This collaborative History aims to become the standard work on Victorian literature for the twenty-first century. Well-known scholars introduce readers to their particular fields, discuss influential critical debates, and offer illuminating contextual detail to situate authors and works in their wider cultural and historical contexts. Sections on publishing and readership, and a chronological survey of major literary developments between 1837 and 1901, are followed by essays on topics including sexuality, sensation, cityscapes, melodrama, epic, and economics. Victorian writing is placed in its complex relation to the Empire, Europe, and America, as well as to Britain’s component nations. The final chapters consider how Victorian literature, and the period as a whole, influenced twentieth-century writers. Original, lucid, and stimulating, each chapter is an important contribution to Victorian literary studies. Together, the contributors have created an engaging discussion of the ways in which the Victorians saw themselves, and of how their influence has persisted.

Kate Flint is Provost Professor of English and Art History at the University of Southern California.
The New Cambridge History of English Literature is a programme of reference works designed to offer a broad synthesis and contextual survey of the history of English literature through the major periods of its development. The organization of each volume reflects the particular characteristics of the period covered, within a general commitment to providing an accessible narrative history through a linked sequence of essays by internationally renowned scholars. The History is designed to accommodate the range of insights and fresh perspectives brought by new approaches to the subject, without losing sight of the need for essential exposition and information. The volumes include valuable reference features, in the form of a chronology of literary and political events, extensive primary and secondary bibliographies, and a full index.

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Notes on contributors


Stephen Arata is Associate Professor of English at the University of Virginia and the author of Fictions of Loss in the Victorian Fin de Siècle (1996) as well as numerous essays on nineteenth- and twentieth-century English literature and culture.


Dame Gillian Beer is King Edward VII Professor Emeritus at the University of Cambridge. Among her books are Arguing with the Past: Essays in Narrative from Woolf to Sidney (1989), Open Fields: Science in Cultural Encounter (1996), and Darwin’s Plots (3rd edition, 2009). She has been President of the British Society for Literature and Science and of the British Comparative Literature Association. She is at present finishing a study of Lewis Carroll’s ‘Alice’ books and is editing Carroll’s complete poems.

Dinah Birch is Professor of English Literature at the University of Liverpool. Her research interests focus on nineteenth-century literature, with particular reference to the work of John Ruskin and to women’s writing. Her most recent monograph is Our Victorian Education (2007), and she is the general editor of the seventh edition of the Oxford Companion to English Literature (2009).

John Bowen is Professor of Nineteenth-Century Literature at the University of York and a Fellow of the English Association. He has written widely on nineteenth-century
Notes on contributors

fiction and is the author of Other Dickens: Pickwick to Chuzzlewit (2000) and has edited Dickens’s Barnaby Rudge and Palgrave Advances in Charles Dickens Studies (with Robert L. Patten).

Joseph Bristow is Professor of English at the University of California, Los Angeles. His recent books include Oscar Wilde and Modern Culture: The Making of a Legend (2008). He is international editor of the Journal of Victorian Culture (Routledge) and series editor of Palgrave Studies in Nineteenth-Century Writing and Culture.

Janice Carlisle has been Professor of English at Yale University since 2004. She has published books and articles on Victorian fiction and autobiography, as well as a study of the works of John Stuart Mill. A book analysing the First and Second Reform Acts from the perspectives of Victorian illustrated journalism and painting is forthcoming.


Nicholas Dames is Theodore Kahan Professor in the Humanities and Professor of English and Comparative Literature at Columbia University. He is the author of Amnesiac Selves: Nostalgia, Forgetting, and British Fiction, 1810–1870 (2001), and The Physiology of the Novel: Reading, Neural Science, and the Form of Victorian Fiction (2007).


David Finkelstein is Dean of the School of Humanities, University of Dundee. His publications include The House of Blackwood: Author–Publisher Relations in the Victorian Era (2002), the co-authored An Introduction to Book History (2005), and the edited Print Culture and the Blackwood Tradition, 1805–1930 (2006). Other co-edited works include The Book History Reader (2001, 2006).

Kate Flint is Provost Professor of English and Art History at the University of Southern California. She is the author of The Woman Reader, 1837–1914 (1993), The Victorians and the Visual Imagination (2000), and The Transatlantic Indian, 1776–1930 (2009), as well as many essays on Victorian and twentieth-century literary, cultural, and visual history. Her current work is on flash photography and surprising illumination.
Notes on contributors

Hilary Fraser holds the Geoffrey Tillotson Chair of Nineteenth-Century Studies at Birkbeck College, University of London, where she is also Dean of Arts. She has written monographs on aesthetics and religion in Victorian writing, the Victorians and Renaissance Italy, nineteenth-century non-fiction prose, and gender and the Victorian periodical. She is currently working on women’s writing about art in the nineteenth century.


Elizabeth Helsinger is the John Matthews Manly Distinguished Service Professor of English, Art History and Visual Arts at the University of Chicago. Her publications include Ruskin and the Art of the Beholder (1982), Rural Scenes and National Representation (1997), Poetry and the Pre-Raphaelite Arts (2008), and numerous articles on Victorian literature and the arts. An editor of Critical Inquiry and long-time member of the Governing Board of the Smart Museum of Art at the University of Chicago, she has also served as Chair of both English and Visual Arts departments at Chicago.

Elisabeth Jay is Director of the Institute for Historical and Cultural Research, Associate Head of School, and Professor of English at Oxford Brookes University. She has written widely on nineteenth-century literature, and in particular on women’s writing, and literature and theology of the Victorian period.

Angela Leighton is Professor of English and Senior Research Fellow at Trinity College, Cambridge. Her books include: Shelley and the Sublime (1984), Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1986), Victorian Women Poets: Writing Against the Heart (1992) and On Form: Poetry, Aesthetics, and the Legacy of a Word (2007). In addition to many essays on nineteenth and twentieth-century literature, she has also published two volumes of poetry: A Cold Spell and Sea Level. She is currently working on a book on music and literature.


Sara L. Maurer is Assistant Professor of English at the University of Notre Dame, where she specializes in nineteenth-century British and Irish literature. Her book The Dispossessed State: Britain, Ireland, and Narratives of Ownership in the Nineteenth Century (2011) argues that Ireland played a major role in how nineteenth-century British literature imagined the British state.

Jerome McGann is the John Stewart Bryan University Professor, University of Virginia. His most recent publications are Byron’s Manfred (2009) and Are the Humanities Inconsequent? (2009).
Notes on contributors

Pablo Mukherjee was educated in Kolkata, Oxford and Cambridge. He is currently Associate Professor in the English and Comparative Literary Studies department at Warwick University. He is the author of Crime Fiction and Empire (2003) and Postcolonial Environments (2010), as well as a wide range of essays and edited collections.


Deborah Epstein Nord is Professor of English at Princeton University, where she also teaches in the Program in the Study of Women and Gender. She is the author of The Apprenticeship of Beatrice Webb (1985), Walking the Victorian Streets: Women, Representation, and the City (1995), and Gypsies and the British Imagination, 1807–1930 (2008), and the editor of John Ruskin’s Sesame and Lilies (2002).

Francis O’Gorman is Professor of Victorian Literature at the University of Leeds. Recent publications include an edition of Conan Doyle’s The Hound of the Baskervilles, the edited collections Victorian Literature and Finance (2007) and The Cambridge Companion to Victorian Culture (2010), and essays on Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Tennyson. His Anxious Ruskin and his edition of Ruskin’s Praeterita will both appear in 2012.


Mary Poovey is the author, most recently, of Genres of the Credit Economy: Mediating Value in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Britain (2008) and A History of the Modern Fact: Problems of Knowledge in the Sciences of Wealth and Society (1998). She is Samuel Rudin University Professor in the Humanities and Professor of English at New York University.

Leah Price is Professor of English at Harvard University. Her books include The Anthology and the Rise of the Novel (2000) and Literary Secretaries/Secretarial Culture (co-ed. 2005); she co-edited a special issue of PMLA on The History of the Book and the Idea of Literature. How to do Things with Books in Victorian Britain is forthcoming in 2012.
Notes on contributors

Andrew Sanders is Professor Emeritus of English at the University of Durham. His books include The Victorian Historical Novel (1978), Charles Dickens: Resurrectionist (1982), Anthony Trollope (1998), Dickens and the Spirit of the Age (1999), Charles Dickens (2003), and The Short Oxford History of English Literature (1994). In addition to his work as an editor of Victorian fiction he has written widely on nineteenth-century culture.

Helen Small is Fellow in English at Pembroke College, Oxford. She is the author of The Long Life (winner of the Truman Capote Award for literary criticism, 2008). She has written widely on nineteenth-century literature, including Love’s Madness: Medicine, the Novel, and Female Insanity, 1800–1865 (1996). She is currently writing a book about the value of the humanities.

Herbert F. Tucker teaches English as the John C. Coleman Professor at the University of Virginia, where he also serves as associate editor for New Literary History and co-editor for the Victorian series of the University Press. He has published Browning’s Beginnings: The Art of Disclosure (1980), Tennyson and the Doom of Romanticism (1988), and Epic: Britain’s Heroic Muse 1790–1910 (2008), and has edited Victorian Literature 1830–1900 (2001), Critical Essays on Alfred Lord Tennyson (1993), Under Criticism (1998), and A Companion to Victorian Literature and Culture (1999).

Carolyn Williams is Professor of English at Rutgers University, New Brunswick. Author of Transfigured World: Walter Pater’s Aesthetic Historicism (1989) and Gilbert and Sullivan: Gender, Genre, Parody (2011), she is currently working on nineteenth-century English melodrama, under the working title The Aesthetics of Melodramatic Form.