to gain respectability by association.

#### Session Four: "the work of thy hand"

##### "Labors of Christian Love: Sisterhoods and the Work of the Devout"

Colleen Hobbs

In the second half of the 19th century, various societal pressures combined to reclaim the model of holy women for Protestant believers. The Oxford Movement re-introduced medieval practices into the Victorian Church, and the example of celibate religious orders went to the heart of a public debate on the problem of unmarried, "redundant" women. Ministers offered groups of unmarried, middle-class women vocations in teaching and nursing that helped meet the demands which rapid industrialization brought to local parishes. Both men and women recognized that sisterhoods constituted a sizeable, untapped labor force which could benefit a specified agenda, yet few studies have considered that the relationship between women and the church could be reciprocal: churches benefitted from women's charitable endeavors, but "sisterhoods" also provided Anglican women with their control over their own work. When she chose to give her labor and her money to God, a "sister" gained a degree of independence seldom granted to other women of her time and station.

Anglican women repeatedly were subjected to criticism and abuse when they moved to take administrative control of sisterhoods and their endowments. The controversy generated by discussions of sisterhoods' troublesome independence indicates that women's religious orders could present a fundamental challenge to the Victorian definition of what "women's work" should be. Much of sisters' work was seen not as labor, but as a comfortable extension of women's nurturing, an impulsive expression

of female compassion. However, when nurturing was codified and regulated by sisterhoods' extensive training programs, the labor involved became visible. The ability to complete rigorous training violates the model of woman as a purely sympathetic creature, moving her actions from the realm of feminine "influence" to that of masculine "power."

Novelist Dinah Mulock Craik observed that "entering a Sisterhood, almost any sort of Sisterhood where there was work to do, authority to compel the doing of it, and the companionship to sweeten the same, would have saved many a woman from a lunatic asylum." Focusing on the work of women religious does not diminish the sisters' piety, but it reminds us not to allow expressions of devotion to obscure religious work's practical application to women's lives. Piety notwithstanding, the business of saving souls provided Victorian women an accepted public forum to address issues otherwise outside the realm of female discussion. The works of female religious were often contradictory, not infrequently subversive, and usually performed under intense public scrutiny; to simplify the complexities of their religious vocations is to diminish not only their labor, but their vision of female-centered work and its potential to enact personal, political, and spiritual change.

##### "A Late Victorian Headmaster and his World"

Michael J. G. Gray-Fow

This paper centers on the career of Herbert James Banks, as Headmaster of a Lincolnshire village school from 1888 to 1917. He was a remarkable and many-talented man whose years at Wragby illustrate both the persistence of immemorial patterns of rural life and the sometimes difficult adjustments to changes across a broad spectrum. In his relations with the Manor House and Church he mirrors enduring tradition, though even here there are observable sea-changes, while his squally tenure with the school managers points towards a later professional world. The paper interlinks his career with a broad range of village activities, and through these interconnections illuminates the varied rhythms of country life at the turn of the century.

Through the lens of Banks and the village school we can see the erosion of the Squire's autonomous jurisdiction, the shrinkage of the Church's monopoly of influence, how this small society coped with the encroachments of new accountabilities and the inroads of bureaucracy, and the struggles of an increasingly self-conscious middle class to make its voice heard within the framework of time-honored deference.

The paper traces the development of educational opportunity in the village, for adults as well as the young, and what this implied for the future. It covers the persistent and vital patronage of the Turner family at the Manor House through a number of village organizations (many launched by Banks), their continuing support of a Ladies Seminary in Wragby, and their adjustment to a nascent village democ-

racy. It touches on the inadvertent start of an enduring village industry by Banks' wife, and his own major contribution to saving life through building the first village swimming pool in England. The paper also illustrates the cohesion of disparate elements in the village over a common goal in the curious and convoluted process for maintaining school funding, and how the village collectively responded (with Banks again very much in the fore) to the outbreak of war.

The paper necessarily spans not only the last years of Victoria but also the Edwardian Age, and goes into the years of the Great War. At Wragby the outward changes were not as great as these divisions might suggest, and the pace of events throughout the Banks years constitutes a unity, looking both to the past and to the future.

"Labors of Christian Love:  
Anglican Sisterhoods and the Work of the Devout"

• Colleen Hobbs

My presentation explores the social work performed by middle-class Victorian women through the creation of Anglican 'Sisterhoods.' The Church of England reinstituted Anglican nunneries in the 1830s as ministers sought to use the labor of unmarried women to help meet social needs brought on by rapid industrialization. In a time when spinsters were discussed as 'surplus' women and encouraged to emigrate to the colonies, many unmarried women were attracted to the vocations sisterhoods offered for in teaching, nursing, and administration. Novelist Dinah Craik observed the orders' service to the sick and needy, but she also stressed the benefit to unmarried middle-class women, finding that 'entering a Sisterhood, almost any sort of Sisterhood where there was work to do, authority to compel the doing of it, and the companionship to sweeten the same, would have saved many a woman from a lunatic asylum.' 'Sisters' work was both varied and challenging: the groups nursed soldiers in the Crimea, treated cholera in Manchester, and cared for orphans in London. At a time when no profession was open to 'respectable' middle-class women, religious orders helped legitimize nursing and social work as viable pursuits for middle-class women. Their training programs helped codify the services they performed, and ultimately they helped open professions for women where previously none had existed. My study examines both the ministers' proposed use of single women's labor and the conflicts that arose when sisterhoods attempted to shake off the authority of male church officials and govern themselves. Anglican women repeatedly were subjected to criticism and abuse when they moved to take control of their own labor. The opportunities that sisterhoods offered for female industry and indepen-

dence, when considered with the partisan fervor they generated, indicate that women's religious orders could present a fundamental challenge to the Victorian definition of what 'women's work' should be.

In the memoirs of Sister Kate Warburton, she emphasizes the empowerment she felt during her lifetime of work among the sick, the poor, and the 'fallen.' The effect of life in St. Savior's Priory was to 'mak[e] one feel one is not a round peg in a square hole, but a bullet filling into a billet.... Nothing seemed too great to attempt, nothing seemed too high or too remote to hope for. We would, I believe, have dared or done anything.' Piety notwithstanding, women religious made choices about use of their time, money, and labor that generally were not allowed to Victorian women. By focusing on their work and its importance to their lives, we can complicate the image of Sisters as simple, altruistic saints. Instead, we can examine the importance of meaningful work as a social and political - as well as a spiritual - concern.

"God's Work:  
High Church Philanthropy in Victorian Oxford"

M. Jeanne Peterson

An anonymous philanthropic worker went to visit a very old man, someone she knew to be an unbeliever. She tried, unsuccessfully, to offer him prayers, Bible reading, a visit from a clergyman. Finally, his old wife approached the lady-visitor and whispered to her, 'Try him with apple dumplings.' She did, and the visit turned from failure to success.

This story was published by philanthropist Felicia Skene, who went on to take the ideas and ideology of High Church Anglicanism from the rarefied atmosphere of the theologian's study and the enclosed space of the Sunday morning worship service into the darkest depths of life among the criminals in Oxford jail, prostitutes in the streets, and the sick poor dying in pauper hospitals or homes.

This paper will explore the way Anglican and Anglo-Catholic notions of Christ's body, and the body (somehow) present in the bread and wine of the sacrament, become - in the hands of Felicia Skene - translated into an epistemology of Christian work among the poor. Skene's understanding of religious experience helps to clarify, for us, the meaning of charity for the Victorians, what they did and why they thought it worked.

The sources for the paper are primarily the published writings of Skene, novels, devotional books, tracts, periodical articles, as well as her unpublished letters. Other Victorian authors will receive brief mention, among them John Newman and E. B. Pusey.