sit on the page along with Disraeli or Lord Kitchener. The PMSA series and the same author have already addressed the City of London, other sections of the capital and a dozen other cities or regions in England and Scotland. An online audit is also being rolled out, but apart from English Heritage and a few enlightened funding bodies, such attempts at definition (unlike indoor art) receive little support. These volumes thus create the vital context in what can only be described as an urban audit absence: no governmental or national body exists in Britain whose remit is to define or control this ubiquitous topic, so apart from minor charities like the PMSA, founded in 1991, the only way this absence can be rectified is by asking your local authority whether they can make available a public art audit simply defining online these public assets. Such access is strangely rare, which only goes to prove the conspicuous inconspicuousness of the invisible public monument as defined in the 1930s by Robert Musil. When monuments are not ignored, the fickleness of taste is very evident in this volume: the Office of Works were 'unable to get anybody to agree to take responsibility' for a prominent fountain by a prominent sculptor situated on Park Lane which was taken down in 1948 as 'an awful example of the depths to which design, technique and taste had sunk in 1874–5'. This would never have happened inside a museum or gallery, so Ward-Jackson is right to observe the 'failure of government to come up with a coherent plan to control the surge in statues'.

The sheer variety (if not serendipitous anarchy) shown by the modern surge in public art starts to become evident through these volumes: there is still almost no awareness or apparent interest in creating a national picture of this aspect of contemporary art, yet commentators persist in calling for some weird form of art police to get rid of or shunt around 'unsuitable' pieces, and keep uttering a stimulating variety of patronizing attitudes not unlike those of 1948 towards the Victorians. The author concludes this fascinating census by stating that 'despite the best efforts of officialdom to control our environment, it is to be hoped that the future of public art will remain unpredictable'.

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Rosalind Crone, *Violent Victorians: Popular Entertainment in Nineteenth-Century London*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012. xv + 304pp. 43 figures. 7 tables. 1 diagram. Bibliography. £16.99 pbk.
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In this fascinating and important new study, Rosalind Crone closely examines a broad range of popular entertainments in London between the 1820s and the 1870s, forcing us to recognize that 'in many respects, the Victorian popular imagination was bloodier, much more explicit, and more angry and turbulent than historians have been prepared to acknowledge' (p. 7). The Punch and Judy shows, execution broadsides, murder melodramas, penny bloods and violent crime reporting which are at the heart of Crone's book were not, she argues, products of a marginal, underground culture, but were instead central features of a Victorian popular culture which eagerly consumed representations of extreme violence. This sits uneasily with traditional conceptions of Victorian 'respectability' and the pervasive sweep of the 'civilizing process'. It is this incongruity – between the 'taming'

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abilities of Victorian culture and the huge popularity of violent entertainments – which Crone sets out to explore, charting the reconfiguration of violence from its physical manifestations in the blood sports of the late eighteenth century, to its representation in Victorian popular entertainments.

This process of reconfiguration was experienced most intensively in London, 'where rapid social change combined with a large population base and new structures of authority sparked a transformation in popular culture' (p. 9). Chapter 1 neatly demonstrates that, for the majority of Londoners, the first half of the nineteenth century was a period 'of instability, social upheaval and discontentment' (p. 16). Indeed, 'the experience of life in the metropolis for the large number of ordinary people is central to an understanding of why the theme of violence emerged in a new form in popular entertainment around 1820' (p. 17). Through a series of detailed case-studies in the following five chapters, Crone reveals how the new violent entertainments of the first half of the nineteenth century allowed contemporaries to work through the pressures generated by rapid social and economic change in London. In particular, 'violent entertainments were used to assert an alternative, mainstream culture to that promoted by the establishment, which expressed plebeian values, kept alive the "customary mentality" and directly confronted the growing cultural hegemony of the middle class' (p. 30).

Chapter 2 exemplifies Crone's nuanced grasp of continuity and change, charting the transformation of 'Punchinello' from the 'comic buffoon' marionette of eighteenth-century fairgrounds to the 'murderous anti-hero' glove puppet of Victorian Punch and Judy street shows. Punch's murderous beatings of his wife acted as satire and irony, expressing working people's annoyance with the unrealistic, middle-class domestic ideal of separate spheres. From the 1850s, Punch and Judy shows were again reconfigured, transposed into the domestic arena of respectable homes, as middle- and upper-class men hired showmen for private performances to indulge their nostalgia for the 'pleasurable elements of Regency culture, including hedonism and misogyny' (p. 63). In this vein, Punch and Judy shows 'were used to confront the realities of marital breakdown', an important icon 'in a society in which marriage could, for many, degenerate into a farce or tragedy, as marital partnerships were so hard, legally and socially, to dissolve' (p. 67).

Chapter 3 examines the ubiquitous 'cult of the murderer' in Victorian popular culture, a cult which, Crone importantly shows, extended beyond class boundaries. Middling men and women flocked to see wax effigies of 'monster murderers' at Madame Tussaud's 'respectable' Chamber of Horrors or at itinerant moving waxwork exhibitions. Crime scenes proved a huge draw for relic hunters: the boards of the Red Barn in Suffolk where William Corder murdered his sweetheart Maria Marten in 1828 were reportedly ripped out with the intention '"to take them to London to make a variety of articles for sale as curiosities"' (p. 92). As Madame Tussaud cast murderers in wax, so too did the Staffordshire potters in earthenware: for wealthier consumers, huge quantities of artefacts were produced to commemorate violent crimes. And for the poorer sorts, a fascination with violent crime was satiated by a vast expansion in murder and execution broadsides, providing 'an outlet for the enjoyment of violence' in the more restricted urban environment of Victorian London (p. 115).

Notorious murders found further fame on the popular stage, but in this location, Crone observes in Chapter 4, 'the re-enactment of actual murders was accompanied and overwhelmed by a virtual tidal wave of melodramas featuring fictional, but

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equally bloody combats and assassinations' (p. 24). An unprecedented phase of theatre construction at the turn of the nineteenth century established several new playhouses in the city's outskirts, drawing a large, mostly plebeian audience who delighted in the 'blood-stained stage'. Playbills highlight the changing cultural role of violence in murder melodramas over the nineteenth century, which, at its highpoint, acted 'as a form of cultural assertion against the establishment, not about politics, but on a far more unifying level, about the content and role of popular culture' (p. 125).

Narratives of violence likewise served an important cultural purpose in the 'penny bloods' – violent and titillating cheap instalment fiction which flooded popular print culture between 1830 and 1860 – examined in Chapter 5. Focusing on *The String of Pearls* (1846) – which first introduced the story of the 'bloodthirsty barber', Sweeney Todd – Crone asserts that Todd's murder machine acted 'as a particularly potent metaphor for the early nineteenth-century metropolis, touching upon a range of fears about death in the city . . . the large number of victims, their anonymity and the mechanical nature of their deaths formed a frightening parallel with the condition of the faceless, poor, urban mass' (p. 188).

Crime reporting in the 'steady stream' of new weekly newspapers established between 1840 and 1870 which catered for the poorer sorts and lower middle classes is the focus of Chapter 6, the book's final case-study. Violence and sensationalism were certainly prominent aspects of such publications. However, through a detailed content analysis of both *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* and *The Times*, Crone is able to make the important point that this was also true of 'serious' daily newspapers. There were in fact 'parallels, networks of exchange and even dialogue that existed between the ["popular"] new weeklies and the ["respectable"] established daily press'. In short, 'reports of violent crime consumed by many working- and lower-middle-class readers were not so very different from those that the respectable classes were devouring' (p. 238).

Violence did not always have to be unrespectable. Nor is the display of violence antithetical to the civilizing process. Indeed, as Crone notes in a teasing and thought-provoking epilogue, gross violence continues to occupy a central place in twenty-first-century popular entertainments, whether it be films or gaming. Violence 'can be considered a kind of cultural amoeba, always present in British society', but constantly evolving and adapting (p. 250). Appropriation, rather than decline, as this work persuasively argues, is a more fitting term for Victorian popular culture.

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Jörg Arnold, *The Allied Air War and Urban Memory. The Legacy of Strategic Bombing in Germany*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011. xxii + 387pp. 30 figures. Bibliography. £65.00.
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As an analysis of the cultural implications of the Allied strategic bombing of German cities in World War II, Jörg Arnold's *The Allied Air War and Urban Memory* stands out for the sophistication of its approach, and the sharpness and complexity of its analysis. To explore the mark that the air war left on German

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