

From the Editors

Carolyn Burdett and Hilary Fraser

On 1 October 2005, *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century* was (digitally) born. When we look back at the [Editor's Introduction](#) to the first number we are struck by, at once, the differences and the remarkable continuities between the journal as it was originally conceived and as it appears today. Despite the vicissitudes of its journey and the transformation of the digital landscape over the past ten years, despite its migrations to new platforms and its visual metamorphosis from an independent publication to a professionally produced journal, *19's* vision has remained consistent. Its aim has been to remediate the nineteenth century for the twenty-first century through the publication of high-quality, rigorously refereed interdisciplinary research in a form that is freely accessible to all. Its intellectual DNA, unique among journals, lies in its curatorial practice: *19* publishes guest editor-led themed issues that emerge from the interests and passions that motivate and drive conferences and symposia, discussion groups and exhibitions. From its start, as the current issue confirms, *19* has used its digital format to bring out the best and most exciting research in the field.

The journal proudly claims a central place in the history of nineteenth-century digital humanities. It was the first online peer-reviewed journal devoted to the long nineteenth century. (*Romanticism on the Net* was set up in 1996, incorporating Victorian studies when in 2007 it became *RaVoN*.) It has always been open access: the free dissemination of research is one of its founding principles. In addition to our tenth anniversary, we also celebrate in 2015 the journal's new home at the Open Library of Humanities. *19* is a citizen of this important new venture in the open access movement housed now in Birkbeck's Centre for Technology and Publishing.

19's visual aesthetic and its theoretical development as an organ devoted to nineteenth-century scholarship in the digital age have always been intellectually integrated with the research interests of Birkbeck's Centre for Nineteenth-Century Studies. But *19* has certainly travelled a long way since its modest beginnings around a shared computer in the Tillotson Room in 30 Russell Square. There, we had fun naming it to resonate with the teen magazines we had grown up with, and we played with ideas for logos invented over dinner and tried out on partners and children the night before. We were stuck, we felt, with the standard Birkbeck 'brick'

colouring, but we could adapt the look to give it a modern or a Victorian feel. We were enamoured of the pink arrows signifying the ‘long’ nineteenth century (Nick Burton’s contribution), but would we go with this? (*Fig. 1*)



Fig. 1: Nick Burton’s suggestion for a logo for *19*.

Or that? (*Fig. 2*)



Fig. 2: Another proposed logo.

Or something altogether different (Steve Connor’s suggestion, we recall)? (*Fig. 3*)



Fig. 3: Steve Connor’s suggestion for a logo.

We remembered these discussions five years later when we refashioned the logo in preparation for the journal’s migration to Open Journal Systems — a journal management and publishing platform — opting for a new, more ‘art nouveau’ look to reflect in visual form our more sophisticated digital identity as a journal of nineteenth-century modernity. The move to OJS was skilfully managed by Heather Tilley, a former intern on the journal. Heather professionalized our logo discussions — this time we had a PowerPoint presentation of the options — though the ensuing debate about preferences was every bit as intense. For us, *19* bears the marks of its happy, collegial beginnings even now, and indeed it has been crucial to retain the sense of being a collaborative collective with a distinctive intellectual identity, as well as a teen excitement over the enterprise in which we are engaged.

The ten-year journey from then to now has only been possible because of the imagination, hard work, and dedication of a lot of people.

Laurel Brake and Jim Mussell brought their immense knowledge of periodical publishing and their experience of developing the Nineteenth-Century Serials Edition (ncse) to our initiative at the outset, and have been stalwarts throughout, supporting us at every step. We have also been fortunate to have the support of a number of digital humanities specialists who had faith in the project from the start and continue to give generously of their time, knowledge, and skills. We would particularly like to acknowledge the encouragement of distinguished digital humanist Jerome McGann in the early days of *19*, who had confidence in the journal and gave us access to the intellectual and training networks on the digital nineteenth century offered by NINES. We remain grateful for the help we had from colleagues at the Centre for Computing in the Humanities at King's College London, who provided the initial platform and technical support for the journal. And we warmly thank Martin Eve at Birkbeck for helping secure the future sustainability of *19* within the Open Library of Humanities. At the launch of the OLH in early October 2015, we were proud to be one of the journals showcasing this exciting new venture and, at the same time, to unveil *19*'s bright new online look.

Ten years of brilliant postgraduate students researching the nineteenth century at Birkbeck have also been central to *19*'s story. From its inception the journal pioneered professional training opportunities through paid internships in editing and digital production and distribution. The college has supported us with funding over the last ten years, for which we are grateful as, without the interns, the journal could not exist. From the beginnings around a shared computer, through the alarmingly steep learning curve of getting to grips with HTML when we moved to OJS, the interns have been resilient, resourceful, and creative. Holly Furneaux, now Professor Holly Furneaux, and Robert Maidens were the first. Our current interns, who have worked on this editorially challenging issue, are Kit Yee Wong and Flore Janssen. During her internship, Kit also took up an editorial position at Yale University Press. *19*, we believe, has made a real and substantial contribution to our students' lives and careers, and has helped shape a new generation of nineteenth-century scholars.

In between Holly and Robert and Kit and Flore has been a steady stream of brilliant people, some of whom remain closely and actively involved with the journal and with Birkbeck. Heather Tilley, who worked for *19* first as an intern and then as the project manager directing its technical upgrade and migration to OJS and liaising with NINES in the US, continues to lend her expertise with characteristic generosity and efficiency. Ben Winyard, also a former intern, who is now responsible for Digital Publications at Birkbeck, retains his interest in the nineteenth century (as Dickens Day impresario and adviser to the *Our Mutual Friend* digital reading project) and gives practical and strategic as well as intellectually imaginative help with the journal, all with great good humour. David Gillott,

also originally an intern, transformed himself into the journal's editorial assistant and has been unstintingly generous with his time, his labour, and his commitment to *19*. His editorial brilliance and high professional standards have driven the journal's now crisp and clean presentation and sets the pace for the whole team.

In the end, of course, the journal is only as good as the intellectual and creative ideas that drive its contents. We thus give very special thanks here to our changing series of guest editors and their imaginative curatorial work that has made *19* what it is. Often our issues had their beginnings in a conference or seminar series, and indeed, one of our motivations in establishing the journal was to ensure that the fantastic experience of the Centre's diverse events was not lost and could be shared virtually by people around the world who were unable to join us in London in person. The first number built on a conference convened by our late, beloved colleague Sally Ledger on the theme 'The Moving Subject: Interdisciplinarity in Nineteenth-Century Studies', and the journal continues to capture the very special qualities of nineteenth-century studies at Birkbeck. All of us here have been involved in convening the field-defining conferences and editing the associated special issues for which the Centre and its journal are known, and we salute our colleagues for the distinction of their work. Not least, we congratulate the editors of this anniversary issue, Luisa Calè and Ana Parejo Vardillo, both of whom lead exciting experimental blogging and editing projects in digital humanities, for putting together such brilliant reflections on the digital nineteenth century. We hope very much that you enjoy this issue and join us in wishing *19* well for its next ten years.

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