

EDITORIAL

The fourteen papers published in this issue of the newly titled *Australasian Victorian Studies Journal* were originally delivered at the Seventeenth Conference of the Australasian Victorian Studies Association, the theme of which was "The Victorians and Science." Any forum on Victorian science will inevitably include a discussion of Darwin's evolutionary theories, and Darwin's impact on Victorian culture—religious, secular, literary, popular, scientific—is a common thread running through many of the papers in this volume. Science, as a knowledge of the physical world, burgeoned in the nineteenth century and, as these papers reveal, its methodology extended to many of the social, political and moral questions of the day. The growing specialisation and popularisation of scientific knowledge created a divide between "scientists" and amateurs and produced a proliferation of texts (and contexts) which form a fascinating legacy for discussion. Papers in the collection examine the development of science in a variety of contexts such as medical, psychological, psychiatric ("the science of the mind"), sanitary and political science, as well as "pseudo"-sciences such as mesmerism, spiritualism and phrenology.

The paper by Sally Shuttleworth which heads the volume examines psychological writing from the mid to the late Victorian period, focussing on debates about the role of memory and self-control as bases for sanity, morality and continuous identity, and as characteristics distinguishing humans from animals. Through her analysis of works by Dickens, Oscar Wilde, Thomas Hardy and George Eliot, Shuttleworth highlights the dialogue between the literature and psychological writing of the period. The two following papers discuss specific works by Eliot: Thomas Hoy considers "how the nineteenth-century cosmology of the ether permeates the language and epistemology of *Middlemarch*," particularly in relation to Eliot's concept of "the web" of interconnecting relationships. Similarly, Rosalind De Saily re-examines *Adam Bede* in relation to Eliot and G.H. Lewes's moral philosophy, positing Hetty Sorrel as the "missing link" between Eliot's fiction and Victorian science.

Other papers dealing with literature include Rose Lovell-Smith's paper on Olive Schreiner's *From Man to Man* which analyses the novel specifically in relation to Darwinism at the fin-de-siècle. Lovell-Smith views the novel as a "feminist critique of progressive Darwinism" and examines it through a scientific and religious frame of reference. Michelle Dawson's paper on the Victorian dramatic monologue positions texts by Browning and Tennyson within emerging theories about the "science of the mind" and, echoing Shuttleworth, maps a "parallel development" between "psychological poetry" and the rise of contemporary psychoanalysis.

The nexus between bodily health and "urban space" are the concerns of three further papers. David Storer inquires into the debate surrounding the issue of urban sanitary reform at the mid-century, and examines the positions taken on class, poverty and disease by two often conflicting reformist groups: pietist sanitary reformers and contagionist medical practitioners. Michael Ostwald and John Moore take up the examination of urban space at a similar point, viewing the city as a personification of the diseases that it fostered. They investigate Victorian urban planning through the "organic metaphor" of the city as a body whose pathologies needed to be treated.

Michael Shortland draws on extensive primary source material for his examination of the growth (in popularity and gentility) of pedestrianism from the early decades of the nineteenth century, relating the "science of walking" to notions of manliness and masculinity, the rise of the natural field sciences and the reinvigoration of the British nation.

Three papers look at the construction and deconstruction of institutional practices in colonial Australasia. David Dorward assembles a fascinating collection of archival material in his exposé of the indigenous and non-indigenous exotica acquired by museums in Australia and New Zealand during the colonial period. Shaun Broadley, in similar vein, reveals the ways in which the pseudo-scientific practice of Spiritualism "reinvented" orthodox religion in New Zealand. Cathy Coleborne questions the scientific and medical classification of patients within the institution of the Lunatic Asylum in Victoria in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

The final papers are concerned with artistic and aesthetic subjects and their relation to science. Betsy Cogger Rezelman examines the connection between science and art in the later Victorian period with specific reference to the work (both visual and written) of Stanhope Forbes and James McNeill Whistler, leaders of the artistic movements *plein airism* and aestheticism. Of two papers on Ruskin, Andrew Leng investigates the problematics of "Ruskinism" by focusing on Ruskin's career as art critic and art patron (particularly in relation to Pre-Raphaelitism), social and political commentator and "secular prophet"; while John Moore and Michael Ostwald consider another aspect of Ruskin's career by examining his "mythopoeically based view of science" in relation to *Deucalion*, *Proserpina* and other written works.

In addition to the papers, we have inaugurated a reviews section, and are pleased to present a review forum on Sally Shuttleworth's new book, *Charlotte Brontë and Victorian Psychology*, by three leading scholars in the field of Victorian literary studies, with a response from the author. Reviews of two recent works by Adrienne Munich and Margaret Beetham are also included.

The editors would like to thank all those who helped them in the preparation of the 1996 publication, in particular AVSA President Barbara Garlick, for her ready advice, members of the Advisory Board for their wise counsel and Denise Frost from the University of Queensland Library. Andrew Joyner deserves a special mention for his whimsical design for this edition's cover. Madge Mitton, the 1996 conference convenor at the University of Adelaide, would like to thank the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Gavin Brown, the University of Adelaide Foundation (for Sally Shuttleworth's airfare), Shirley Bobridge and Shirley Ball for invaluable secretarial assistance, Frances Kelly for administrative advice, Kate Rogers and Parting Company for the performance of "Lady Audley's Secret" and "Overruled," Mr Ray Choate and the staff of the Barr Smith Library, the staff of the Mortlock Library, and Mr Ron Radford and Mr Christopher Menz of the Art Gallery of South Australia.