Looking Outward

2018 NAVSA Conference
October 11-14, 2018
St. Petersburg, Florida
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Written by Margaret Oliphant
Edited by Pamela Perkins
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Margaret Oliphant was widely recognized at the time of her death as one of the great Victorian writers of fiction—and, after a long period of eclipse, her fiction has in the twenty-first century begun to be again considered alongside that of such writers as Elizabeth Gaskell, Charles Dickens, George Eliot, Anthony Trollope, and Thomas Hardy.

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A Note from the Organizers

We are delighted to welcome you to the sixteenth annual conference of the North American Victorian Studies Association. This year’s theme is “Looking Outward,” and this year’s papers, panels, roundtables and plenaries feature a diverse array of scholarship. We asked, “What did the Victorians see, feel, and think as they looked beyond the borders of their time and place?” And we particularly invited considerations of the Victorians and the Caribbean or Latin America, within the conference’s wider emphasis on the global possibilities of the field. Presentations include foci on specific regions and cultures, as well as the networks of empire, trade, war and diplomacy that linked and divided the world. Looking past the individual and the human, we find an emphasis on trans- and posthumanism, on forces of nature, time, and space, as well as on animal and plant life. New technologies of looking made new understandings possible, technologies of printing and publication that shaped knowledge in new ways, and new technologies of reading and representation in literature and art invited innovation in cultural forms and their functions. Ways of looking outward from self to the outer world implied not only an ethical vision toward others in terms of social justice, philanthropy, religion and spirituality, but also to nature, both animate and otherwise. Finally, we see Victorianists looking outside the traditional boundaries of the field, using new techniques of reading, rethinking periodization, thinking through the NeoVictorian, and using the full range of digital, visual, and theoretical approaches to interrogate both the field and its purposes. Most importantly at this historical moment, we see Victorianists thinking through the ethical and political stakes of what we do as scholars and teachers.
In putting the panels together, we made special efforts not to cluster panels on a single author or, given this year’s topic, region. One of our guidelines was that we hoped for people to hear papers on topics they have not already studied, and to make new, unexpected connections. We wanted to create space for discussions of teaching at this critical moment, and you will see a couple of events on the program with that in mind. We also wished to make a space for undergraduate research and participation—please do consider coming to the first-ever undergraduate poster session at NAVSA.

Special events on the program include the three plenary talks featuring Erika Rappaport, Belinda Edmondson, and Sally Shuttleworth. The book prize session places Yopie Prins, author of *Ladies’ Greek* (Princeton 2017), in dialogue with the prize judges, Elizabeth Miller and Andrew Miller. Leah Rosenberg and Laurie Taylor of UF will offer a workshop showcasing the Digital Library of the Caribbean. No fewer than nine Caucus meetings testify to the vitality and variety of our members’ interests. The Theater Caucus will offer an evening staged reading of W. Richard Waldron’s sensation drama *Lizzie Leigh! or the Murder Near the Old Mill* (1863), a mystery loosely based on Elizabeth Gaskell’s short story. Dino Felluga and Melissa Valiska Gregory have once again kindly offered to run the professionalization workshop in which many senior scholars are participating, and we welcome this cohort of graduate and early career professionals. There are also a number of field seminars in areas of interest, and we want to thank Julie Codell, Christine Ferguson, Linda Hughes, Alan Rauch, Talia Schaffer, and Tim Watson for leading those events.

NAVSA 2018 has been organized by a consortium of scholars from different institutions, many of which have contributed substantial support for this event. We are particularly grateful for the sponsorship of the University of Florida. We are also very
thankful for the Co-sponsorships of the Florida State University and the University of South Florida.

We have also received substantial support from the University of Central Florida. The journal SEL Studies in English Literature 1500-1900 is sponsoring the first plenary. Additional sums have been contributed by the David and Kathleen Ryan Fund at Cornell University, the University of Miami, and the College of Arts, Sciences, and Education at Florida International University. Thanks also to Eckerd College for their generous loan of a keyboard for the Theater Caucus performance.

We want to record our appreciation of Dennis Denisoff, Marlene Tromp, Kate Flint, Dino Felluga, Sue Hamilton and Dan Bivona, as well as the entire NAVSA Advisory Board, for all their advice, wisdom, support, and encouragement. Finally, we wish to thank our extraordinary Conference Assistants, Sarah Kniesler and Brooke Fortune. With her spectacular organizational skills and her enviable command of budgets and spreadsheets (especially the daunting FileMakerPro), Sarah is an architect of the conference, as well as its principal builder. Congratulations to Sarah on her successful completion of the PhD in the midst of the madness! In July of 2018, when Sarah moved to take a permanent position at the Tabor Academy in Massachusetts, Brooke took over many of Sarah’s activities and added some new ones, including a lot of the practical legwork involved in the final countdown to the meeting. Finally, thank you to the Conference Planning Committee and to those additional colleagues who volunteered their time to help us select the papers and arrange the conference program.
Looking Outward
Annual Conference of the
North American Victorian Studies Association
October 11-14, 2018
Hilton St. Petersburg Bayfront Hotel
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# Conference at a Glance

## Thursday, October 11th

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<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>9:00am-2:00pm</td>
<td>Professionalization Workshop</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:00pm-3:30pm</td>
<td>Panel Session 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:00pm-5:30pm</td>
<td>Panel Session 2</td>
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<td>5:30pm-6:30pm</td>
<td>Reception</td>
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<tr>
<td>6:30pm-7:45pm</td>
<td>Plenary—Erika Rappaport</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Kate Flint, University of Southern California</td>
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## Friday, October 12th

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:30-10:30</td>
<td>Undergraduate Orientation</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:30am-10:30am</td>
<td>Seminars/Caucus Meetings (with breakfast)/EC/AB Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:00am-12:30pm</td>
<td>Panel Session 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:30pm-2:30pm</td>
<td>Caucus Meetings (with lunch)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:30pm-4:00pm</td>
<td>Panel Session 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:30pm-6:00pm</td>
<td>Plenary—Belinda Edmondson</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Tim Watson, University of Miami</td>
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<td>Theatre Caucus Performance</td>
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## Saturday, October 13th

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<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:30am-10:00am</td>
<td>Panel Session 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:30am-12:00pm</td>
<td>Panel Session 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:00pm-1:30pm</td>
<td>Banquet Lunch</td>
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<td>1:30pm-2:45pm</td>
<td>Book Prize</td>
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<td>3:00pm-4:30pm</td>
<td>Panel Session 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>5:00pm-6:30pm</td>
<td>Plenary—Sally Shuttleworth</td>
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<td>(Introduction: Rae Yan, UF)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Reception</td>
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## Sunday, October 14th

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<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:00am-9:30am</td>
<td>Panel Session 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:45am-11:15am</td>
<td>Panel Session 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30am-1:00pm</td>
<td>Panel Session 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00pm-4:30pm</td>
<td>Professionalization Workshop</td>
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</tbody>
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Plenary Biographies and Abstracts

Erika Rappaport

“Looking into the Tea Leaves: Writing a Feminist History of Global Capitalism”
Thursday, October 11 | 6:30-7:45 PM | Ballroom
Sponsored by SEL Studies in English Literature 1500-1900

The nineteenth century saw the integration of global markets for labor, goods, finance and ideas. However much recent scholarship focusing on such developments has failed to interrogate how Victorian perceptions of identity, power, and difference shaped labor relations, business practices, trade flows, advertising, and consumer desires and distastes. This talk examines the imperial history of the Victorian tea shop to place race, gender and the consumer at the center of understandings of the global economy that emerged in the Victorian era.

Erika Rappaport is Professor of history at the University of California, Santa Barbara. She received her PhD in history from Rutgers University in 1993 and worked as an assistant professor at Florida International University until 1997, before moving to UCSB. She is the author of A Thirst for Empire: How Tea Shaped the Modern World (Princeton UP 2017) and Shopping for Pleasure: Women in the Making of London’s West End (Princeton UP 2000), is co-editor of Consuming Behaviours: Identities, Politics and Pleasure in Twentieth Century Britain (Bloomsbury 2015) and has published numerous chapters and articles on gender, urban history, consumer culture and imperialism in journals such as Victorian Studies, History Workshop, Journal of British Studies, and Gender and History. She currently serves on several editorial boards of journals, is a past member of NAVSA’s executive board, and is currently an associate editor of the Journal of British Studies. While primarily a scholar of the nineteenth century, her most recent work has moved into the twentieth and she is embarking on a project that investigates the intertwined histories of public relations and decolonization, tentatively titled White Mischief: Public Relations at the End of Empire.
Belinda Edmondson
“The Rise of Creole Literature in the Victorian Caribbean”
Friday, October 12 | 4:30-6:30 PM | Ballroom

This talk explores the emergence of Creole (or “dialect”) literature in the Anglophone Caribbean during the Victorian era. Specifically, it seeks to revise the common assumption that Creole literature is the product of a twentieth-century, anti-colonial sensibility. The use of Creole, the “bad grammar” considered the only truly authentic language of the Caribbean, has been a staple of Caribbean fiction since the early twentieth century. By extension, it has long been a truism that any truly authentic Caribbean literary practice will center Creole as its formative feature. The twentieth century is the usual starting point for the periodization of nationalist Creole discourse, while nineteenth-century examples of Creole fiction have been dismissed by critics as part of an inauthentic imperialist tradition.

This talk will challenge this view by reviewing the origins of Creole discourse in the mid-to-late nineteenth-century Anglophone Caribbean. Focusing on the societies of Jamaica and British Guiana, it will sift among the various influences—the rise of “brown” cultural identity; the transatlantic mania for “dialect” in the Victorian era; imported US and UK periodicals; local print and performative culture—to arrive at a more nuanced understanding of this early period of Creole literature.

Belinda Edmondson is Professor in the Departments of English and African American and African Studies at Rutgers University, Newark; and an affiliate member of American Studies and Women’s and Gender Studies. She is the author of Creole Noise: Early Caribbean Dialect Literature and Performance (forthcoming, Oxford UP), Caribbean Middlebrow: Leisure Culture and the Middle Class (Cornell UP 2009), Making Men (Duke UP 1999), and is the editor of Caribbean Romances: The Politics of Regional Representation (U of Virginia P 1999). She has also published several chapters and articles on Caribbean literature, African diaspora cultural studies, and gender studies, in venues such as The Journal of Transnational American
Studies, Women's Studies Quarterly, Small Axe, Cultural Critique and Callaloo. Professor Edmondson serves on the editorial boards of the journals Anthurium and Signs. She has been the recipient of the Schomburg Fellowship, the Society for the Humanities Fellowship, the Mellon Fellowship, a National Endowment for the Humanities Stipend, and a Ford Foundation Summer Fellowship, among others.
British colonial activities were not restricted to the far reaches of the empire, but could also be found nearer at hand, in the creation of 'English colonies' in European health resorts. In this talk I focus on the 'invention' of Mentone, on the Riviera, and Davos in Switzerland, as outposts of British culture. According to James Henry Bennet, the 'creator' of Mentone as a health resort, the British should take their cue from the swallows, and travel south in the winter. Sufferers from consumption, clergyman's throat, or general overwork and the pressures of modern life, followed his siren call. Yet by the 1880s Mentone was supplanted as the health destination of choice by the rise of Davos, with John Addington Symonds, the resort's most famous invalid, lionised as the 'solar myth of Europe'. Basking in the sun in a natural winter garden was to be replaced, one commentator grumbled, by the refrigeration of invalids. The talk will explore the medical, climatological and cultural dimensions of these developments, looking in depth at literary responses from a range of authors including Symonds, Robert Louis Stevenson, Augustus Hare, and Constance Fenimore Woolson.

Body/Politics: Women and the Discourses of Science (Routledge 1990), and Nature Transfigured: Science and Literature 1700-1900 (Manchester UP 1989). She is currently working on the interface of literature, science, and culture with two large projects, for which she is Principal Investigator. She holds a European Advanced Investigator grant for a five-year project, “Diseases of Modern Life: Nineteenth-Century Perspectives.” She is also Principal Investigator for a large AHRC four-year grant in the field of Science and Culture, on “Constructing Scientific Communities: Citizen Science in the 19th and 21st Centuries.” She is collaborating with Dr. Gowan Dawson at the University of Leicester and Dr. Chris Lintott at the University of Oxford, as well as the Natural History Museum, the Royal Society, and the Hunterian Museum at the Royal College of Surgeons.
Special Sessions

*Lizzie Leigh! or the Murder Near the Old Mill* (1863)
Thursday, October 11 | 6:30-7:45 PM | Ballroom

The Theater Caucus will offer a staged reading of W. Richard Waldron's sensation drama, a mystery loosely based on Elizabeth Gaskell's short story.

Undergraduate Poster Session
Sunday, October 14 | 8:00-9:30 AM | Pier

The inaugural NAVSA Undergraduate Poster Session will feature undergraduate research in a walk-through poster display format.

Workshop on the Digital Library of the Caribbean:
Historical Sources and Digital Resources
Friday, October 12 | 2:30-4:00 PM | St. Petersburg II

Conducted by Leah Rosenberg and Laurie Taylor, of the University of Florida.

Book Prize
Saturday, October 13 | 1:30-2:45 PM | Ballroom
Winner: Yopie Prins's *Ladies' Greek*
Honorable Mention: Daniel Hack's *Reaping Something New*