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PICTURING REFORM IN VICTORIAN BRITAIN

How did Victorians, as creators and viewers of images, visualize the politics of franchise reform? This study of Victorian art and parliamentary politics, specifically in the 1840s and 1860s, answers that question by viewing the First and Second Reform Acts from the perspectives offered by Ruskin's political theories of art and Bagehot's visual theory of politics. Combining subjects and approaches characteristic of art history, political history, literary criticism, and cultural critique, *Picturing Reform in Victorian Britain* treats both paintings and wood engravings, particularly those published in *Punch* and the *Illustrated London News*. Carlisle analyzes unlikely pairings – a novel by Trollope and a painting by Hayter, an engraving after Leech and a high-society portrait by Landseer – to argue that such conjunctions marked both everyday life in Victorian Britain and the nature of its visual politics as it was manifested in the myriad heterogeneous and often incongruous images of illustrated journalism.

JANICE CARLISLE is Professor of English at Yale University, and she has published a wide variety of essays and books on Victorian novels and autobiographies, including a study of the works of John Stuart Mill. More recently she has focused on the culture of Britain in the 1860s, publishing a book on the sensory registers of novels written during that decade (*Common Scents: Comparative Encounters in High-Victorian Fiction*, 2004).

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Nineteenth-century British literature and culture have been rich fields for interdisciplinary studies. Since the turn of the twentieth century, scholars and critics have tracked the intersections and tensions between Victorian literature and the visual arts, politics, social organization, economic life, technical innovations, scientific thought – in short, culture in its broadest sense. In recent years, theoretical challenges and historiographical shifts have unsettled the assumptions of previous scholarly synthesis and called into question the terms of older debates. Whereas the tendency in much past literary critical interpretation was to use the metaphor of culture as ‘background’, feminist, Foucauldian, and other analyses have employed more dynamic models that raise questions of power and of circulation. Such developments have reanimated the field. This series aims to accommodate and promote the most interesting work being undertaken on the frontiers of the field of nineteenth-century literary studies: work which intersects fruitfully with other fields of study such as history, or literary theory, or the history of science. Comparative as well as interdisciplinary approaches are welcomed.

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