

REVIEW ESSAY

The New Other Victorians: The Success (and Failure) of Queer Theory
in Nineteenth-Century British Studies

RICHARD A. KAYE

THE NEW OTHER VICTORIANS: THE SUCCESS (AND FAILURE) OF QUEER THEORY IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY BRITISH STUDIES

By Richard A. Kaye

MUCH OF THE CRITICAL WRITING on Queer Theory and Sexuality Studies in a Victorian context over the last decade or so has been absorbing, exploring, complicating, and working under the burden of the influence of Michel Foucault's theoretical writings on erotic relations and identity. The first volume of Foucault's *The History of Sexuality* (1978), in fact, had begun with a gauntlet thrown down before Victorian Studies, a chapter-long critique of Steven Marcus's *The Other Victorians* (1966), a work that had offered an entirely new and at the time, quite bold avenue of exploring nineteenth-century culture – namely, through the pornographic imagination that Marcus taxonomized with precise, clinical flair as a “pornotopia” in which “all men . . . are always infinitely potent; all women fecundate with lust and flow inexhaustibly with sap or both. Everyone is always ready for everything” (276). In Foucault's telling, however, Marcus demonstrated a theoretically impoverished faith in Freudian models of “repression” in Marcus's examination of “underground” Victorian sexualities. It was Marcus's reliance on the “repressive fallacy,” his conviction that there existed a demarcated spatial and psychic Victorian counter-world that *The History of Sexuality* had so forcefully undermined.

Other critics of nineteenth-century British fiction have been at the center of Queer Theory intellectual activity, notably Leo Bersani. It is Bersani who arguably presented the first Queer Theoretical essay in Victorian Studies, *avant la lettre*. Bersani's chapter on *Wuthering Heights* in *A Future for Astyanax* (1976) overturned orthodox readings of Brontë's novel with its argument that the first part of the narrative represents a radical text addressing sexuality's inevitably destructive forces and the novel's latter half signaling a dispiritingly conventional “Victorian” resolution. Of course, in the decades that followed numerous scholars explored the ways in which convention-bound resolutions harbored dissident possibilities.

This essay will discuss the works that have been most exciting in the nexus of Victorian and Queer Theory over the last two decades, suggesting the clear “success” of Queer Theory in critical explorations during that time. Looking over many of the works in Victorian Studies that have drawn on Queer Theoretical ideas and models, it is difficult to take seriously Michael Warner's recent suggestion that Queer Theory may be nearing the end of its intellectually exhilarating days. (The primary evidence for Warner's claim is curiously piece-meal: Duke

University Press's termination of its Series Q series, the death of Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, and the publication of a volume dealing with post-queer identities.) Nonetheless, there are limitations to Queer Theory's achievements, and therefore checking the triumphalism of my argument will be the last part of my essay. Accounts of critical "schools" tend to follow a structure whereby new scholarly movements accrue increasing influence, appeal, and attention. Yet, as I hope to suggest, until very recently Queer Theory has failed to gain any ground in that perennial step-child of Victorian Studies, Victorian Art History.

The Post-Foucault Challenge

THE ENSUING DECADES have witnessed Foucault's work exfoliate into a range of important studies of Victorian sexuality, although Marcus's Freud-indebted model continued to have its adherents, most prominently in the multi-volume historical narratives of Peter Gay. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's *Between Men* and *The Epistemology of the Closet* set the tone for much of the Queer Theoretical accounts of Victorian literary texts. Its crucial insight – that male-male relations (the homosocial) were defined by a fear of male homosexuality and a concomitant desire to protect those relations via triangulation with women – was not without some of Foucault's beguiling paranoid outlook, as Sedgwick herself later acknowledged with typical panache. It is difficult to overstate the foundational utility of Sedgwick's works, particularly in their distillation of Feminist Criticism, Gender Studies, and Queer Theory, although it is worth noting that a number of Sedgwick's defining concepts were first explored in the work of lesser-known theorists (in France, Guy Hocquenhem, whose *Homosexual Desire* [1972] arguably is the very first work of Queer Theory, and in Britain, Mary McIntosh, whose 1968 "The Homosexual Role" was a prescient document). At the same time, most of the most compelling critical writing over the last decade has sought to think beyond or without Foucauldian categories.

Rather, as the scholarly works I reference here attest, most of the basic discernments of Queer Theory (that sexuality is an unstable, historically shifting, and overlapping set of categories; that Victorians were no more "repressed" or constricted than those who followed in their wake; that sexuality is shaped by numerous social and cultural factors and in highly gendered ways) have had a diffuse but paramount effect – and continue to do so – in the field of Victorian Studies.

One way in which this post-Foucauldian turn has expressed itself is in an interest in citizenship and non-standard sexualities, a concern animating Eric Clarke's *Virtuous Vice: Homoeroticism and the Public Sphere* (2000), which trenchantly proposes that attempts at assimilation of sexual dissidents into "mainstream," normative cultures invariably fail. Another critical work of canny post-Foucauldian and post-Sedgwickian energies is Richard Dellamora's *Friendship's Bonds: Democracy and the Novel in Victorian England* (2004). (Dellamora's *Masculine Desire* (1990) remains a much-cited exploration of Victorian male-male relations.) In readings of the fiction of George Eliot, Benjamin Disraeli, and Henry James, the newer work construes nineteenth-century liberal democracy in Britain as variously conducive to same-sex friendships, preeminently in mentor-protégé relations. Like Caleb Crain's *American Sympathy: Men, Friendship and Literature in the New Nation* (2001) and Morris B. Kaplan's *Sexual Justice: Democratic Citizenship and the Politics of Desire* (2007), a work of political theory indebted to Hannah Arendt's conception of democracy as thriving when there are competing interests in a given political sphere, Dellamora's study eschews

Foucault's radical skepticism about the possibilities for dissent within democratic societies while providing a finely-grained set of historical and literary accounts of the thought of Disraeli, George Eliot, and Wilde. In one striking revisionist reading, Dellamora discerns in Ruskin's aesthetic values not only a proto-aestheticist perspective but a proto-decadent one, noting that Ruskin sometimes evoked Baudelaire's idea that the greatest artists are "immoralists."

Feminist scholarship addressing Victorian criminality and anxieties about female vulnerability in the urban environment such as Judith Walkowitz's *Cities of Dreadful Delight* (1992), Elaine Showalter's *Sexual Anarchy: Culture and Gender at the Fin de Siècle* (1992), and Deborah Epstein Nord's *Walking the Victorian Streets* (1995), with their emphasis on the real-world dangers as well as the mind-forged manacles promoted by sensational Victorian narratives (the Ripper Murders, most notoriously), were models of Victorian Studies. Showalter fairly inaugurated a scholarly interest in construing the *fin de siècle* as an epoch with its own cultural concerns and logic. As *Sexual Anarchy* proposed, the *fin de siècle* proved an especially rich arena for the exploration of preoccupations about same-sex relations, in which panic over sodomy, syphilis, and New Women anticipated fretful discourses of the 1990s about homosexuality, AIDS, and unmarried women.

These new assessments established and coincided with a new critical interest in exploring the dissident erotic life of Victorian London as well as other cities, laying out the critical terms for works such as Morris B. Kaplan's *Sodom on the Thames* (2012) and Matt Cooke's *London and the Culture of Homosexuality, 1885–1914* (2003). In an inventive and seamless distillation of urban, social, and cultural history, Cooke distinguishes between differing kinds of constructed metropolitan environments shaping Britain's capital—"The Grossly Indecent City" (engendered by legal cases emblazoned in press accounts), "The Inverted City" (constituted of new medical and anthropological classifications), "The Decadent City" (the metropolis overrun by predatory aristocrats), and "The Hellenic City," (imagined in reaction against presumed Wildean excess in the classical myth-making of John Addington Symonds, Edward Carpenter, and George Ives). It is especially in these encapsulations of British metropolitan life that the influence of Foucault's non-essentialist theorizing about sexuality is most amply in evidence since these works accentuated the ways in which gendered and erotic identities are structured by historical conditions, moments, and locales. William Cohen's *Sex Scandals: The Private Parts of Victorian Fiction* (1996) focused on scandalous scenes in the fiction of Trollope, Dickens, and others in tandem with headline-grabbing Victorian scandals.

Yet public outrages evidently were only one part of Queer History. In his insightful study *Nameless Offences: Homosexual Desire in the Nineteenth Century* (2009), the historian H. G. Cocks cautions against the limitations of focusing primarily on public Victorian sex imbroglios as a way of determining prevailing sexual attitudes given that, however titillating, such cases have less to do with the lives of most Victorian citizens than the everyday, routine exercising of laws in the criminal regulation of individuals. Fleet Street tastes in the parsing the historical record have their limitations, although sensational cases continue to serve as an irresistible way of comprehending Victorian attitudes towards same-sex attraction. Cocks himself, after analyzing in detail Victorian arrest records for sodomy, turns to a number of headline-grabbing Victorian court cases dealing with sodomy.

To be sure, sex scandals such as the Cleveland Street case, in which a male brothel was discovered in London's West End, are primarily useful for discerning male same-sex

activity given that the prevailing legislation seldom addressed same-sex behavior among women who, according to recent scholars such as Martha Vicinus and Sharon Marcus, often found familial and kinship networks to be surprisingly accommodating of lesbian desire. Marcus's *Between Women: Friendship, Desire, and Marriage in Victorian England* (2007), scrutinized the intricate ties defining female-female relationships, few of them ostensibly "dissident" in kind, whereby women bonded deeply at the same time that they enabled one another's heterosexual relations in marital outcomes (all sanctified by a burgeoning consumer culture.)

Many of the more valuable studies of Victorian writing assumptively invoked the insights of Queer Theory without explicitly acknowledging that perspective. Thus Catherine Robson's *Men in Wonderland: The Lost Girlhood of the Victorian Gentleman* (2001) (my favorably-titled work of the last decade) brilliantly construes the idealization of "ideal girls" by middle-class male writers such as De Quincey, Dickens, Ruskin, and Lewis Carroll in terms of their own conflicted investment in femininity. Robson traces the emergence of a Victorian idealization of an innocent femininity and then the rampant "legislation of innocence" in the 1880s with W. T. Stead's "Maiden Tribute" exposés and the resulting Labouchère Amendment. Kate Thomas's *Postal Pleasures: Sex, Scandal, and Victorian Letters* (2012) presents an analysis of the British postal system – the "bureaucratic backbone of nation and empire" – that interprets it as an opportunity for "an exuberant displacement of subjectivity," one that allowed for citizens to imagine themselves in places otherwise out of bounds to them. Just as the Cleveland Street case (which notoriously ensnared telegraph boys and upper-class homosexual Lotharios) brought public attention to the postal service as a conduit of illegal sexuality activity, writers such as Trollope, Eliza Lynn Lytton, Wilde, and Henry James found fictional gold in the metaphor of the post office as a power-house and network of illicit erotic intrigue (2).

One beneficiary of Queer Theory, surprisingly enough, has been studies addressing the Victorian fascination with the supernatural. In *Our Vampires, Ourselves* (1995), Nina Auerbach provided a quickening revisionist comprehension of Victorian vampiredom as a teeming, polymorphously erotic utopia of sorts, in which vampires were loyal *doppelgängers* – that is, in early and at mid-nineteenth century in the writing of Sheridan LeFanu's *Carmilla* (1872) before Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897) emerged on the scene as a promiscuous aberration of the type. In *Queer Others in Victorian Gothic: Transgressing Monstrosity* (2012), Ardel Haefele-Thomas insists that Victorian gothic revised earlier gothic traditions, rendering certain figures – the spinster who declines to participate in the marriage and child economy of heterosexuality, or the atavistic, racialized outsider who wields power – in more appealing terms.

The Victorian rage for the weird, occult, supernatural, mystical and all-around non-rational is taken up in Alex Owen's revisionist *The Place of Enchantment: British Occultism and the Culture of the Modern* (2004), part of a broader recent intellectual shift questioning the so-called, once-dominant "secularization" thesis, as cultural historians question whether Victorians became less and less beholden to religious structures and beliefs over time or whether new systems of belief, from Theosophy to spiritualism, continued to proffer new forms of metaphysical faith. Her chapter explicating the sexual politics of these occult movements offers a startling appreciation of the ways in which these seemingly reactionary coteries enhanced women's status by liberating the spiritual from the Victorian domestic domain and situating it in both private and public locales. Often dismissed by

biographers as a crack-pot, Madame Blavatsky appears here as a canny visionary who imported once-denigrated Eastern ideas about erotic pleasure to a constricted Victorian social ethos. Another illuminating assessment of nineteenth-century religious culture is Patrick O'Malley's *Catholicism, Sexual Deviance, and Victorian Gothic Culture* (2006), which provides a detailed account of how never-quite-dormant eighteenth-century gothic tropes and heretical Catholic ideas dovetailed with – and helped to generate – dissident erotic ideas in the writings of Newman, Hardy, and Wilde.

Scholarly studies focusing on individual writers and their posthumous literary authority assimilated some of the key premises of Queer Theory – principally, the notion that erotic dissidence was formed out of historical actualities, cultural values, and literary traditions. This encompasses critical works focusing on how homoerotic affiliations are inherited over time. For example, in *Victorian Keats: Manliness, Sexuality, and Desire* (2002), James Najarian delivers a masterly examination of the ways in which Keats's poetry was excoriated in highly gendered terms for its "effeminacy," excessive delicacy, and sensuousness. At the same time, Najarian construes how writers drew on Keatsian models in thematizing homoerotic *amours*. In Najarian's post-Bloomian analysis, a treacherous "anxiety of influence" gives way to a semi-covert but warm "tradition of desire," as writers such as Walter Pater and Wilfred Owen variously adopt Keatsian modes.

Another tradition of desire informs Andrew Elfenbein's *Romantic Genius: The Pre-History of a Homosexual Role* (1999), which traces the (imagined, problematic, enduring) association between a propensity towards genius and a penchant towards homosexual eros. Just as masculinity is a culturally fluid and manipulated subject for Najarian, for Kathy Alexis Psomiades in her landmark study *Beauty's Body: Femininity and Representation in Victorian Aestheticism* (1997), the feminine is continually conflated with the aesthetic from the Pre-Raphaelite writings of Rossetti and Swinburne to the paintings of Burne-Jones and the decadent work of Wilde and Beardsley.

In terms of single-author critical texts animated by Queer Theory, there are far too many excellent critical studies devoted to Oscar Wilde, the Victorian writer who has most benefited from Queer Theoretical attention, to discuss here. I would spotlight several valuable and even game-changing works, however, all from the 1990s, those *anni mirabili* for Queer Wilde Studies: Ed Cohen's *Talk on the Wilde Side* (1992) with its reliance on the trial transcripts in the British Library to explain how the playwright's troubles shaped the modern conceptual formation of the homosexual; Alan Sinfield's *The Wilde Century: Effeminacy, Oscar Wilde, and the Queer Moment* (1994) which addressed the issue of how same-sex desire became newly associated with effeminate behavior; Joseph Bristow's *Effeminate England: Homosexual Writing After 1885* (1995), and Michael S. Foldy's underappreciated and unsentimental *The Trials of Oscar Wilde: Deviance, Morality, and Late-Victorian Society* (1997) which also drew on courtroom details. Like Regenia Gagnier's *Idylls of the Marketplace: Oscar Wilde and the Victorian Public* (1999) which accentuated how the seemingly commercially-detached playwright was immersed in the Victorian performance and publishing world, Foldy revealed a latent cash-nexus in Wilde's canny but ultimately tragic self-fashioning – specifically in terms of the ways in which Wilde's exalted Hellenism, promulgated at length during his trials, was exposed by the prosecution as masking cross-class monetary exchanges typical of privileged late-Victorian men of same-sex preferences.

One of the more compelling of recent single-author works in Victorian Studies is Holly Furneaux's *Queer Dickens: Erotics, Families, Masculinities* (2009) in which Dickens, either

admired or reviled as the patriarchal sage of the Victorian domestic sphere and sentimental adorer of chaste and noble femininity – and yet in so many ways a “queer writer” given the protean weirdness of his fictional characters – emerges as an advanced proponent of heterodox figures, sexual outsiders, countercultural familial arrangements, odd pairings, and non-standard families. Offering not only a fresh contribution to Dickens Studies, Furneaux’s work represents an implicit rebuke to Queer Theory’s sometimes-reflexive disparagement of the family and its tendency to see all familial structures as norm-reproducing, punitive, and inhospitable to alternative desires. Perhaps because of Sedgwick’s much-cited treatment of *Our Mutual Friend* and *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* in *Between Men*, most critics of Dickens have tended to follow Sedgwick’s lead in seeing Dickensian homoeroticism as chiefly legible in acts of violence. In overt dissent, Furneaux traces “an abundance of gentler, but no less eroticized, same sex encounters” in the writer’s work (16). She perceives in Dickens’s bachelor fathers, maritally resistant men, and male nurses, novels that reserve a privileged status for varieties of nurturance rather than a longing for heterosexual reproduction.

Furneaux locates patterns of serial bachelorhood, “female and male marital resistance” (18), reparative masculinities, and a preponderance of alternative family structures in Dickens’s fiction. For Furneaux, in the novelist’s writing there is always an emphasis on the constructed nature of family as the novelist highlights nurturance over genealogy. At the same time that it accentuates the positive alternate-family scenarios in Dickens’s major fiction, *Queer Dickens* is careful not to over-idealize all non-traditional scenarios, pointing out, for example, the unsavory symmetry between the criminal Fagin’s craven attachment to *Oliver Twist* and the well-off Brownlow’s possessiveness towards the boy. Furneaux’s study hints at a new turn in Queer Theory itself. In Furneaux’s reading, Dickens’s fictional corpus depicts a range of sexualities, socially anomalous characters, and “queer families.”

A sense of the Victorian family as reflective of the comfily recognizable as well as of erotic disturbance also permeates Mary Jean Corbett’s provocative *Family Likeness: Sex, Marriage, and Incest from Jane Austen to Virginia Woolf* (2008) which accentuates the shifting meaning of incestuous relations over a century. Corbett considers how an early-nineteenth-century tradition of forging relationships between relatives became defined as pernicious, ultimately giving way to intimate relations between strangers that became the paradigm of fictional and real-life heterosexual marriage plots, and culminating in the scrutiny of neuroses-saturated “family romance” heralded by psychoanalysis.

Several biographical studies gave new theoretical sophistication to the focus on same-sex erotics in nineteenth-century British society and culture. Oliver Buckton’s innovative *Secret Selves: Confession and Same-Sex Desire in Victorian Autobiography* (1997) is an especially exemplary work. Expanding on Foucault’s notion of silence as discursively meaningful, Buckton argues that secrecy in Victorian autobiographical writing by sexually dissident men is not so much the suppression of information as a complex negotiation between author and reader, in which readerly interest oscillates with authorial reserve concerning intimate secrets. In readings of work by Newman, Carpenter, Wilde, and Symonds, Buckton delves into the well-springs of a queer confessional mode that shows no signs of disappearing as a literary genre. Chris Snodgrass’s bio-critical study, *Aubrey Beardsley: Dandy of the Grotesque* (1995), drew attention to the tensile relations within the Decadent Movement, demonstrating that the artist both loathed and needed Wilde just as Wilde admired but felt apprehensive about the silky lubricities of Beardsley’s drawings (particularly the definitive illustrations for

“Salome”) which the playwright derided as the “naughty scribbles a precocious schoolboy makes on the margins of his copybooks” (119).

Biography itself, so seemingly low on the Queer-Theory totem pole, flourished with several revealing accounts of major Victorian erotic trouble-makers. The first full-scale biography of a late-Victorian socialist thinker and queer communitarian appeared with Sheila Rowbotham’s *Edward Carpenter: A Life of Liberty and Love* (2008), in which Carpenter emerges as a utopian thinker in the tradition of Ruskin and Whitman, a free-love advocate, avid nudist, and early supporter of recycling. Influenced by Eastern philosophical traditions such as Sufism, Taoism, and Japanese Buddhism, principally in his erotic radicalism, Carpenter found followers in late-Victorian feminist cenacles, an affiliation arising from his interest in endorsing a “homogenic” love that would not be appropriated by men of upper-class privilege, although Carpenter’s emphasis on sentimental friendship – what Rowbotham terms his “yearning for syncretic wholeness”—however politically visionary would not survive a Freudian epoch of drives, neuroses, and unconscious predicaments (273). Fiona MacCarthy’s *The Last Pre-Raphaelite: Edward Burne-Jones and the Victorian Imagination* (2012) is keenly informative in its account of Burne-Jones’s on-again, off again relation to an Aestheticist movement he monitored out of concern about perversities (he scoffed at Aubrey Beardsley’s illustrations for *Le Morte d’Arthur*, deeming them “lustful,” and on Wilde’s arrest called the playwright “that horrible creature who has brought mockery to everything I love to think of” [446]) as well as homosexual imbroglios, particularly those repeatedly ensnaring his friend the painter Simeon Solomon, whom he admirably defended when the painter was arrested for indecency in 1895.

You May Safely Gaze: *The “Conservatism” of Contemporary Victorian Art History*

THERE HAS BEEN a real resistance on the part of some of the best recent scholars of Victorian literature and culture to consider – or even to acknowledge – the challenge of Feminist, Sexuality, and Gender Studies or the insights of Cultural Studies. For lack of a better word I will deem this a “conservative” critical element in accounts of Victorian art. The question of Victorian art’s relative low repute in art history, particularly in contrast with French painting, is an interesting if familiar one. The obvious answer – that nineteenth-century British painting was obsessed with the anecdotal and with narrative at the historical moment when French painting was eliminating the subject, aspiring to the condition of music – remains a very convincing answer, although, as Richard Dorment notes, in 1940 Robin Ironside defended Burne-Jones’s work against Clive Bell’s valorization of “significant form” by maintaining that poetic content was equally significant in the estimation of painting. His was a lone voice, however.

Ernst Gombrich put the whole matter with brutal succinctness with his dismissive comment in the two pages he devoted to a discussion of the “unattainable goals of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood” in his *The Story of Art* (1950):

While their starting point was similar to that of Millet and Courbet, I think that their most honest endeavor landed them in a blind alley. The longing of the Victorian masters for innocence was too self-congratulatory to succeed. The hope of their French contemporaries to make progress in the exploration of visible world proved more fruitful for the next generation. (392)

The naturalism of Millet and Courbet, in this reckoning, is corrupted by their British acolytes, who transformed it into an insupportable, impure idealism. Gombrich was articulating a then-dominant, pervasive view among critics, curators, and collectors. As Dorment has pointed out, a telling detail pointing to the low repute of Victorian art lies in the factoid that between 1928 and 1956 the National Arts Collections Fund, a private charitable organization tasked with acquiring art for the nation, purchased only a single picture by Burne-Jones (14). There are numerous subsequent examples of the low repute afforded Victorian painting, among them the sad story of the wonderful 2005–06 Simeon Solomon exhibition, which originated in Birmingham and then traveled to Munich and London, having found no institution in the United States that would take on the exhibition. A 2006 conference devoted to Solomon at the Yale Center for British Art took place in the absence of the art work.

In recent times some of the most prominent collectors of nineteenth-century British art have been flamboyant, if somewhat tacky, figures (Allen Funt, Malcolm Forbes, and Andrew Lloyd Webber, for example). Still, I would suggest that the continued failure of Victorian Art to receive full critical and institutional measure is related to a scholarly hesitancy to respond seriously to the insights, models, and achievements of Gender and Queer Studies critics. This is especially undermining given the opportunities afforded by the passive, supposedly effeminate male nudes of Leighton, the epebe-like, exquisite males who dominate so many of the works of Burne-Jones, and even the muscled physiques and complex visual schema of working-class figures in so many Victorian paintings elaborated on by Tim Barringer in his sumptuously illustrated study *Men at Work: Art and Labour in Victorian Britain* (2005).

Yet these works are insufficiently reflective of – one is tempted to say allergic to – the most thoughtfully searching theoretical and critical developments in Gender and Queer Studies. The problem is not just an old-fashioned formalism that places the highest premium on what Perry Anderson once called, in a critique of Gombrich, the “march of technique,” but a reliance on orthodox ideas about sexuality and representation (257). Thus Barringer’s neo-Marxist critical approach never veers from its normative assumption about the depiction of working-class figures in Victorian painting, a critical framework in which, for example, Frederick Leighton’s *Daedalus and Icarus* and *Work* (1869) is allowed its homoerotic meaning but Ford Madox Brown’s “Work” (1852–65), with its strapping, preening male workers, cannot be discussed in such terms. To make the point in an altogether different way and perhaps too bluntly, why has Victorian Art History failed to produce the kind of groundbreaking scholarship of the order of T. J. Clark, Thomas Crow, Abigail Solomon-Godeau, Linda Nochlin, and Alex Potts (with the exception of the last of these art historians, all critics who have made their substantial scholarly reputations in the field of French art history)?

There are several reasons for this asymmetry in British versus French art historical trajectories beyond the more densely interesting confluence of aesthetic and historical concerns in French painting: specifically, the history of private rather than public collecting of Victorian art, a tendency to fall back on biographical rather than social and historical causalities, a somewhat quaint impulse towards a “new canonization” of nineteenth-century British painters, and a reluctance to construe and build on some of the most theoretically and imaginatively-advanced insights in Gender Studies and Queer Theory as undertaken throughout the last three decades in critical accounts of Victorian literature.

Most of the first twentieth-century studies of Victorian painting, particularly those of the 1930s and 1950s – Sacheverell Sitwell’s *Narrative Pictures: A Survey of English Genre*

and *Its Painters* (1937), James Lever's *Tissot* (1936), Peter Quenell's *Victorian Panorama* (1937), William Gaunt's *The Pre-Raphaelite Tragedy* (1942) and *Victorian Olympus* (1952), John Steegman's *Consort of Taste* (1950), Graham Reynold's *Painters of the Victorian Scene* (1953) – were the works of passionate connoisseurs, heavily indebted to biographical detail and lacking in sufficient reproductions. And although problems of “canonicity” can be dated to the 1940s, beginning in the 1970s there were a number of bold re-estimations of Victorian art in exhibitions and resulting catalogues. Among them were “Sacred and Profane in Symbolist at the Art” at the Gallery of Toronto in 1969 and then the exhibit “From Realism to Symbolism: Whistler and His World” at the Philadelphia Museum of Art in 1971, the latter an exhibit that explored international cross-currents by viewing Whistler's friendships and connections as paramount. Even naïve historical overviews such as Philippe Jullian's image-saturated *The Symbolists* (1973), with its Mario Praz-like incessant cataloguing of the contents of what Jullian called “The Palace of Symbolism,” helped to substantiate the links between British and French aesthetic enterprises, along with extensive illustrations at a time when such connections were hardly apparent and much of the visual material unseen.

The 1986 opening of Paris's Musée d'Orsay, with its much-debated reassessment of French academic art, especially the so-called *Pompier* artists, was indirectly salutary for the study of Victorian art as well as for Gender/Sexuality Studies since it helped to canonize what once had been below a certain critical and scholarly radar, the Academic Art that continued to make the nude central to painting and sculpture. That nineteenth-century British art continues to earn enhanced critical respectability and popular attention is evidenced by such recent crowd-pleasing exhibitions as the 2001 “The Victorian Nude” exhibition at the Tate Britain (and in 2002 at the Brooklyn Museum) along with the 2011 “The Cult of Beauty: The Victorian *Avant-Garde*, 1860–1900” exhibit at the Victoria and Albert Museum. With an eye on the box-office, these recent exhibitions have been eager to explore what Dorment has characterized (in a reference to Burne-Jones's 1873–78 painting *Laus Veneris*) the “hothouse simmering with sexual tension” so characteristic of painting of the Pre-Raphaelites and the British Aesthetic movement (15).

Yet, today, in the amply detailed, erudite work of Elizabeth Prettejohn, we find a fulsome effort to promote a new art historical canon inclusive of Victorian painting, girded in an explicitly Kantian aesthetic and opposed to discussion that would focus on the sexual politics animating Victorian art. Part of the point of those ground-breaking exhibitions and catalogues was to correct the view on which Prettejohn continues to base her work. Proudly blind both to these older critical perspectives and to current theoretical methodologies, Prettejohn is the most accomplished, not to mention the most impressively productive, of current art historians examining Victorian art (she writes with sensitivity about the major figures in Victorian painting), but she is also the most polemically set against those who would presume to offer a socially aware, theoretically stringent view of Aestheticism. In the introduction to her gorgeously illustrated *Art for Art Sake's: Aestheticism in Victorian Painting* (2008), Prettejohn dogmatically laments the reductive tendencies of “political correctness” (those are her words) in recent estimations of Victorian art (9).

These are code words, of course, for a Gender Studies and Queer Theoretical cultural critique. Reading such passages, one might wonder why traditional critics choose to deem advanced critical accounts of art works as “reductive” excesses and yet never pause to consider that the same might be said of a hermetically-structured, formalist criticism to which they claim allegiance. In this wide-ranging study of Victorian Aestheticism, Prettejohn explores

the London circles of Dante Gabriel Rossetti and Frederick Leighton as she focuses on what she seems to take to be burning artistic question – indeed, a question for the ages: if art is not created for the sake of preaching a moral lesson, or supporting a political cause, or making a fortune, or for that matter, any objective, what might art be? Prettejohn traces the emergence of the debates around these issues, focusing particularly on the principal protagonists of the Aesthetic Movement and their paintings. There is much to admire in this book including detailed interpretations of familiar and unfamiliar images, as well as the underpinnings of the movement in French and German aesthetics, itself, it must be said, a very familiar subject. Prettejohn writes intelligently of Swinburne and Pater, twin poles of critical consciousness in explorations of British aestheticism, and there is an intelligent discussion of the possible homoerotic subtexts in the major processional paintings of Frederick Leighton.

Yet one strongly senses that Prettejohn would rather skirt such issues – and indeed the abiding aim of *Art for Art Sake* is to affirm that the late-Victorian Aesthetic Movement made estimable formal contributions to the history of modern art. Always eager to sequester erotic desire from beauty, the only “scandalous” aspect of Victorian art for her lies in its reception. “If it still seems scandalous to suggest that Leighton and Rossetti might be as important as Manet and Cezanne,” she notes, “that can scarcely be explained in the terms of social history and materialist analysis” (9). Prettejohn’s discomfort with historical actualities in the depiction of same-sex desire leads her into some willfully perverse emphases. In an essay on Simeon Solomon in a 2005 catalogue of the painter’s work, she repeatedly maintains that it was primarily Solomon’s “classicism” that led Victorians to find his work “disturbing,” an odd observation given that earlier in this same essay she explains that “Critics generally regarded the Classical revival as a salutary development, a worthy emulation of the ideal qualities attributed to the Greco-Roman artistic tradition” (45, 39–41). “Solomon’s Classicism,” we are told, “constantly asks us to question the customary divisions of the Western tradition”, that is, he is an artist who troubles the familiar tensions between Arnoldian categories of Hellenism versus Hebraism (45). Never mind that Solomon was one of the most recklessly audacious of Victorian artists in his eagerness to represent male and female homoerotics as well as a man whose arrest in 1895 for public indecency threatened the integrity of Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. All questions of historical actuality, of the relation between social and political aspirations and aesthetic production – so important in the writing of art historians of French painting such as Crow, Clark, and Solomon-Godeau – are forced to cede to the issue of canonicity and the obliterating abstractions of Kantian thought and, inexplicitly, a universalized sexual history.

Indeed, there is an almost theological allegiance to Kant in Prettejohn’s work, invariably used as a cudgel against colleagues who reflect recent theoretical work, that relies on the assumptions that Kantian aesthetics lack a theory of eros. But is Kant’s theory of beauty without eros, as Prettejohn repeatedly implies? Certainly not, for Kant argues in “Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime” (1767) that when an (assumptively) male subject encounters, for example, Homer’s portrayal of the girdle of Venus he experiences only a “pleasant sensation” (47). Thus for Kant the female nude cannot be represented in a work of the highest sort because such a representation inevitably evokes utilitarian pleasure, while the lowest form of representation of the female is the pornographic. (A corollary: Because he would assume a male figure cannot elicit libidinal feelings in a subject Kant would have no problem thinking of, say, Apollo in the highest aesthetic terms.) Yet for the New Kantians questions of the erotic always must be sequestered from questions

of the aesthetic. Thus Prettejohn and Barringer in their introduction to a volume on Frederick Leighton testily criticize the “preoccupation verging on the prurient” of certain [unnamed] critics looking into the [it needs to be said, still-unresolved] question of Leighton’s sexuality (xiv). Once we dispense with such prurient preoccupations, they instruct us, “we might then reinterpret Leighton’s art as a joyous celebration of all varieties of human sexuality” (xv). In such a way are the challenges of depicting brooding, eroticized male nudes (hardly a “joyous celebration,” by the way) blandly abstracted into a de-historicized pagan wonderland, more a Masters and Johnson wish-dream or happy-go-lucky San Francisco 1973 than conflicted mid-nineteenth century Britain.

Such demurrals, simplifying questions of sexuality so that they signify only the biographical, neglect an opportunity to consider, say, Leighton’s famously close relations to his younger male pupils at his studio, the kind of formative pedagogical relationship that, at a quite different time and set of circumstances, Thomas Crow took up in his *Emulation: Making Artists for Revolutionary France* (1995). Drawing on Sedgwickian paradigms, Crow considers the homosocially-structured psycho-biographical relations linking artists and their students in Revolutionary France, analyzing for example, David’s fascination with paternal figures in his painting.

A similar churlish disdain for adventurous criticism informs Prettejohn’s rendering of Feminist Art History dealing with Victorian imagery, although it is worth noting that Prettejohn tends to collapse all new theoretical art historical approaches into one blurrily trendy approach to be dismissed. In a late chapter on “Gender and Sexuality” in *Art of the Pre-Raphaelites* (2000), Prettejohn perfunctorily rehearses the feminist reckoning with the Victorian iconography of Tennyson’s “The Lady of Shalott” and then concludes her discussion with the observation:

She may be a sexualized woman; she may be the victim of patriarchal oppression; she may an allegory for the artist, she may be a fairy or prophet. But at the end of the twentieth century, though, we may perhaps rejoice that the Lady has eluded the attempts of patriarchal societies, either hers or ours, to fix her meanings. (231)

What is notable here is the wearily omniscient catalogue of implicitly “trendy” approaches, a deliberately derisive mock-up of imagined “politically correct” interpretations, none of them rendered interesting, and all of them having to submit to the presumably superior view of abstract, timeless ambiguity. What a relief, in Prettejohn’s summary – and, indeed, what an occasion for critical communal rejoicing – that one might contemptuously transcend all such blinkered perspectives for a love of “Beauty,” Prettejohn’s most favored term, part of a didactic positivism that cannot theorize about the beauty of desire or of perverse erotics. In a sense, aesthetic “beauty” is deployed so as to preclude a consideration of carnal beauty.

This refusal to parse the trenchant inquiries established by dozens of contemporary scholars working from Gender and Queer Theory perspectives harks back to Prettejohn’s *Beauty and Art: 1750–2000* (2005), another work resting on a murky aesthetic foundation deeply indebted to Kant. In this study Prettejohn devotes attention to Winckelmann, the celebrated “father of art history” and a pioneer of the social history of art, a man of same-sex tastes who struggled with considerable social limitations on his entwined personal and aesthetic aspirations. No matter. For Prettejohn, the key to the entire Winckelmann project – and the most original aspect of his corpus – is Winckelmann’s demonstration of the beauty

of the art of antiquity. “Beauty for him,” she writes, “was something that was not definable in general or abstract terms but could only be discovered through profound and sustained observation of particular works” (30). She further maintains that Winckelmann “initiated a practice of homoerotic criticism of superb quality in its own right, and which was inspirational for later critics such as Walter Pater.” This is all well and good, except that well and good cannot be left alone. In the very next sentence we are instructed:

Nonetheless, there is a danger in assuming that Winckelmann’s response to the beautiful can be explained away as the effect of his homosexuality. The sensual element in Winckelmann’s response cannot be reduced to an expression of desire for the sculptured male body. Rather, it permeates his descriptions, for instance of the texture of chiselled marble, of the fall of sculptured draperies, and even of female figures. (30–31)

All good, but then Prettejohn goes on to assure us that:

It would be easy enough to resolve them by collapsing the beautiful into the erotic. Thus in Winckelmann’s case it is tempting to avoid difficulties by seeing his love of the beautiful simply as a disguised or sublimated form of erotic attraction to young men. Yet that would not only reinforce the stereotype, ingrained in modern western societies, that presumes some innate affinity between homosexual desire and love of art; it would also reduce the theoretical question of the beautiful to mere personal preference, something about which people of different genders or sexualities would be unable to share ideas or opinions. Winckelmann’s writings, however powerful their homoerotic resonances, cannot be dismissed as merely the fantasies of an eighteenth-century white European homosexual. (30)

There is much that is confused about this intellectually and syntactically torturous passage. Leaving aside the odd rush to “resolve difficulties,” one is most struck here by Prettejohn’s forced distinction between the (supposedly easy) task of collapsing the erotic with the beautiful (a complex and worthy enterprise, actually) versus what she considers the intellectually tough work of arguing for an exalted sense of art as coldly abstract. Equally striking is the fanciful melodrama Prettejohn conjures up in order to denigrate the fictive enemies of her formalist purism. She imagines them as composed of a party of “political correctness,” an utterly notional Queer-Theory crowd that would, in Prettejohn’s telling, insist on Winckelmann’s sexualized biography as wholly determining his critical enterprise, a querulous mob that in this melodramatic tale is then shot down by an imaginary other party, a second politically-correct cohort, this one comprised of all those feminist, race-conscious art historians – there are so many of them! – denigrating this newly-queer Winkelmann for being a privileged white European male. These are phantom critical skirmishes, produced out of thin air. Significantly, no actual critics are anywhere cited for this supposed denigration of Winckelmann.

Equally problematic is the way in which Prettejohn strenuously turns questions of Winckelmann’s sexuality into a matter of mere biographical interest – inevitably, a reduction in her schema in a way that of course is never the case in standard art-historical accounts of the robustly normative erotic adventures of, say, Rembrandt or Jackson Pollock. Perhaps Prettejohn means to warn against the pitfalls inherent in what the philosophers Morris R. Cohen and Ernest Nagel have called the “genetic fallacy,” whereby a conclusion arises entirely on something or someone’s origin rather than a subsequent or current context. If

one were only absorbed in the implication of biography for Winckelmann's theory of art, Prettejohn might have a point. But if one is interested in another set of questions – say, why Hellenic male beauty is so crucial at a particular juncture in the history of aesthetics – Prettejohn's caution gets one nowhere. It is worrisome that an art historian of Victorian painting writing in the year 2000 has completely misconstrued the enterprise of Queer Theory, one of the theoretical fundaments of which is its questioning of decades-long, naïve biographical investigations into such matters as Leonardo's or Michelangelo's personal life. It is not, one must insist, the issue of biography that matters in the case of Winckelmann but the complex matrix of social, historical, and political factors helping to shape his position as the “father of art history.”

What renders Prettejohn's failure to grasp this is especially strange is that *Beauty and Art* was published six years after Alex Potts's *Flesh and the Ideal: Winckelmann and the Origins of Art History* (1994), a landmark, much-cited, and continually controversial (for its reliance on a supposedly anachronistic psychoanalytic terminology) synthesis of deeply grained historical exploration, aesthetic theory, and clear-eyed comprehension of the place of dissident sexuality in social history that Prettejohn curiously – or is it tellingly? – does not cite in her many pages devoted to Winckelmann. Despite the critical debate it inspired, Potts's book over time has become an art historical standard in the investigation of the coordinates linking sexual identity with the formation of a particular notion of art history. *Flesh and the Ideal* meticulously demonstrates that Winckelmann, cannily converting to Catholicism to escape servitude in Germany and taking refuge in the artistic treasure-house of Rome, fell first under the patronage of a cardinal and then, as the Commissioner of Antiquities of the Holy See, was able to pursue his scholarly work in relative independence. The move into the upper reaches of Italian clerical society in the early years of Clement the Thirteenth's papacy gave him a social, intellectual, and homosexual freedom that was scarcely possible in the stifling atmosphere of northern Germany. Yet it was a liberation that became precarious with the onset of the homophobic bigotry and paranoid repressiveness that overtook the papal court in the mid-1760s.

What is particularly fascinating about Potts's study is the way in which he demonstrates that it was this personal experience of a liberating social ethos, followed by a repressive anti-homosexual atmosphere, that powerfully shaped Winckelmann's *History of the Art of Antiquity* (1764), a work whose originality lay in its positing of art history as harboring an organic model of growth and decline determined by natural forces rather than by the relatively superficial conquest of representational problems and associated formal techniques. Clearly, Winckelmann's personal experience is indissociably related to a particular place and moment in the history of sexuality and to his creation of a certain version of art history.

Nor was he alone in bringing his own experience to a subjective history of art: Goethe, much influenced by Winckelmann during his travels through Italy, believed that by running his hands along the naked body of his Roman mistress he could gain an enhanced appreciation of restored ancient sculpture. “Each day with increasing delight” Goethe would “busily thumb” the Ancients:

But at the love-god's behest, by night my business is different;
 Half of my scholarship's lost, yet I have double the fun.
 And is not this education, to study the shape of her lovely
 Breasts, and down over her hip slide my adventuring hand?

Marble comes doubly alive for me then, as I ponder, comparing
 Seeing with vision that feels, feeling with fingers that see. (69)

There could scarcely be a more sensual expression of the relation between palpable personal experience and realized art-historical knowledge. In his 1867 essay on Winkelmann, which relied on Goethe's understanding of the author of *The History of Art*, Pater similarly fixated on the sources for exuberance before sculptural works in terms of corporeal relations, only ones that were notably same-sex in kind:

This enthusiasm, dependent as it is to a great degree on bodily temperament, has a power of reinforcing the purer emotions of intellect with an almost physical excitement. That his affinity with Hellenism was not merely intellectual, that the subtler threads of temperament were interwoven in it, is proved by his romantic fervent friendships with young men . . . These friendships, bringing him in contact with the pride of human form, and staining the thoughts with its bloom, perfected his reconciliation to the spirit of Greek sculpture. (130)

With the deployment of the words "staining" and "bloom," one detects a shift from Goethe's German Romanticist exultation in male-female carnal consummation to a proto-decadent erotics of male-male desire at Victorian mid-century.

But the outstanding point here is that in Pettejohn's account of Winckelmann a real opportunity is lost to deliberate on the specific historical and social context in which a pioneering art historian, in so many ways formed by his own erotic relations and identity, came to assume his scholarly authority over several generations. Her reliance on a de-erotized theory of beauty leaves her without a theory of desire, and thus her accounts of Pre-Raphaelite and Aesthetist Art remain impoverished.

In making my case for a more theoretically enhanced history of Victorian art I would contrast Pettejohn's critical reckoning with the substantial achievements of contemporary art historians considering eighteenth- and nineteenth-century French art, specifically, Crow, Clark, Nochlin, and Solomon-Godeau in their very different studies. Solomon-Godeau discloses why the male nude dominated French art throughout the years of the French Revolution and then largely disappeared. Beyond Crow's innovative absorption of Sedgwick's ideas, both Clark and Nochlin have invigorated the study of nineteenth-century French art with a synthesis of socio-political analysis and Gender Studies critique. Only when Victorian Art History brings the same history-conscious seriousness and theoretical energy to the question of the "radical" changes in relations between the sexual and sexuality to the study of art that historians of revolutionary-era France bring to the social history of French art will it shed its reputation as the Miss Grundy of Victorian Studies.

Fortunately, a number of more recent works of Art History considering nineteenth-century British art go very far in rectifying this willful failure to summon the insights of Gender Studies and Queer Theory to the construal of Victorian Art. Drawing on Judith Butler's influential theories of performativity, Carol Mavor's *Pleasures Taken: Performances of Sexuality and Loss in Victorian Photographs* (1996) is an original, somewhat impressionistically diffuse meditation on the artificial, anti-realist mode so popular in nineteenth-century photography. Christopher Reed's *Art and Homosexuality: A History of Ideas* offers a thoughtful short chapter on late-nineteenth-century painting. Jongwoo Jeremy Kim's deeply-researched *Painted Men in Britain, 1868–1918: Royal Academicians*

and *Masculinities* (2012) reassesses portrayals of male bodies in their narrative context, analyzing disruptions of gender norms in paintings by John Singer Sargent, Henry Scott Tuke, and their contemporary Academicians. There is a startlingly original chapter addressing Leighton's Orientalism in terms of his depiction of the male nude. The literary critic Stefano Evangelista covers similar ground with originality and flair in his *British Aestheticism and Ancient Greece: Hellenism, Reception, Gods in Exile* (2009), where once again Winckelmann stands as an all-influential aesthetic potentate. In *The Homosexual Revival of Renaissance Style, 1850–1950* (2009), Yvonne Ivory looks at analogous displacements and projections in arguing that the reasons for the late-Victorian celebration of the Italian Renaissance lay in the criminalization of male same-desire, which prompted writers such as Symonds, Vernon Lee, Pater, and Wilde to yoke criminality to beautiful bodies in an imagined “decadent” past.

The work that most powerfully (if only implicitly) rebukes the “conservative” strain in Victorian Art History I have been identifying is Whitney Davis's *Queer Beauty: Sexuality and Aesthetics from Winckelmann to Freud and Beyond* (2010), with its brilliant discussions of the post-Winckelmann aesthetic fascination with male beauty encompassing Darwin, Vernon Lee, Wilde, Symonds, and Freud. Along the way Davis makes it clear that Kant did appreciate male beauty, as, of course, did Winckelmann. Davis expands on Potts's insights, noting, for example – in a wry critique of a reductive Freudian binary between repressed desire and its expressed cathexis – that “Whatever Winckelmann's erotic self-interest might have been, he insisted that Classical Greek images of admirable young men served to steer individual interests in sensuous pleasure towards the erotic temperance practiced by Socrates,” adding that “Winckelmann's Platonizing tendency was not – it was quite specifically not – the *suppression* of pederastic love. It was the *normativization* of pederastic love” (43). Davis provides a theory that can accommodate, perversity, decadence, aestheticism, and early modernism. Beyond suggesting the limitations of dominant approaches to Victorian Art History as hitherto practiced, these works cumulatively suggest a new critical epoch, windows opened onto different vistas, wherein the theoretical insights and fundamentals of Queer Literary Studies have at long last migrated to an expansive, historically cognizant fresh estimate of nineteenth-century British art.

Hunter College/The Graduate Center, City University of New York

WORKS CITED

- Anderson, Perry. “Components of the National Culture.” *Student Power*. Ed. Alexander Cockburn and Robin Blackburn. London: Penguin, 1969: 214–86.
- Auerbach, Nina. *Our Vampires, Ourselves*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1995.
- Barringer, Tim. *Men at Work: Art and Labour in Victorian Britain*. New Haven: Yale UP, 2005.
- Barringer, Tim, and Elizabeth Prettejohn, eds. *Frederick Leighton: Antiquity, Renaissance, Modernity*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1999.
- Bersani, Leo. *A Future for Astyanax: Character and Desire in Literature*. Boston: Little-Brown, 1976.
- Bristow, Joseph. *Effeminate England: Homosexual Writing After 1885*. New York: Columbia UP, 1995.
- Buckton, Oliver. *Secret Selves: Confession and Same-Sex Desire in Victorian Autobiography*. Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1997.
- Carluccio, Luigi. *Sacred and Profane in Symbolist at the Art*. Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, 1969.
- Clarke, Eric. *Virtuous Vice: Homoeroticism and the Public Sphere*. Durham: Duke UP, 2000.

- Cocks, H. G. *Nameless Offences: Homosexual Desire in the Nineteenth Century*. London: I. B. Tauris, 2009.
- Cohen, Ed. *Talk on the Wilde Side*. New York: Routledge, 1992.
- Cohen, Morris R., and Ernest Nagel. *An Introduction to Logic and Scientific Method*. New York: Harcourt Brace, 1934.
- Cohen, William. *Sex Scandals: The Private Parts of Victorian Fiction*. Durham: Duke UP, 1996.
- Cooke, Matt. *London and the Culture of Homosexuality, 1885–1914*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003.
- Corbett, Mary Jean. *Family Likeness: Sex, Marriage, and Incest from Jane Austen to Virginia Woolf*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2008.
- Crain, Caleb. *American Sympathy: Men, Friendship and Literature in the New Nation*. New Haven: Yale UP, 2001.
- Crow, Thomas. *Emulation: Making Artists for Revolutionary France*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1995.
- Cruise, Colin. Ed. *Love Revealed: Simeon Solomon and the Pre-Raphaelites*. Birmingham: Merrell, 2005.
- Davis, Whitney. *Queer Beauty: Sexuality and Aesthetics from Wincklemann to Freud and Beyond*. New York: Columbia UP, 2010.
- Dellamora, Richard. *Friendship's Bonds: Democracy and the Novel in Victorian England*. Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2004.
- _____. *Masculine Desire: The Sexual Politics of Victorian Aestheticism*. Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1990.
- Dorment, Richard. "Beautiful, Aesthetic, Erotic." *The New York Review of Books* 23 Feb. 2012: 14–16.
- Elfenbein, Andrew. *Romantic Genius: The Pre-History of a Homosexual Role*. New York: Columbia UP, 1999.
- Evangelista, Stefano. *British Aestheticism and Ancient Greece: Hellenism, Reception, Gods in Exile*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.
- Foldy, Michael S. *The Trials of Oscar Wilde: Deviance, Morality, and Late-Victorian Society*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1997.
- Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction* (Volume I). London: Penguin, 1990.
- Furneaux, Holly. *Queer Dickens: Erotics, Families, Masculinities*. London: Oxford UP, 2009.
- Gagnier, Regenia. *Idylls of the Marketplace: Oscar Wilde and the Victorian Public*. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1999.
- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang. *Selected Poetry*. Ed. and trans. David Luke. New York: Penguin, 2009.
- Gombrich, E. H. *The Story of Art*. 1950. London: Phaidon, 1994.
- Haefele-Thomas, Ardel. *Queer Others in Victorian Gothic: Transgressing Monstrosity*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2012.
- Hocquenhem, Guy. *Homosexual Desire*. 1972. Durham: Duke UP, 1994.
- Ironside, Robin. "Burne-Jones and Gustave Moreau." *Horizon: A Review of Literature and Art* 1.6 (June 1940): 406–24.
- Ivory, Yvonne. *The Homosexual Revival of Renaissance Style, 1850–1950*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.
- Jullian, Philippe. *The Symbolists*. Oxford: Phaidon, 1973.
- Kant, Immanuel. *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime*. 1961. Trans. John T. Goldthwait. U of California P, 2003.
- Kaplan, Morris B. *Sexual Justice: Democratic Citizenship and the Politics of Desire*. New York: Routledge, 2007.
- _____. *Sodom on the Thames: Sex, Love, and Scandal in Wilde Times*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2012.
- Kim, Jongwoo Jeremy. *Painted Men in Britain, 1868–1918: Royal Academicians and Masculinities*. London: Ashgate, 2012.
- Marcus, Sharon. *Between Women: Friendship, Desire, and Marriage in Victorian England*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2007.
- Marcus, Steven. *The Other Victorians: A Study of Sexuality and Pornography in Mid-Century Britain*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1966.

- Mavor, Carol. *Pleasures Taken: Performances of Sexuality and Loss in Victorian Photographs*. Durham: Duke UP, 1996.
- MacCarthy, Fiona. *The Last Pre-Raphaelite: Edward Burne-Jones and the Victorian Imagination*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2012.
- McIntosh, Mary. "The Homosexual Role." *Social Problems* 16.2 (Fall 1968): 182–92.
- Najarian, James. *Victorian Keats: Manliness, Sexuality, and Desire*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002.
- Nord, Deborah Epstein. *Walking the Victorian Streets: Women, Representation, and the City*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1995.
- O'Malley, Patrick. *Catholicism, Sexual Deviance, and Victorian Gothic Culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2006.
- Owen, Alex. *The Place of Enchantment: British Occultism and the Culture of the Modern*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2004.
- Pater, Walter. *The Renaissance*. 1873. New York: New American Library, 1959.
- Potts, Alex. *Flesh and the Ideal: Winckelmann and the Origins of Art History*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1994.
- Prettejohn, Elizabeth. *Art for Art Sake's: Aestheticism in Victorian Painting*. New Haven: Yale UP, 2008.
- _____. *Art of the Pre-Raphaelites*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2000.
- _____. *Beauty and Art: 1750–2000*. New York: Oxford UP, 2005.
- Psomiades, Kathy Alexis. *Beauty's Body: Femininity and Representation in Victorian Aestheticism*. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1997.
- Reed, Christopher. *Art and Homosexuality: A History of Ideas*. New York: Oxford UP, 2011.
- Reff, Allen, and Theodore, Staley. *From Realism to Symbolism: Whistler and His World*. New York: Columbia UP, 1971.
- Robson, Catherine. *Men in Wonderland: The Lost Girlhood of the Victorian Gentleman*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2001.
- Rowbotham, Sheila. *Edward Carpenter*. London: Verso, 2008.
- Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire*. New York: Columbia UP, 1990.
- _____. *The Epistemology of the Closet*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1990.
- Showalter, Elaine. *Sexual Anarchy: Gender and Culture at the Fin de Siècle*. New York: Viking, 1992.
- Sinfield, Alan. *The Wilde Century: Effeminacy, Oscar Wilde, and the Queer Moment*. New York: Columbia UP, 1994.
- Snodgrass, Chris. *Aubrey Breadsley: Dandy of the Grotesque*. New York: Oxford UP, 1995.
- Thomas, Kate. *Postal Pleasures: Sex, Scandal, and Victorian Letters*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2012.
- Walkowitz, Judith. *Cities of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late-Victorian London*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1992.
- Warner, Michael. "Queer and Then?." *Chronicle of Higher Education* (Jan. 1, 2012). Chronicle.com/article/QueerThen. 22 April 2014.