

Session I

Panel I.A. Crosspollination and Women's Writings

Chair: Bénédicte Monicat, The Pennsylvania State University

"Efflorescences hybrides : les ouvrages de botanique dans la production littéraire des femmes au XIXe siècle."

Bénédicte Monicat

The Pennsylvania State University

Les ouvrages de botanique que les femmes consacrent à l'instruction de la jeunesse, et plus spécifiquement encore à celle des filles, témoignent d'une pratique d'écriture aux formes et aux objets tout à la fois codifiés et d'une grande souplesse. Livres de botanique historique et littéraire faisant œuvre de florilèges intertextuels, série d'ouvrages consacrés au langage des fleurs où le symbolique et le ludique s'entremêlent, manuels techniques de botanographie, botanique appliquée, récits de fiction vulgarisatrice et bien d'autres textes encore qui résistent à la classification : le corpus est caractérisé tant par la diversité que par une hybridité qui est certes le fait de son cadre didactique mais qui tient aussi plus généralement à un horizon intellectuel et idéologique où le savoir n'est pas envisagé étroitement comme accumulation de données scientifiques. Le domaine de la botanique se prête particulièrement au mélange des genres (texte / image, factuel / imaginaire, descriptif / glose). J'examinerai les manifestations esthétiques de ces phénomènes d'hybridation, mais j'en explorerai aussi les ramifications idéologiques. Le processus de vulgarisation scientifique s'avère en effet être un vecteur de réflexion sociale et politique tout autant qu'un domaine d'activité intellectuelle et de créativité littéraire important pour les femmes.

« Pris dans la nature »: Fiction and Natural History in the Works of Genlis Beth McCartney

University of Pennsylvania

After a trip around the world to study natural history with Thélismar, the protagonist of Félicité de Genlis's *Veillées du château*, Alphonse, returns to Paris to reunite with his beloved Dalinde. When Alphonse sees Dalinde appear on the horizon, well-worn comparisons of real women to mythic figures like Juno or Minerva fail him. Thanks to scientific discovery, truth has become more fabulous than fiction, and Dalinde arrives in an awe-inspiring « globe aérostatique. » Thélismar bemoans literature's inability to compete with science because of the latter's testable and repeatable exactitude.

In this paper, I argue that in her works from the 1780s to 1820s, such as her *Herbier moral*, *Dictionnaire critique* and *Mémoires*, in addition to the *Veillées du château*, Genlis contradicts her character Thélismar by writing fiction that incorporates and rivals scientific intertexts. The importance of natural history in her work has long been overlooked because, as Martine Reid has demonstrated, Genlis has a reputation as a religious and aristocratic « fossile » of the Old Regime. Genlis does outwardly incorporate natural history in her œuvre to defend religion. However, I show how she uses over one hundred major scientific works of her day, such as Bomare's

Dictionnaire... d'Histoire naturelle and the Comte de Buffon's *Histoire naturelle* to revise popular generic forms and imagine a new « scientific method » for both author and reader. Furthermore, in spite of her Catholic intentions, Genlis's experiments evoke the thorniest debates of the nineteenth century: to what extent are apes « faits comme nous »? Are different races biologically distinct?

Buffon's natural science, once criticized for being rudimentary, has since been re-remembered as an important stepping stone to nineteenth-century evolutionary thought. His exquisite writing style is now appreciated as an important attribute of his work. This paper extends the same respect to Genlis, his close confidant and colleague, for her scientific reinvention of « le charme du naturel » in fiction.

Transatlantic Crossings: Thérèse Bentzon, North American Women Writers, and Textual Interplays

Rachel Williams

The Pennsylvania State University

As a prolific translator and author of novels, travel narratives, historical essays, and literary criticism, Thérèse Bentzon's literary production in all domains was continually defined by a cultural cross-pollination that ultimately influenced every aspect of her work, both thematically and generically. In 'Transatlantic Crossings: Thérèse Bentzon, North American Women Writers, and Textual Interplays' I examine the intersection of translation, travel writing and historical scholarship in Bentzon's œuvre through an analysis of three of her works: *Notes de voyages: les Américaines chez elles*, *Femmes d'Amérique*, and the preface to her translation of Sarah Orne Jewett's *A Country Doctor*, *Le Roman de la femme médecin*. Not only are these works representative of the polygraphic nature of women's creative projects in the 19th century, but they are also revelatory of the ways in which masculine and feminine literary values, values that shaped women's generic choices and defined their possibilities for literary creation in general, fundamentally intersected in Bentzon's work. As I demonstrate, by working in both traditionally masculine and traditionally feminine genres in a cross-cultural context, Bentzon was able to subvert the logic that would have placed her in either category and simultaneously analyze and expand upon women writer's opportunities for textual production in both France and North America.

Olympe de Gouges's Revolutionary Patriotism

Marie-Pierre Le Hir

The University of Arizona

“O French people! True Frenchmen, know the depth of my soul! I do not write out of ambition: only the good of the country [patrie] and love and respect for my King inspire me.” Written in 1788, this profession of patriotic faith marks the beginning of Olympe de Gouges's participation in the political debates of the French Revolution. It is the first of many statements in which this unconventional literary and political figure would express her love of France and her willingness to die for her country. Between 1786, the year her first volume of *Oeuvres de Madame de Gouges* appeared in print, and 1793, the

year she died on the guillotine, there would be many more such proclamations of nationalist feeling.

Olympe de Gouge's patriotic writings raise an interesting question. According to the dominant critical view, nationalism is first and foremost a modern phenomenon that appeared and flourished in the nineteenth-century. But if nationalist feelings were unknown in an estate-society like the France Gouges grew up in, as Norbert Elias for instance claims in *The Germans*, how can we account for her patriotism? Reading her *Ecrits Politiques* (1788-1793) against the background of political events that occurred at the time may provide an answer to this question. Gouges's independent, and even "marginal" position in the literary and political field, as well as her awareness of the quick pace of revolutionary change, offer a unique opportunity to examine the modern national habitus in the making, or more precisely, the passage from old-regime patriotism ("Vive le roi") to modern nationalism ("Vive la France!").

Panel I.B. Flaubert's Fossils

Chair: Jean Christophe Ippolito, The Georgia Institute of Technology

"Tous les chants de cygnes mourants": Fossilized Romanticism and Temporal Dysfunction in Madame Bovary

Luke Bouvier

University of Massachusetts, Amherst

In this paper I examine problems of time in Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* through a re-examination of Emma Bovary's well-known taste for romantic literature and her obliviousness to its "fossilized," threadbare nature. Drawing on a broadly psychoanalytic framework, and in particular recent work on trauma and addiction, I investigate what other critics have identified as Emma's "temporal disorder," her strange inability to produce an event in her life or to integrate time into her experience. A key scene in this regard is Emma's odd failure to mourn her mother as she acts out a set of elaborate romantic grief rituals that ultimately leave her bored and unmoved. I suggest that this scene is symptomatic of a broader inability to assimilate loss, which manifests itself in the problems of boredom and addiction, and in Emma's general inability to orient herself temporally with respect to the past.

If Emma's failure to mourn her mother reveals a certain inability to mourn time itself, this scene unmistakably depicts Emma's inability or refusal to mourn a dead aesthetic as well. Indeed, when Emma indulges her taste for romantic imagery in listening to "les chants de cygnes mourants," what she fails to hear is precisely the clichéd, worn-out nature of such imagery, romanticism's equivocal double voicing as a *champ de signes mourants*.

Ultimately, I examine the linguistic implications of this problem, the way in which such a temporal disorder linked to a failure of mourning can be read precisely through the disturbances of language that it provokes. In this regard, I trace the cryptic adventure of language that arises from the problem of unassimilated loss in this novel, the very

conspiracy of words that drives Emma to suicide through the staging of equivocal, uncanny returns.

Flaubert et les fossiles du discours moderne

Jean Christophe Ippolito

The Georgia Institute of Technology

Flaubert, tenant de la « littérature exposante », n'est pas seulement le pourfendeur du positivisme, moqué à travers l'épisode géologico-héroico-comique où Bouvard et Pécuchet cherchent des fossiles improbables que Louis Bouilhet avait célébrés auparavant. Il critique également le fossile dans le moderne, au-delà des moralisateurs pontifiants du moderne et de leur rapport au savoir. On analysera ici ses attaques contre le langage fossilisé de la modernité, et deux phénomènes en particulier qu'on mettra en relation : le discours importé (ainsi les clichés d'Hussonnet), souvent mis à distance par l'hypertrophie des italiques dans des cadres sociaux rituels (tel le dîner mondain de la première *Éducation sentimentale*), et la répétition déclinée dans l'envahissement de la copie ou la critique des types, du bourgeois au commis. Un des premiers textes de Flaubert est *Une leçon d'histoire naturelle*, genre commis, pastiche d'un article d'encyclopédie. Mais le discours importé, c'est d'abord celui du psittacisme généralisé, du faux ou de la vacuité moderne, telle qu'elle peut s'exprimer dans les journaux, le *National* par exemple, une des cibles privilégiées. L'intégration de ces paroles gelées dans le tissu narratif est une des grandes innovations de Flaubert et servira à redéfinir le roman comme genre. À travers un processus de circulation intratextuelle, le texte reproduit, 'produit' et met en scène le préconstruit, et l'imprime dans la mémoire prospective du lecteur. Dans cette perspective, les romans de Flaubert aident à construire une forme particulière de connaissance du monde, une sorte d'encyclopédie critique, même dans les cas où cette encyclopédie est détournée de sa fonction au point d'être réduite à une caricature. Les types, comme les clichés, les italiques ou autres formes figées du langage sont des exemples d'un 'formatage' général du discours moderne dans la littérature exposante qui désigne ce discours à la critique.

Flaubert's Dig: Modern Form from Fragments

Suzanne F. Braswell

University of Miami, Coral Gables

A great if not obsessive archivist, Flaubert's meticulous approach to documenting the topics of his novels certainly bears the stamp by what may be termed an archeological impulse. Indeed, in his most celebrated novels, including *L'Éducation sentimentale*, *Madame Bovary*, and *Salammbô*, the relatively fixed traces of history are brought into stark relief against the movement of characters and time. But nowhere is this interplay between stasis and mobility, the fixed and the ephemeral, more central to the very form of the narrative than in *La Tentation de saint Antoine* and *Bouvard et Pécuchet*. Why, in these two works especially, does Flaubert insist upon fragmentation, and how does this formal aspect of the work impact meaning? How, too, does fragmentation interact with prevailing forms of performance? In this intervention, I propose to analyze the

importance of the fragment in relation both to Flaubert's narrative structure and ironic gaze, and to trends in performance in popular milieus.

Fossils and Theories of Evolution in Flaubert's *Bouvard et Pécuchet*

Anthony Zielonka

Assumption College, Worcester, Mass.

This paper proposes a close textual analysis of Chapter III of the masterpiece of comic and satirical fiction that is Gustave Flaubert's last novel, *Bouvard et Pécuchet* (1881). After exploring the sciences of medicine, cosmology, astronomy, and zoology, Flaubert's "deux bonshommes" turn their attention to geology, paleontology, and even competing theories of evolution: "Et Bouvard s'échauffant, alla jusqu'à dire que l'Homme descendait du Singe! (...) 'Moi, je vais plus loin!' s'écria Pécuchet. 'L'homme descend des poissons!'"

This chapter of the novel is of considerable interest as a comic tour-de-force in its own right and when read in the context of the scientific discoveries, theories, controversies, and disputes (including conflicts between religious and scientific world views), that were raging in Flaubert's lifetime. The novelist was deeply fascinated by many of the new developments taking place in the sciences. The wide range of reading that he undertook in preparation for writing his final novel is well documented. Interestingly, however, he chose to write about the latest scientific theories and discoveries in a decidedly skeptical and comic mode, as Bouvard and Pécuchet examine a wide range of theories concerning the evolution of the Earth and of humankind. We also watch them engage in a rather chaotic and disorganized search for rocks and fossils, as they attempt to form a collection, upon which to base their speculations.

As they discuss the ideas of Buffon, Cuvier, Lamarck, and Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, as well as of traditionalist Biblical scholars, Bouvard and Pécuchet, unsurprisingly, find their theories to be incompatible, contradictory and ultimately unconvincing. They draw their information from published scientific reports, books, and articles, but also from popular accounts published in magazines and newspapers. Flaubert very interestingly shows how distortions, inaccuracies, and simplifications in those accounts only serve further to confuse and depress the two seekers after scientific truth, to add to the comic and bizarre nature of their insights and, ultimately, to lead them to give up their pursuit of scientific knowledge altogether.

Panel I.C Zola and ...

Chair: Jeremy Worth, The University of Windsor

Evoluer vers la littérature – Schopenhauer et le roman naturaliste

Rod Cooke

Columbia University

Des six auteurs naturalistes qui ont contribué aux *Soirées de Médan*, cinq ont lu Schopenhauer et impliqué sa pensée dans leur œuvre. Deux romans en particulier

témoignent de la rencontre entre Schopenhauer et le naturalisme français – *La Joie de Vivre* de Zola, et *Une Belle Journée* d'Henry Céard. Je soutiendrai une thèse en apparence paradoxale, à savoir que c'est Zola et non Céard dont l'œuvre porte les marques les plus fidèles du pessimiste allemand.

Par un examen des passages d'inspiration schopenhauerienne je montrerai que, dans *Une Belle Journée*, le philosophe se trouve dans une vaine lutte conceptuelle avec Flaubert: les attitudes des personnages ont bien plus en commun avec un Frédéric Moreau qu'avec les principes de Schopenhauer. Ceci en dépit du fait que Céard a, dans sa correspondance et son journalisme, fait preuve d'un enthousiasme sans conteste pour cette philosophie. Le nihilisme flaubertien prime le pessimisme de l'Allemand chez le jeune naturaliste, à son insu, la conclusion du texte en fournissant la meilleure preuve.

Quant à lui, Zola a globalement rejeté les idées schopenhaueriennes qu'il a découvertes dans la traduction tendancieuse de Jean Bourdeau. Pourtant, le dossier de *La Joie de Vivre* démontre qu'il a voulu incarner, dans le personnage de Pauline Quenu, la face positive de la doctrine, tout autant qu'il s'est servi du personnage de Lazare pour critiquer le pessimisme outrancier de la jeune génération. Une comparaison archétypique avec les autres récits zoliens, notamment *Le Rêve*, soulignera l'impact de Schopenhauer sur la construction de *La Joie de Vivre*.

Je conclurai donc à une séparation radicale entre les deux romans et les prises de position externes de Zola et Céard sur Schopenhauer. Lire pour sa philosophie éclair les œuvres dans leur totalité, et souligne la différence entre le naturalisme zolien et les écrits de ses jeunes collègues autour de 1880.

"Rien ne bougeait": On "Replacement and Recrystallization" Symbolism in Zola
Jeremy Worth
The University of Windsor

In his chapter "The Means of Correct Training" (Discipline and Punish), Michel Foucault writes of the authoritarian and disciplinary hegemonic gaze, the method of "hierarchical observation"[1] which (like the regime which will be at the centre of our discussion, the French Second Empire) seeks to control and render innocuous all diverse, otherwise potentially unexploitable and uncontrollable elements within a society. The process of material fossilization provides an appropriate and perhaps obvious metaphor to evoke the effects of this quasi-panoptic eye, which ensures a useful degree of general subjective stasis by, in Foucault's terminology, "hierarchiz[ing], homogeniz[ing], exclud[ing]" and "normaliz[ing]"[2]. While the first of these terms brings to mind immobilizing systems of social stratification, the remaining terms suggest the process of fossilization (replacement and recrystallization) itself, with all its symbolic resonance. The notions of exclusion, homogenization and normalization evoke the gradual removal of original essence (and thus all possibility of ambient non-conformity) from a given individual form, and its replacement by an anodyne substance which is shared (like social codes) with the matter (society) around it. Thus are the inner, psychic identities of individual subjects "set" to fit their already-imposed forms and roles, their perception determined by

a process of internalized regulation akin, in certain aspects, to the development of the Freudian Superego.

In Zola's Rougon-Macquart series, we find many symbolic expressions of this "internalized regulation" and of the external "systems" which become imposed, exclusive prisms, the amber through which the subject is constrained to perceive existence (daily timetables and alcohol are two examples). Having talked in the past about the general symbolic significance of dust imagery in Zola, in this paper I wish to discuss a number of the less obvious ways in which the tension between "fossilization" (replacement and recrystallization) and the need and drive for its antithesis (subjective and social evolution) is expressed in the zolian text. A range of metaphorical and metonymical systems, such as the alimentary and the vestimentary, will be analysed.

[1] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, New York: Random House, 1983, 170.

[2] *Ibid.*, 183.

L'histoire [...], telle que relatée par Zola, est [...] résolument inexacte [1]

Soundouss El Cettani

Royal military College of Canada

Après la rupture d'*À rebours*, après la déclaration de la quête d'un naturalisme autre, «spiritualiste», dans *Là-bas*. Aucune rencontre ne semble plus possible entre Zola et Huysmans, l'un orienté dorénavant vers une religion de la science et l'autre vers une foi mystique. Le dialogue semble cependant ne pas avoir de fin entre les deux puisqu'il va au-delà de la mort et que Huysmans ne répond au *Lourdes* de Zola, par ses *Foules de Lourdes*, qu'après le décès de ce dernier. Nous proposons une lecture comparative des deux œuvres nous arrêtant particulièrement au traitement différent que chaque œuvre réserve aux récits seconds. Il s'agira donc de mettre en évidence l'inscription, dans le texte, de récits préexistants à l'œuvre, empruntés à l'histoire ou à la légende, récits fossiles que le narrateur déterre et qui subissent dans l'une et l'autre œuvres des évolutions opposées.

[1] Joris-Karl Huysmans, *Les foules de Lourdes*, Jérôme Million, Grenoble, 1993, p.116

Sonorous Palimpsest: Parisian Soundscape of the Nineteenth-Century Industrial Culture

Alix Mazuet

University of Central Oklahoma

In this presentation, I argue that the process of industrialization was accompanied by the creation of a sonorous palimpsest. On the one hand, certain pre-industrial sounds (natural) were present and absent, muffled almost immediately upon being heard; some of them (lower class) were pushed to the city's outskirts and the suburbs; others (certain pre-industrial trades, notably the criers) gradually disappeared. On the other hand, new industrial sounds (streetcars, factory machinery, construction work, and so forth) had to

be heard, for they were instrumental to the power structures at hand, notably industrialists against workers. It is as if increased loudness were meaningless and trifling compared to the brightness born of industrialization.

What ends up happening, is that whoever controls loudness gains power over the acoustic space it covers. Yet the sonorous palimpsest carried remnants of the underlying sonic text. This palimpsest explains how the loudness of industrial culture was hiding all other subtler sounds, and, at the same time, how it could recover them.

Certain nineteenth-century writers made an attempt to criticize the sounds made by the power structures in place, most particularly Haussmann's work, and, indirectly through it, Napoleon III's dictatorship and politics of *laissez-faire*. To illustrate this point, I concentrate on Zola's *La Curée*, set during the Second Empire, *Au bonheur des dames*, in the heart of Haussmann's transformations, Flaubert's *Bouvard and Pécuchet*, which also criticize Haussmann's work and finally, Baudelaire's "A une passante," in which the idealized representation of the passer-by enables the writer to escape in poetic death from the reality of the industrial culture.

Panel I.D Old Fossils and Fogeys

Chair: Charles J. Stivale, Wayne State University

Death and the disciple: Leon Daudet's souvenirs of Hugo's death, and Maurice Barrès's representation of youth at Verlaine's funeral

Daniel Ridge

Vanderbilt University

For more than one generation of writers, poets, and intellectuals Victor Hugo and Paul Verlaine were the grand masters of their crafts. Even before their deaths in 1885 and 1896, respectively, they had become icons: Hugo for the people, Verlaine for the elite. The events of their deaths, and their following wakes and funeral ceremonies therefore become powerful cultural events, symbols open for interpretation and dispute.

This presentation proposes to compare Leon Daudet's account of Victor Hugo's death with the involvement of Maurice Barrès in Verlaine's final days as well as his speech at the poet's funeral. Key to these interpretations is the role of youth. Leon Daudet was nineteen at the time of Hugo's death, and Maurice Barrès continued to maintain the status of Prince de la Jeunesse when Verlaine passed on. To what extent are these figures fossilized by the youngest generation to emerge at their deaths and in what way do these young men understand the master's works in the continuum of the literary canon? More than artists, what did Hugo and Verlaine mean as symbols to these writers and how are the events of their deaths indicative of their placement in this canon. Further, how does the death of the artist open up a greater understanding of the literary habitus in which they worked?

Passing from a linguistic interpretation as evinced in journals, letters and articles to a materialist and behavioral rendering of the events, this presentation proposes to explore

not only the stages of death (i.e. death bed, wake, public funeral), but also the interpretations of the literary culture and tradition which Leon Daudet and Maurice Barrès were inheriting from their masters.

Fossilizing French Literary History: La Galérie métallique de grands hommes français

Sarah Hurlburt
Whitman College

The commemorative impulse of the late eighteenth century, as defined by Jean-Claude Bonnet and David Bell, lurches on well into the 19th century in numerous collective biographies and portrait series. The creation and reception of these 19th-century expressions of the “culte des grands hommes” demonstrate the inherent contradiction of commemoration in times of significant social and political change. Commemoration attempts to honor, but most of all to preserve, to immobilize (indeed, to fossilize, as if in amber) the past in order to shape and inspire future greatness through emulation, while at the same time designating by exclusion what will necessarily be forgotten. The marketing discourse surrounding the content selected for these collections (frequently sold by subscription) lays claim to a documentary authenticity, a purely descriptive representation of a significant and pre-existing truth, carefully compiled.

This paper will examine the one hundred and twenty medallions of La Galérie métallique de grands hommes français, minted between 1816 and 1839, as the perfect embodiment of the early 19th-century impulse to fossilize the past in the name of the future. The Galérie métallique occupies a curious intermediary point between the publicly financed monumental representation of great men and the private large subscription collection of biographies. It sought to fulfill dual functions of preservation and propagation specifically of the reputation of France's great writers in an implied distant future where French literary production might be equally distant (and, by implication, considered equally great) as the literature of Antiquity seemed to early 19th-century France. Citing the absence of any similar series depicting Greek and Roman authors, the 1817 prospectus clearly articulates the goal of avoiding a similar loss of information for future generations by providing a permanent numismatic record. The prospectus promises high representational and esthetic standards for the series and emphasizes the ease of circulation of medallions and the possibility of individual ownership. The series thus presented the ideal combination of longevity and low price, immortalizing French literary figures in a future archaeological document that was accessible to the present public.

Take Me to the Place Where the Old Boys Play

Charles J. Stivale
Wayne State University

In an earlier NCFS talk on “Boys' Rooms, Spaces of Desire,” I considered the generative topic, where do we love, or at least where would we desire loving? In other words, how do novelists imagine and depict the ideal site for characters to experience spiritual (and usually carnal) delights with a chosen love object? In this talk, I continue this reflection

and propose to contrast three such fictional spaces of (and for) desire -- from *La Cousine Bette*, *Madame Bovary*, and *Nana* (time permitting) -- as a means to consider how this locative imaginary developed across the nineteenth-century.

Aural and Oral: Henry Monnier's 'Deux gougnottes' and the Lesbian on the Eve of Discovery

Melanie Hawthorne

Texas A&M University

This presentation excavates a play by the satirist and dramatist Henry Monnier (1799-1877), most famous for his creation Monsieur Prudhomme, the caricature of bourgeois narrow-mindedness. Far from narrow minded in his own ideas, Monnier wrote a number of plays on licentious themes for private staging, including "Deux gougnottes" of 1864. This comedy anticipates the theater of the absurd and the work of Eugene Ionesco in its staging of two very proper aristocratic ladies forced by circumstances to share a bed who discover they have a liking for one another. The play offers a humorous way to gauge some popular (if not so public) perspectives on same-sex female eroticism on the eve of the birth of what Foucault dubs "the invention of the homosexual."

Panel I.E Romantic Fossils

Chair: Daniel Desormeaux

University of Chicago

Literary Remnants: The Evolution of Crèvecoeur's *Le Voyage dans la haute Pennsylvanie et dans l'état de New York* (1801)

Jim Allen

Southern Illinois University

Best known for the lyrical realism of *Lettres d'un cultivateur américain* in 1784, Michel-Guillaume Jean de Crèvecoeur re-created his literary persona in his subsequent account of life in America, published to little fanfare in the same year as Chateaubriand's much better known *Atala*. Crèvecoeur's last work – a compilation of his earlier writing and that of other writers, some of whom he acknowledged, many of whom he did not – exemplifies the evolution of literary remnants left from the eighteenth century.

The author borrowed heavily from himself, of course, but also from naturalists, travelers, and ethnographers, who had first-hand experience with the Native Americans whose stories Crèvecoeur recounts as his own. His text is pre-eminently hybrid. *Le Voyage* draws on the author's own memory and various manuscripts of his unpublished writing, but also the scientific articles, travelogues, and tales published many years earlier by William Bartram, Gilbert Imlay, William Smith, and Jonathan Carver, all of them, like Crèvecoeur, were unknown or nearly forgotten in post-revolutionary France.

In this paper I argue that Crèvecoeur assembled the fossils of this text in an evolutionary process of archival accumulation, layer by layer, like geological stratification, within

which may be discerned the evidence of many former lives and voices. Although much had changed in the American and French revolutions, Crèvecoeur managed to find essential continuities in his writing that otherwise resembles a natural scientist's collection of samples collected and stored in no particular order. The result is an anomaly of historical and literary interest, despite its relative neglect since publication in 1801, because of the way in which Crèvecoeur re-fashioned the literary shards of a past he shared for 26 years with other writers in America before his return to France in 1782.

Chateaubriand's *Atala*: The Last Philosophical Tale of the Enlightenment

Mary Anne O'Neil

Whitman College

Although the exact date of the composition of Chateaubriand's *Atala* remains uncertain, it is evident that Chateaubriand's first published work of fiction was heavily influenced by the conte philosophique practiced by Enlightenment writers, such as Voltaire. Chateaubriand himself admitted to being inspired by Voltaire's *L'Ingénu* in his creation of the Indian narrator Chactas. The influence of the conte philosophique extends, however, beyond *Atala*'s characters to the story's narrative structure and to the work's goal- the rehabilitation of Christianity as a charitable, humane religion that alone could repair the excesses of the French Revolution. Although comparable in length to *René* of 1802 and *Les Aventures du dernier Abencérage* of 1826, *Atala* belongs to the moralist tradition in its focus on the problems of ignorance and prejudice in religious matters and its valorization of freedom in the pursuit of love and happiness.

Atala is an evolutionary step both in Chateaubriand's opus and in the nineteenth-century French novel. The writer of the 1797 *Essai sur les révolutions créées*, in *Atala*, a fictional treatment of his vision of modern history, one which insists upon the importance of conserving Christianity as a moral force in developing democracies. *Atala* also presents, in microcosm, the principal themes of *Le Génie du Christianisme*, the monumental apology for the Christian faith published only a year later (1802). *Atala* prefigures the short fiction of Flaubert, and even Maupassant, and proves the lasting and largely unrecognized influence of the eighteenth-century conte philosophique on nineteenth-century fiction.

Le Récit fossile selon Dumas et Nodier

Daniel Desormeaux

University of Chicago

Dans sa huitième leçon au Collège de France du 22 janvier 1841 sur les contes slaves, Adam Mickiewicz compare l'empreinte des anciennes traditions narratives qui préexistent à l'écriture à une «littérature fossile dont les débris, comme les ossements d'animaux antédiluviens, appartiennent à tous les pays et à tous les climats». C'est une autre façon de rappeler que les grands traits de la paléontologie figuraient tout bonnement dans la théorie littéraire du 19e siècle. Les fossiles (restes d'organismes disparus) encombrant la curiosité des gens de lettres qui cherchent depuis toujours la pensée originale, pour ne pas dire la voie impénétrable de l'immortalité littéraire. On le savait

depuis les envolées mystiques de Nodier dans *De la palingénésie* (1834) jusqu'au théâtre fin de siècle, *Les fossiles* (1892) de François de Curel, en passant par *Les fossiles* (1854) de Louis Bouilhet, le «seul poème scientifique de toute la littérature française» selon Flaubert. Alexandre Dumas est certainement le plus paléontologue des écrivains de la génération romantique. Certes, dans ses *Mémoires* et dans ses célèbres *Impressions de voyages*, il a tenu à faire valoir qu'il s'est rendu sur le terrain afin d'observer et de comprendre la nature du travail des paléontologues et des géologues. Parfois il ressemble à un vague ancêtre de *Bouvard et Pécuchet* lorsqu'il clame en fanfare son intérêt croissant pour des théories évolutionnistes et les expositions scientifiques des Cuvier, Saint-Hilaire et Lamarck. Paléontologue, Alexandre Dumas le fut, à vrai dire, dans son approche théorique de l'originalité et dans la pratique de l'histoire littéraire. Si la disparition des espèces vivantes lui donne à penser à l'avenir peu réjouissant de l'homme en général, celle des œuvres littéraires et des traditions narratives révolues revêt plus encore l'aspect d'un épineux problème ontologique. Quel avenir donc pour la littérature et pour l'écrivain qui lui donne vie? Pourquoi et comment des chefs-d'œuvre meurent? Quels sont les facteurs déterminants d'oubli littéraire, de disparition des livres et quelles en sont les causes probables? C'est sous l'angle de la bibliophilie que nous amorcerons, à travers quelques écrits de Dumas et de Nodier, deux grands ramasseurs de débris littéraires, ce que l'on conviendra d'appeler une poétique du récit fossile.

Satire du milieu littéraire et parodie du style: Musset contre le Romantisme (dans *Histoire d'un merle blanc*)

Anne-Céline Michel

Université de Poitiers

Musset appartient à la deuxième génération de romantiques, celle que Paul Bénichou appelle « l'école du désenchantement ». Cette génération, qui arrive trop tard dans un monde trop vieux, a pour aînés des personnalités telles que Hugo ou Lamartine, « mages romantiques » (P. Bénichou) dont la popularité perdure. Or, Musset, enfant prodige du romantisme, refuse d'être l'héritier de ce premier romantisme, de suivre les traces de ces illustres auteurs et rejette toute appartenance à une quelconque école littéraire. Dans le conte *Histoire d'un merle blanc*, avec sa verve satirique et sa plume capricieuse, il dépeint le milieu littéraire de son époque, caricature les grandes figures du romantisme et ne manque pas de souligner les clichés et les motifs romantiques rebattus. L'auteur met en scène la figure d'un pauvre merle délaissé en raison de sa différence et de sa marginalité. Double du poète, l'animal dénonce l'abondance du lyrisme et du pathos dans le style romantique grâce à une écriture parodique. Par le sarcasme et l'ironie, Musset fait rire et sourire mais, plus sérieusement, il dénonce l'immobilisme et l'assurance d'une poésie perçue à sa naissance comme novatrice et révolutionnaire par rapport au classicisme. Cette poésie, établie et légitimée, se considère désormais comme la nouvelle aune poétique, référence absolue, cependant qu'elle ressasse les mêmes motifs, a recours aux mêmes procédés et se complaît dans son propre succès sans se remettre en question. Quant à Musset, il se place en position d'observateur des êtres et reste en marge du monde. A travers son écriture se dévoile, en creux, sa propre conception du poète et de la poésie, un poète désengagé, une poésie personnelle.

Panel I.F Wet Nurses and Children

Chair: Marshall Olds, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Le Lait vicié, or the Wicked Wet Nurse

Lisa Algazi

Hood College

“Comment souffrons-nous que notre enfant soit infecté d’un sang impur et contagieux?” asks midwife Madame Le Rebours in her popular breastfeeding manual, first published in 1770.. Indeed, many pre-revolutionary physicians and moralists wrote of men who had absorbed many characteristics of goats due to having drunk that animal’s milk in their early childhood. Despite the evolution of medical knowledge as well as of infant feeding technology during the eighteenth century, the belief in the transmission of both physical and moral depravities through the wet nurse’s milk persisted well into the twentieth century. Representing the wet nurse as ignorant, negligent or evil served as a useful tool for proponents of maternal breast-feeding, whose voices were growing ever more strident in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In an 1867 treatise on the wet-nursing business in Bordeaux, Dr. Brochard called it “une industrie meurtrière,” claiming that more than 50% of children sent out to wet nurses in France died there. “La statistique montre que la seule action de mettre un enfant en nourrice, double, triple les chances de mort de ce nouveau-né.”¹

In an 1891 novel entitled *Le lait d’une autre*, prominent journalist and naturalist Alexandre Hepp tells the story of a male child who is utterly corrupted by the moral depravity of an ignorant wet-nurse. “L’instinct pris avec la nourriture de l’autre faisait son œuvre. Le lait maudit de l’étrangère s’inoculait dans sa chair.” (186) When the child’s father finally realizes the truth, it is too late to save his son from complete moral ruin. The father describes the boy as « une âme morte pour eux, dans un être flétri. » (256) Just as Zola would do a few years later in *Fécondité*, Hepp attempts to use fiction to convince mothers of the dangers inherent in hiring a wet-nurse; in his preface, Hepp states his hope that mothers will read his novel “avec effroi” (ii) and will therefore think twice about abandoning their children to the care of a stranger. In this paper, I will examine negative representations of the nourrice in late nineteenth-century French literature and their usefulness as propaganda in the pro-natalist crusade to encourage mothers to nurse their own children.

La Littérature populaire et la mobilité sociale des femmes du peuple

Julia Pryzbos

Hunter College and The Graduate Center, CUNY

Echappant à la classification traditionnelle des phénomènes sociaux, la mise en nourrice brouille les catégories du familial et social. Vu son ambiguïté, la parenté de lait nous permettra de découvrir l’enjeu idéologique de deux textes populaires où la sororité de lait structure les intrigues. Il s’agira de *Mélanie et Lucette* (1810), un roman à l’eau de rose de Charles-François Aviau du Bois de Sanza et des *Deux Orphelines* (1874), un mélodrame de D’Ennery et Cormon. L’analyse du destin des sœurs de lait issues de

différentes catégories sociales, permettra de dégager le modèle social fossilisé de *Mélanie et Lucette*. En effet, ignorant les bouleversements politiques et sociaux de la Révolution, le romancier présente un monde strictement hiérarchisé où toute mobilité sociale est impossible, voire unimaginable. Quelque soixante ans plus tard, le mélodrame de D'Ennery et Cormon propose un modèle social opposé. Les dramaturges donnent à voir une société où la solidarité des sœurs de lait vainc les anciens préjugés de classe et conduit à la promotion sociale d'une fille du peuple. Notre communication montrera que la littérature populaire, loin d'être toujours réactionnaire, véhicule parfois une idéologie qui, tout en embrassant la mobilité individuelle, est favorable à l'évolution des rapports sociaux.

Parental Discipline and Social Control in Jules Vallès's *L'Enfant*
Deborah Schocket
Bowling Green State University

Although childrearing belongs to the realm of the private sphere, parents' decisions about how to raise their children are nonetheless shaped by cultural forces and authority figures located beyond the immediate family. Constituting one piece of a larger project examining French family practices of discipline from the 18th to 20th centuries, this paper seeks to understand more fully the relationship between individuals and society and the role of social control in forging that relationship in late 19th century France.

In writing his 1878 novel *L'Enfant*, Jules Vallès wanted to bring attention to situations he considered abusive, as evidenced by the novel's dedication "A tous ceux qui crevèrent d'ennui au collège ou qu'on fit pleurer dans la famille, qui, pendant leur enfance, furent tyrannisés par leurs maîtres ou rossés par leurs parents." While Vallès's first-person narrator viewed his own treatment as an injustice, one can only truly understand the ramifications of such charges on a societal level by reading the novel in tandem with medical treatises and parenting guides from the same period.

My paper will draw on the aforementioned sources in seeking answers to a series of interrelated questions. How did people in France during the mid-to-late nineteenth century view discipline and punishment of children by their parents? How were adults and children perceived to react to and benefit from the various disciplinary methods employed, and where does one draw the line between acceptable tactics and abusive ones? How do society's attitudes toward the discipline of children play into larger questions of power, domination, and social control in Third Republic France? The answers to these questions will help us to understand more clearly not only the parent-child relationship, but also the use of power—both within and beyond the family—to influence the shape of the new republic.

Session II : 3:30-5:00pm

Panel II.A. Women authors, Female Voice Science
Chair: Juliette Dade, Indiana University

Vacuity vs. Vitality: The Evolution of Women in the Novels of André Léo.
Cecilia Beach
Alfred University

During the final decade of the Second Empire, when tight controls of the press and assembly had silenced most feminist voices, André Léo (1824-1900), journalist and novelist best known for her role in the Paris Commune, used the novel to challenge the dominant view that women must be restricted to the domestic sphere. Criticizing this fossilized social order defended by men on both ends of the political spectrum, André Léo contrasted the vacuity of the conventional bourgeois woman with the intellectual and physical vitality of her enlightened female protagonists. While the conventional women in her novels seek an idle and futile life based on money, marriage and motherhood, André Léo's female protagonists strive to make their lives active and useful, valuing instead the Republican ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity. These free-thinking, independent young women reject the social prejudices and conventions of the bourgeoisie, along with the rigid class structure and gender roles of their milieu. Despite harsh accusations and criticism from their peers, André Léo's protagonists generally thrive and lead fulfilling lives, while the women who have chosen a more conventional life often meet a less fortunate fate. In this paper, I will focus on four novels published in the decade before the Commune: *Un Mariage scandaleux* (1862), *Les Deux Filles de M. Plichon* (1865), *L'Idéal du Village* (1867), and *Aline-Ali* (1868). I will examine these novels within the context of feminist and socialist movements of the period, and in relation to André Léo's 1869 feminist treatise, *La femme et les mœurs. Liberté ou monarchie*.

Femmes, fossiles et fictions: la bourgeoisie et l'anarchiste
Valerie Narayana
Mount Allison University

Si les discours sur les fossiles abondent dans la seconde moitié du XIXe siècle, il demeure que ceux écrits par les femmes sont beaucoup plus difficiles à trouver. Comment les femmes, souvent exclues du milieu scientifique, réagissent-elles à ces objets déterrés, porteurs de controverses et détenteurs d'origines? Voilà une bien grande question, qui dépasse évidemment l'envergure d'une simple communication. Or, pour commencer à y répondre, on peut tenter d'établir certains repères avec une comparaison.

Il s'agira ici de contraster les réactions de deux femmes issues de milieux sociaux fort différents - d'une part, celui, triomphant, de la bourgeoisie positiviste, avide de progrès scientifiques; de l'autre, celui des anarchistes, soucieux de «redresser» le cours d'une évolution qui n'a plus rien d'une révolution. Cette étude se penchera sur l'écriture de deux femmes, toutes les deux éprises de science mais pour des raisons bien différentes. La première, Juliette Figuier, digne épouse du plus grand vulgarisateur scientifique du Second Empire va tenter sa chance au théâtre en écrivant une pièce intitulée « La Femme fossile ». La deuxième est l'anarchiste Louise Michel, auteur d'un petit texte satirique, « Paris-fossile », qui ne reste que sous forme de fragment inédit, écrit dans le genre des *Ruines de Paris* d'Alfred Franklin. Ces courts écrits sont tous deux traversés de

rhétorique évoquant les perspectives sociales des deux femmes. Chacun, à sa façon, met en scène le savant passionné de savoir et certain de pouvoir déchiffrer les mystères des mondes enfouis.

Or, bien que ces deux textes fassent preuve de divergences certaines, on ne peut que constater qu'ils partagent aussi un certain humour, qui laisse entrevoir, chez Juliette Figuiet comme chez Louise Michel, une part de scepticisme et une pointe de subversion envers le discours savant de l'époque.

Fossils and Feminists: The Woman Question in Jules Claretie's *La Vie à Paris* (1881-1913)

Wendelin Guentner

The University of Iowa

Jules Claretie, the prolific late 19th-century man of letters, authored fiction, plays, libretti and volumes of history; he also practiced journalism for over forty years. Claretie is especially known for articles that appeared for over 30 years in *Le Temps*, one of the day's most important newspapers. Entitled "La Vie à Paris," these essays were also published yearly in volumes of the same name. As he carried out his self-described role as "anecdotier, conteur, annotateur, chroniqueur, [et] annaliste au courant de la plume" Claretie leaves a fascinating record of the evolving status of women in fin-de-siècle Parisian society. Discussing suffragist tracts in 1907 he remarks: "Nous en sommes à une période d'évolution ou plus rien n'est improbable" and declares that if the 19th was the century of workers, the 20th would be that of Women. His long-time association with the theater, first as a critic and then as Director of the Comédie Française from 1885 to 1913, provided Claretie with unique opportunities to observe women in Parisian "high life," "low life" and everything in between. Sarah Bernhardt, Rachel and Loë Fuller share the spotlight with anonymous players--the young women who advocated "l'union libre" as a way to avoid "les barreaux de la cage hyménéenne--and infamous ones, such as wives who in their own quest for freedom "ont brownigisé" their husbands, or others who argued for their "Droit à la Morphine." Elected to the Academie Française in 1888, Claretie was sensitive to the ways this social evolution was challenging the French language: should women doctors be called "doctoresses", "doctrices," or "docteuses"? Stating that the principal difference between men and women is muscle size, Claretie is sympathetic to feminist demands for equality both in education and the work place. But while in 1884 he easily accepts new mores, such "la toilette rationnelle"—such as "les pseudopantalons" worn by "les bicycle women"—by 1912 he has some reservations, lamenting that "Tout homme poli semble le survivant d'un temps aboli, un fossile." Besides describing his depiction of women-in-evolution, I hope to show how Claretie himself was both a "fossil" and a feminist.

The Guarded Evolution of the Role of Courtesans: Liane de Pougy and Public Relations

Juliette Dade

Indiana University

At the end of the nineteenth century, courtesans were part of an established institution that played an important role among the upper classes of Parisian society. Viewed as a regrettable necessity, courtesans served as sexual outlets in order to help maintain the structures of bourgeois and upper-class existence, including the marriages that had often been formed by financial and titular arrangements. The courtesans were both desirable objects of beauty and living displays of their clients' wealth, as their luxurious belongings were regularly on public display. In 1880, Zola's *Nana* had depicted the malefic influence that such women could have on society. Consequently, when Liane de Pougy, the reigning queen of courtesans, attempted to expand her role from desirable object to subjective author, she was obliged to counter the public's vision of courtesans by emphasizing her dissimilarity with this destructive portrait.

Pougy's autobiographical novels, *L'Insaisissable : roman vécu* (1898) and *Idylle sapphique* (1901), seem to be created to show the public that Pougy, through the books' protagonists, was herself a cultured and honest woman, thus offsetting the transformation of her role from object of desire to subjective voice. She insists that she is not just a pampered commodity, but a well-read woman of wit and intelligence capable of producing these novels, in spite of her public's skepticism. The work required of her as courtesan is downplayed, as is her involvement in lesbian sex in *Idylle sapphique*, in spite of the novel's evocative title. In so doing, Pougy creates a contrived spectacle that mirrors the performance required of her role as courtesan that she repeatedly decries in her texts. The bane of a courtesan's life is that she must stifle any sort of identity and put on a heroic and continuous show. Instead of gaining freedom from this obligation by becoming a writer, Pougy has merely exchanged one mandatory performance for another.

Panel II.B. Theatrical Evolution

Chair: Susan McCready, University of South Alabama

Coucou, cocu! The Modernist Comedy of Georges Feydeau

Warren Johnson

Arkansas State University

As a collective and above all commercial enterprise, French theatre during the latter half of the nineteenth century was constrained by the inherent conservatism of directors and critics who were chary of innovation. While melodrama and the Romantic drama found fresh incarnations in the social problem plays of Dumas fils and Augier, and later in the innovative work presented by Antoine's Théâtre libre, gelastic comedy—comedy aimed primarily at provoking laughter, as opposed to any theatrical work with a happy ending—has generally been seen as part of a continuum from Labiche forward. In particular, the still-popular farces of Georges Feydeau that were first represented during the 1880s, a decade of intense comic invention in the works of writers such as Armand Silvestre, and that extended through the period of fumistes in the 1890s into the immediately pre-war Belle Epoque, have been too often been classified as at best the apotheosis of the mockery of bourgeois ambitions and obsessions in Labiche and his collaborators.

In rereading Feydeau in the context of not only other contemporary comic dramatics such as Courteline and Pailleron, but in that of the radical reconceptualization of the comic during the last two decades of the nineteenth century in the hands of the fumiste writers associated with the Chat Noir (Alphonse Allais, George Auriol, Charles Cros), the comedy of confusion in the prose of Jules Moinaux and Charles Leroy, the comic monologue, and the fracturing of realism in Jarry, not to mention the delightful but disquieting ludicity of the films of Georges Méliès, we can see that in the author of *La dame de Chez Maxime* the fossilization of bourgeois boulevard farce (and theatre in general) during the Second Empire gives way to the comedy of destabilized perspective, as the complications of plot that reinforced the spectator's sense of superiority by their perfect legibility in Labiche become devices to make the spectator call into question his critical judgment of the characters and even assumptions about human motivation. While perfectly conforming to the demands of commercial theatre, Feydeau subtly introduces to the boulevard stage an evolution of comic sensibility that had been gaining momentum in avant-garde and popular writers alike of the last two decades of the century.

Embodying Ephemera: Testing Social Legibility on the Vaudeville Stage
Cary Hollinshead-Strick
American University of Paris

For much of the nineteenth century Parisian theaters began each new year with vaudeville reviews of the year that had just ended. Events, inventions and plays of the last 12 months were embodied by actors and paraded before audiences, often as part of a dream sequence or enchanted time-tour. Though critics tended to disparage such reviews as formulaic and frivolous, vaudeville reviews remained popular enough that 4 or 5 major theaters produced reviews every year, particularly during the July Monarchy. While many characters in such reviews were personifications of passing trends, others represented the current state of more lasting institutions. Laws and newspapers were personified and made to defend themselves against objections which had been raised against them. Figures such as *La France* and *La Vérité* appeared on stage to complain of their treatment or to pass judgment on disputes. Mixing jokes about the media, the judiciary, and even some aspects of the government, with banter about fads allowed reviews to sort out which innovations were contributing to the evolution of society and which were bound to be forgotten.

Vaudeville reviews also put two of the more consequential July Monarchy ideas about politics and theater into practice: they united audiences of different social origins around comic entertainment, and they represented governing institutions to those governed by them in a context that allowed for their approval or disapproval. Not only were nineteenth-century audiences livelier than audiences of today, laughing and jeering with abandon, but they also only attended reviews they found amusing. The success of year-end reviews depended on their ability to catalyze some small consensus as to the accuracy of their critiques and the cleverness of their humor. Those that succeeded survive to this day in cheaply-printed series of plays. Reading them allows us to follow the evolution of popular opinion regarding major institutions of nineteenth-century

society even as we chuckle over the fact that *paracrottes* and *étoffes de verre* were once the latest thing.

Rachel as Star and Symbol, Muse and Marketer: Rethinking Romanticism in the French Theater

Susan McCready

University of South Alabama

Beginning with the Restoration and continuing throughout the century, celebrity culture began to emerge in France to an extent not previously seen. This is in large part due to conditions affecting the press and the theaters, as both became increasingly subject to market forces for their survival. For the theaters, this meant a new approach in promoting plays, one based partly on the collusion of journalists, whose column inches translated into lines at the box office. The press, for its part, had to have something to write about in order to gain and retain readers in an increasingly competitive market, and then as now what sells more papers than celebrities and their scandals? It was clearly in the interest of both the press and the theaters of this period to create and promote “stars.”

This essay will explore the career of one such star, Rachel Félix (1821-1858) and the use to which her celebrity status was put by proponents of romanticism in aesthetic debates about the nature of the theater, tragedy and romanticism, played out in the press during the 1840s. The most heated debates over romanticism/classicism in the French theater had by this time long cooled; romanticism itself was on the wane and classicism had been declared legally dead. An examination of Rachel's role in romantic commentary on the theater during this later period will give us insight into the evolution of the theater business (and particularly the place of the Comédie-Française), the emergence of celebrity culture, and the long adieu of romantic theater around the middle of the nineteenth century.

Atar Gull: Lu et vu

Thérèse de Raedt

University of Utah

A la fin du XVIII^{ème} siècle, la révolte des esclaves à St Domingue fut ressentie en France comme un réel cataclysme. Plusieurs jeunes écrivains s'emparèrent du sujet et commencèrent à écrire sur les dures conditions de vie des esclaves dans les Antilles et sur leurs aspirations à la liberté. Le « roman maritime » *Atar-Gull* d'Eugène Sue parut en 1831. Ce roman créa par son intrigue (la vengeance portée à son paroxysme par Atar-Gull) une publicité scandaleuse, un choc culturel. Les dramaturges MM Anicet Bourgeois et Masson ne tardèrent pas à adapter ce « best-seller » pour la scène. (La première représentation du mélodrame *Atar-Gull* date du 26 avril 1932.) Les auteurs en avaient modifié l'intrigue pour ne pas traumatiser le public. C'est ce changement entre deux genres littéraires qui retiendra mon attention. Finalement j'analyserai quelques illustrations du roman car il me semble qu'un lien doit être établi entre les illustrations (populaires) du roman et le mélodrame d'Anicet Bourgeois et Masson. Ces deux transformations visuelles du roman emploient une rhétorique similaire.

Panel II.C. Colonial Subjectivity
Chair: Doris Kadish, University of Georgia

The Evolution of the White Heroine's Identification with Slavery from Olympe de Gouges to Madame Charles Reybaud
Lesley Curtis
Duke University

From the early 1780s to 1792, Olympe de Gouges imagined a utopian society of colonizers and colonized peoples in her abolitionist play *L'Esclavage des Noirs, ou l'heureux naufrage*. Like her contemporaries, de Gouges incorporated Enlightenment ideals into her vision for a new and better society. Unlike her contemporaries, de Gouges's interpretation of Enlightenment values led her to pay special attention to the role of women, both free and enslaved, in her model for a better empire. The play's three versions evolve with the movements of the early years of the French Revolution, culminating in 1792 in an allegorical portrayal of her ideal feminist colony of the French Empire. In de Gouges's imagination, women are equal to their partners, but the French colonial family model in which hierarchy is based on race and class remains otherwise unchallenged.

In 1838, Madame Charles Reybaud published a short story entitled "Les Epaves." Like de Gouges's play, Madame Reybaud's story, which takes place in early eighteenth-century Martinique, challenges patriarchal hierarchy by giving powerful roles to female characters. Yet, contrary to de Gouges's play, all women in Madame Reybaud's story—though technically free—share a subject position with slaves. The indomitable female character Cécile usurps power from the racist slave-owner Monsieur de la Rebelière by marrying the mulatto Donatien, thereby freeing her fellow "slave" from the domination of the white man.

In this paper, I examine the evolution of the term "slave" as a marker of subjugated worker and subjugated wife from the late eighteenth-century works of Olympe de Gouges through the early nineteenth-century works of Madame Charles Reybaud. "Slave," I conclude, evolves from a rhetorical device through which female sovereignty is negotiated to one in which both gender and racial equality coalesce.

"Ce corps inconnaissable": The Fantasy of the Native Body in Discourses of Degeneration
Lisa Ann Villarreal
Stanford University

My essay examines the convergence of medical discourse, colonial politics, and the role of fantastic literature in fin-de-siècle France. Specifically, I consider Todorov's analysis of the social function of the fantastic—i.e. that fantastic literature becomes the space within which those elements of human experience excluded from scientific and philosophical discourse become legible—in conjunction with a post-Freudian theory of

the uncanny, to explore the way in which anxieties surrounding biological theories of race, the discourse of degeneration and atavism, and the viability of the colonial project were repressed within political and medical discourse, yet found their way into literary discourse, transformed into fantastic figures. I focus on Maupassant's 1887 tale "Le Horla," in which the protagonist becomes increasingly fascinated and horrified in contemplating the nature of the body of the Horla, the invisible presence invading France from Brazil. The narrator conflates this invasion with the threat of the contagious epidemics that imperil European settlers in the tropics, and which likewise threaten to migrate to the European continent; racial otherness menaces the borders of the homeland like a disease, threatening to infect and, eventually, to overpower, and the terrific power of the Horla is at once the strength of the Other which allows the possibility of the regression of European society through reverse colonization, and the inverse threat of miscegenation, the fantasy of becoming like the other, the possibility to mix with the other, and to be infected. My reading will explore the anxieties surrounding racial otherness latent in the discourse of tropical pathology invoked by Maupassant, and, in so doing, examine his tale as a site of the uncanny confrontation with the complex ambivalence at the heart of the rhetoric of imperial expansion--the primitivism of the racial other as both a temptation and a terror, the object of fear and fascination.

Revolution in Paradise? Communard Narratives of New Caledonia
Leonard R. Koos
University of Mary Washington

In the aftermath of the Paris Commune of 1871, the Assemblée de Versailles approved an order for the forced deportation of convicted Communards which led to the incarceration of thousands of these political prisoners in the French penitentiary colony in New Caledonia. Journalistic accounts of the deportees' journey to their political exile in the Pacific, which began to appear in metropolitan newspapers and journals in 1873, were succeeded by the regular appearance of narratives written by the prisoners themselves depicting their lives in New Caledonia and, in a number of instances, their attempts at escape from it. These texts constitute a curiously hybrid instance of writing in the 1870s that mixes travelogue representation and adventure narrative with oppositional political and social commentary. My paper proposes the consideration of this corpus of Communard accounts of New Caledonia as a way of understanding the transformation and evolution of post-Commune radicalism in relation to republican political discourse in the early days of Third Republic France. In my reading of first-person narratives by Communard prisoners like Henri Rochefort, Jean-François Paschal Grousset, François Jourde, Achille Baillièrè, Jean Allemane, and Louise Michel, among others, as well as in literary works like Henri Rochefort's novel *L'Évadé* (1880), my paper will begin by examining how these texts represent the history of France's presence in New Caledonia as well as its then current colonial project in the Pacific island group in the dual context of its convict and colonialist presuppositions. My discussion will then turn to ancillary depictions of indigenous Kanak cultural difference, particularly in light of the eventual Kanak insurrection of 1878-9. My analysis of these accounts of New Caledonia will show how these writers subversively if not contradictorily employ the representational

pretext of the Pacific colony to critique mainstream republican politics as they attempt to retain and extend the counter-discursive proposition of revolutionary rhetoric.

Racial Evolution and Colonial Gender: Louis Bertrand's "Latin-Mediterranean" Solution

Daniel Brant

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Louis Bertrand's *Le Sang des races* (1899) depicts the evolution of a new Latin-Mediterranean “race” by fusing together various European populations in French Algeria. Literary scholar Peter Dunwoodie has described this novel as an aesthetic rupture with the “narcissistic and sentimental escapism of Orientalism” that attempts to valorize the vitality of the settler community (Writing French Algeria, 85). It also inaugurated a genre, settler literature, whose peak coincided with and helped encourage the apotheosis of the *idée coloniale* in the 1930s. Although published at the twilight of the century, this work, with its notion of Latin-Mediterranean race, resonates with intellectual developments of the nineteenth century and offers a unique vantage point from which to interrogate the interactions among race, class, gender, sexuality, and nation.

The debacle and humiliation of 1870 mobilized both intellectuals and politicians in new ways. To consolidate domestic political divisions and remain abreast of other European powers, French leaders devoted renewed attention to colonial expansion. At home, however, observers combated a “fossilized” French population stagnating with effeminate men and infertile women. The importance of *Le Sang des races* lies in its appropriation of these two trends. Both a product of and an unfettered apology for the colonial project, Bertrand's novel engages with metropolitan gender constructions, and proposes a reinvigorated race of virile men and fecund, domesticated women essential to regenerating a languishing nation.

Through a sustained focus on the intimate spaces of the body and the home, this analysis will provide a discussion of gender and sexuality in the European settler community. It will also attempt to demonstrate how Bertrand utilizes Franco-European settler communities as laboratories of gender and sexual discourse. Finally, this study traces as well how the novel collapses distinctions between public and private, the political and the domestic, and, moreover, subordinates the metropolitan to the colonial by locating the stakes of national redemption on the settler body.

Panel II.D. Science

Chair: Ione Crummy, University of Montana

Resisting the Spell of Science in George Sand's *Le gnome des huîtres* and *Laura, ou voyage dans le crystal* Mary Garnett University of Arkansas at Little Rock

Herself an avid collector of specimens – including rocks, minerals, insects and fossils – George Sand satirizes the obsessive collector of oyster fossils in *Le gnome des huîtres*,

one of her *Contes d'une grand-mère* (1875). As Béatrice Didier observed, the *Contes* are remarkable for the place they accord the history of the universe, and *Le gnome des huîtres*, while making fun of scientific nomenclature and collection mania, presents an evolutionary view of the appearance and disappearance of species. This short text shares many features with Sand's novella *Laura, ou voyage dans le cristal* (1865), itself a forerunner of the *merveilleux scientifique* popularized by Jules Verne. The two texts are structurally similar, consisting of framed narrations that recount a fantastic, hallucinatory excursion by the intra-diegetic narrator under the spell of a collector who is transformed in the narrator's mind into a menacing figure. The themes of death/petrification and the temptation of the absolute/the ideal that haunt Sand's oeuvre are embodied here in fossils and crystals. Moreover, a comparative analysis of these two texts elucidates Sand's own vision of the role of science in society and the dangers of a misguided approach to science. The subversion of science is an implicit theme in *Le gnome des huîtres* where the fossilized replaces the comestible, whereas in *Laura* three competing visions of the goals of scientific inquiry are explicitly presented and found lacking: an abstract, ontological vision as represented by Tungsténus; a positivist, utilitarian view incarnated by Walter; and the "science of details" of collectors. These texts demonstrate Sand's interest in the scientific discoveries of her time even as she encourages moderation in the pursuit of scientific knowledge and a recognition of its limits.

Biodiversity in Chateaubriand's *Atala*

Annie Smart

Saint Louis University

This paper is part of an enquiry I'm conducting into the intersections between biology and literature. My analysis hinges on how we might apply E.O. Wilson's idea of biophilia (a normative implication of his empirical evolutionary-ecological perspective) to literary texts. In his study *Biophilia* (1984), Wilson suggests that we have an innate tendency to affiliate with the natural world. He contends that exploring the natural world leads to a deepening of our understanding of diversity; that by understanding other organisms, we place value on them, and also – potentially – we place value on human diversity.¹ I examine how in *Atala*, Chateaubriand portrays nature in order to build a moral relationship between humans and the non-human living world, a relationship grounded in knowing and appreciating the diversity of the natural world.

Previous interpretations of nature in *Atala* have stressed either Chateaubriand's providential world view, or the "effet d'exotique." For Europeans, Chateaubriand's rich descriptions of North America conjured up a fantastic world, far from their everyday world. Indeed, in *Nous et les autres* (1989), Tzvetan Todorov points to *Atala* as exemplifying his definition of "exotic."

In this paper, I read Chateaubriand's descriptions differently. I focus in particular on the lists of plants, birds, and animals in the "Prologue." These lists might produce an "effet d'exotique." But we might also understand these lists as Chateaubriand's attempt to understand the world around him; and, more importantly for this study, as a sign of respect for the diversity and difference of the non-human living world. I argue that a

“biophilic” interpretation leads us to re-examine the tensions between universal/relative that underpin the novel. While *Atala* certainly promotes Christianity as a universal religion, I believe that Chateaubriand also promotes (bio)diversity as a universal value.

Movement, Color, and Spark: Fireworks and the Chemical Sublime in Nineteenth-Century France

Laura A. Kalba

George Mason University

This paper traces the development of color pyrotechnology, from the 1830s to the turn of the twentieth century, analyzing the role of color in the creation of a visual language of fantasy and enchantment. More specifically, looking at how firework shows went from being modeled on theatre to the abstract spectacle of light and color to which we are accustomed today, it considers how political authorities created collective experiences of enchantment through the visual transformation of Paris’ urban landmarks by means of light and color. Special attention is given to the Eiffel Tower, whose history and reception, I argue, were shaped by the spectacular firework shows that illuminated the tower in ever changing and unexpected ways. I connect these sublime makeovers of the Eiffel Tower to the contemporary transformations of consumer culture, revealing important similarities between overtly political spectacles (organized on the occasion of national holidays, visits of foreign dignitaries, and Universal Expositions) and those created by nineteenth-century consumer capitalism, which also placed increasing emphasis on the sensual appeal of color. Considering not only literary but also visual representations of fireworks, this paper examines, moreover, the challenges of depicting that which by its very nature sought to surpass visual expectations. Focusing here on the work of Gaston de Latouche (1854-1913), I show the overlapping of realism, fantasy, and abstraction in this endeavor, thus revising categories of visual analysis that have defined twentieth-century art history. Fireworks, I thus hope to demonstrate, provide a unique window onto the importance of bright and shifting colors in nineteenth-century visual culture, their role in shaping the categories French men and women used to make sense of their visual environment, and the relationship between modern aesthetics and contemporary technological and commercial developments.

Panel II.E. Family

Chair: Claudie Bernard, New York University

Indissolubilité et mutabilité: discours sur le mariage et le divorce au théâtre à la fin du siècle

Katia Viot-Southard

SUNY Oswego

Divorçons ! Ce titre à l’allure univoque d’une pièce de Victorien Sardou recèle pourtant, par sa forme plurielle, les ambivalences liées aux problématiques conjugales de la fin du siècle. En 1880, lorsque cette pièce est représentée pour la première fois, le divorce n’est pas encore rétabli. Cependant, les possibilités de changement qu’il inspire permettent de construire des situations imaginaires qui révèlent combien l’idéal marital se trouve

bousculé par ses propres ambiguïtés. Si, comme nous le verrons, la pièce de Sardou constitue surtout une condamnation de l'instabilité créée par le fantasme du divorce, elle contient aussi les prémices d'une réflexion sur la tyrannie du mariage perpétuel. Impératif pluriel, le divorce n'est donc qu'une modalité pour Victorien Sardou. En revanche, comme nous le constaterons, le divorce s'inscrit comme réelle exigence sociale pour Marya Chéliga qui dans *L'Ornière*, une pièce représentée pour la première fois en 1896, condamne les injustices du Code Civil envers les femmes, mais aussi souligne la nécessité pour les femmes mal mariées de s'emparer de cet outil de révolte pour pouvoir se dégager de la tyrannie conjugale et s'affirmer enfin libres. Nous étudierons comment Victorien Sardou et Marya Chéliga exploitent le thème du divorce pour articuler une réflexion opposée sur la société et les idées reçues, sur les mœurs et les lieux communs, mais aussi comment ces deux auteurs jouent avec les mots et leur polysémie pour énoncer un discours qui, bien que partisan et même militant, confirme que le théâtre parce qu'il est lieu d'une énonciation multiple peut déstabiliser des dualités que les auteurs eux-mêmes pensaient inébranlables.

De la bonne évolution familiale : *L'Étape* de Paul Bourget

Claudie Bernard

New York University

Votre famille ne s'est pas développée d'après les règles naturelles. Vous êtes des victimes de la poussée démocratique telle que la comprend et la subit notre pays, où l'on a pris pour unité sociale l'individu. C'est détruire à la fois la société et l'individu [...] La durée vous manque, cette maturation antérieure de la race, sans laquelle le transfert de classe est trop dangereux. Vous avez brûlé une étape et vous payez la rançon de ce que j'appelle l'Erreur française et qui n'est au fond, tout au fond, que cela : une méconnaissance des lois essentielles de la famille.

Le roman publié par Paul Bourget en 1902, *L'Étape*, pose la question de l'*évolution familiale* dans la France issue de la Révolution. Il met en scène deux familles, l'une propulsée sans transition d'une paysannerie archaïque à la petite bourgeoisie républicaine athée, et misant sur le mérite individuel et sur le soutien de l'Etat, l'autre montée « par étapes » de la propriété terrienne à la haute bourgeoisie cléricale et conservatrice, en s'appuyant sur les solidarités domestiques ; la première est en crise, la seconde en harmonie. Parallèlement, le roman oppose deux formules de l'*évolution* historique : le socialisme égalitariste, menacé, dans sa précipitation vers un avenir radieux, par une *révolution* anarchique, et un catholicisme paternaliste qui s'applique à combiner progrès scientifique et culte du passé et des morts. On suivra l'illustration de ce propos au fil d'un roman de formation qui relate l'*évolution personnelle*, sentimentale et spirituelle, d'un jeune homme et son passage, au terme de plusieurs épreuves domestiques et politiques, de la première famille à la seconde, ainsi que de la fraternité ouvrière à la fraternité chrétienne. Enfin, *L'Étape* étant un roman à thèse, on relèvera les « étapes » concertées de la démonstration, en en mettant en évidence les partis-pris et les sophismes.

Dégénérescence et régénération: *Le Disciple* de Paul Bourget

Françoise Belot

University of Washington

Après des décennies de progrès scientifique placées sous le signe du positivisme optimiste d'Auguste Comte, la fin de siècle est marquée par la montée d'inquiétudes, voire d'angoisses, au sujet du futur de la France. Dans la préface belliqueuse de son roman *Le Disciple* (1889), Paul Bourget appelle à un sursaut de la jeune génération pour faire face aux fléaux de la modernité, inertie, nihilisme, et neurasthénie, qui menacent l'individu, la race et la nation. L'évolution, semble-t-il, a fait fausse route : au lieu de mener à une vie meilleure, elle produit des formes déviantes, des aberrations, des monstres. Dans le roman lui-même, conçu comme un antidote à la crise morale, Bourget présente l'un de ces monstres, Robert Greslou, un jeune homme en qui les déficiences familiales sont exacerbées par un milieu intellectuel imprégné d'un scientisme néfaste. En lui, hérédité et environnement se combinent pour former une figure dangereuse, condamnée par Bourget, le « barbare civilisé » dont les ambitions scientifiques mènent à la mort d'une jeune femme. Greslou représente à la fois l'aboutissement du processus évolutionniste, l'intellectuel éclairé, et le retour atavique à la férocité brutale et immorale.

Dans mon étude de ce roman et de la controverse qui a suivi sa publication, je me penche sur la représentation du déterminisme dans le texte et par le texte, et sur la façon dont Bourget manipule certains des concepts qu'il condamne explicitement.

The Female and the Species: Radical Feminism and Social Darwinism in late Nineteenth-Century French Literary Discourses

Louise Lyle

University of London Institute in Paris

The major achievements of the early Third Republic included the introduction of free, compulsory, secular primary education for all children and the expansion of the secondary and higher education sectors for both boys and girls. From the 1880s onward, the initially limited number of Frenchwomen enjoying the newly available educational and professional opportunities increased steadily. These very positive developments for women coincided with an increase in levels of political insecurity about the continuous decline in the French birth-rate, however. The ideas of nineteenth-century evolutionary theorists such as Geddes and Thomson, and Herbert Spencer, which cast the female as the reproductive instrument of the species, were frequently mobilized by natalists and other opponents of feminism with the aim of upholding the traditional female stereotype of housewife and mother. It might therefore be expected that women, historically characterized as “le sexe faible”, would be consigned to a position of “natural” inferiority within the social Darwinism paradigm that featured in an extensive range of discourses of the fin de siècle period. It is rather the case, however, that educated women and, most particularly, those trained in the sciences, were feared as potential social Darwinists themselves, who might seek to assert their newly acquired intellectual autonomy and financial independence over men. Using examples drawn from a selection of fin de siècle novels including Octave Feuillet's *La Morte* (1886), Colette Yver's *Les Cervelines* (1902), *Princesses de Science* (1907) and *Les Dames du Palais* (1910), and Marcel Prévost's *Les Vierges fortes* (1900), this paper will show how social Darwinism was used to negatively characterize radical strands of feminism thought to offer an aggressive challenge both to male authority and to the “natural” roles to which women had

historically been restricted within the closed domain of the family. To conclude, I will compare the use of social Darwinist rhetoric in these novels and in the writings of two real fin de siècle feminist writers, the journalist Séverine, and the physician Madeleine Pelletier.

Panel II.F. Reanimation and Codification

Chair: Sara Pappas, University of Richmond

Animation et repétrification chez Rachilde

Guri Barstad

University of Tromsø, Norway

Les romans de Rachilde nous présentent un certain nombre de personnages aptes à illustrer en même temps une réflexion sur l'Art, sur les mœurs et sur le rapport entre les sexes. Cette réflexion s'articule souvent autour du mythe de Pygmalion. C'en est le cas dans *Monsieur Vénus* où « l'animation de la statue » dans le personnage de Jacques incarne pour Raoule de Vénérande son désir d'inventer « un vice nouveau » (qui est peut-être aussi un art nouveau), et de se révolter contre des mœurs fossilisées. C'en est le cas aussi dans *La Jongleuse*, où l'on pourrait voir transparaître le même mythe de l'animation dans la relation qu'Éliante Donalger entretient avec son défunt mari et avec Léon Reille. Mais les deux romans présentent aussi une autre dynamique, qui menace et annule le miracle de l'animation, à savoir le conflit ou la réciprocité qui lie Pygmalion et Méduse. Jacques finit en mannequin et objet d'adoration, tandis que dans *La Jongleuse* ce sont de mystérieuses statuette ainsi qu'une amphore rappelant un être androgyne qui détiennent un rôle central. Ce dynamisme entre animé et inanimé rappelle que l'invasion du mythe de Pygmalion par la (re)pétrification est un aspect important de ce mythe au XIXe siècle, un dynamisme qui concerne souvent l'incompatibilité de l'Art et de la Vie. Cette communication se propose d'examiner le rapport entre animation (mythe de Pygmalion) et repétrification (Méduse) dans *Monsieur Vénus* et dans *La Jongleuse*. Comment le récit et le texte évoluent-ils sous l'influence de ces figures mythiques opposées et complémentaires?

Museums as Stasis and Change: The Example of the Petit Palais

Sara Pappas

University of Richmond

The building of the Musée d'Orsay in the 1980s occurred alongside a cultural and (art) historical debate. At the heart of the deliberation was the categorization of 19th-century French art itself: some curators and critics argued for the inclusion and importance of more "academic" art from particularly the second half of the period while others affirmed that the museum should honor more "revolutionary" artists, painters and sculptors who challenged the accepted norms of their time and have since been considered more vanguard. Still other critics and curators advocated less emphasis on formalist practice altogether and more attention to social and political issues of the 19th century; for this group, the Musée d'Orsay should demonstrate the relationship between art and society, focusing on issues of social class, gender, race, and politics. The evidence and tangible

trace of attempts at compromise in this debate can be seen in the resulting museum: the prominent placement of the sizeable Thomas Couture painting *Les Romains de la Décadence* in the main sculpture gallery is lamented by some and lauded by others, the location of the Impressionist and Post-Impressionist collections on the top floor is praised by some as the acknowledgment of their supreme importance while others celebrate this positioning because they see it more as banishment--the Impressionists were kept off the ground floor of the museum.

At the dawn of the 21st century, France once again took up the organization of its collection of 19th-century art with the renovation of the Petit Palais, closed in 2001 and finally reopened in late 2005. The permanent collection of 19th-century art held by the Petit Palais is as varied and eclectic as that of the D'Orsay. My paper will consider the presentation of the Petit Palais' 19th-century collection in the context of both 19th-century art criticism and the larger question of how to organize and codify the period. I will argue that the Petit Palais, while keeping several of the d'Orsay's compromises, also breaks new ground in the constant recalibration of how to canonize 19th-century French art.

Anachronistic Archeology in 19th-Century France: Tanagra Statuettes--Examples of Greek Artistry or Parisian Fashion?

Donald Wright
Hood College

In this paper, I will examine the historical, artistic and epistemological repercussions of the discovery votive statues in the region of Schimatari in Greece in the mid-19th century. These statuettes were known as Tanagra. Perhaps the first serious study on the topic comes from the exhibition that took place at the Louvre in 2004. However, from a literary and even more importantly from an epistemological perspective, the study of these statuettes allows us to examine and to deconstruct the psyche of the 19th-century citizen, for not only were these statues considered to be examples of artistic superiority come down through the ages, that of the great mother Greece, but were also believed to be the forerunners of the citizen whose rights and duties dictated his or her place in society. Modern society of the 19th century was the breeding ground for all sorts of new conceptions of the human psyche. Thus the returning to the land of the ancestors, Greece, was to return to the « terres exquisément teintes, comme des Tanagra qui seraient mélancoliques »¹.

Perhaps the most noticeable difference with the great Greek precursors, exemplified by the white purity of Winkelmann, are the traces of paint found on the Tanagra statues. In the 19th century, scientists are starting to discover the psychological impact that color had on the psyche. Hence, the pigments found on the statues, or perhaps the interpretation of these pigments by the art critiques and connoisseurs of the 19th century give us insight into how the 19th-century citizen interpreted his own role in society.

To conduct this study, I will examine literary texts dealing with the sudden reanimation of Tanagra statues. The subject is rather arcane for the time given that archeology was

one of the new sciences and hence widely written about. The number of fictional novels on the subject is overwhelming. I will also rely on writings of art critiques and collectors of the 19th century. Even Charcot had his Tanagra. It is even posited that it inspired his theory on the relativity of color. The Tanagra were not only vestiges of a distant past, but proof that the distinctly Parisian lifestyle was, somehow universal.

The (R)evolution of Art Nouveau in the Notebooks of Henri Vever

Willa Silverman

The Pennsylvania State University

This paper will present and analyze the abundant material about Art Nouveau in the private, unpublished notebooks of the prominent French jeweler, Henri Vever (1854-1942). One of the heads of the profession of French jewelers along with René Lalique, Vever in both his private journals and publicly was a champion of Art Nouveau, the international movement that at the end of the nineteenth century aimed both to eliminate the distinction of value between the decorative and fine arts and to foster collaboration among luxury craftsman. Many passages such as the following one from Vever's notebooks read like manifestos in favor of this 'new art:' "J'ai la conviction que nous sommes à une époque très rare, j'allais dire unique, pour la production d'œuvres d'art nouvelles. Tout le monde est saturé, dégoûté, écœuré, de voir rabâcher depuis tant d'années les vieilles rengaines des styles Louis XV et autres, on commence à n'en plus vouloir... On veut réellement du nouveau. On commence à en produire, le mouvement se dessine avec une rapidité inouïe, surtout depuis deux ou trois ans... on verra en 1900 l'ensemble de ce mouvement rénovateur, dans toutes les branches de l'industrie d'art" (3 Aug. 1898). Vever's preoccupation with readying both his firm and the entire French jewelry profession for the opening of the 1900 Paris World's Fair -- whether this involved designing new pieces; buying gemstones; working with architects to design his installation; dying fabric for the display windows; negotiating insurance coverage; fretting about lighting; hiring English-speaking commis; or worrying about the reception of Art Nouveau jewelry -- indicates the extent to which Vever and his colleagues viewed the Fair as a watershed moment in the legitimation of this new artistic movement. Vever's notebooks thus prove enlightening about the (r)evolution of Art Nouveau, as viewed by one of its leading practitioners.

Friday, October 23, 2009

Session III: 8:30-10:00am

Panel III.A. Literature and Art

Chair: Peter Vantine, Indiana University

**Crossing the Styx: Troubled Journeys through the Past, the Poetic and the Modern
(Dante in Delacroix and Baudelaire)**

Helen Abbott

Bangor University

In order to trace the evolution of Baudelaire's writings in relation to previous works of art, I propose to question whether Delacroix's 1822 painting 'Dante et Virgile' is at the origin of Baudelaire's involvement with the distortions of canonic environments. Does the journey across the river Styx in Delacroix's painting suggest a troubled journey through a literary past? Does such a journey reinforce the necessity of the process of travel in order to uncover new artistic worlds? Given that the painting's intensity 's'accroît par la distance', according to Baudelaire, I shall explore to what extent a notion of distancing is a necessary feature of Baudelaire's literary endeavour. I propose to read Delacroix's painting together with Baudelaire's poem 'L'Irrémédiable', in order to establish whether this is a poem which thematises strategies of distancing and the foreclosure of the conventional gaze ('Dans un Styx bourbeux et plombé / Où nul œil du Ciel ne pénètre') by toying with the canonic, accepted and conventional past of Dante's Inferno. As such, both Delacroix and Baudelaire ironise perception, and propose a concept of modernity that takes as its (problematic) focus a foreign, distant and poetic past. The trapped boat in Baudelaire's poem, like the boat in Delacroix's painting, is frozen in a moment of stasis necessitated by the act of artistic representation in the face of modernity. The inescapability of the journey across the Styx in Delacroix and Baudelaire, serves, I suggest, not simply as a necessary rite of passage, but also as a means to transpose familiar perceptions into an unfathomable realm by forcing the viewer or reader to pause for thought along the way.

The Goncourts' *Manette Salomon*: The Dynamics of Description

Sabrina Wengier

University of Miami

Manette Salomon could have been subtitled, à la Stendhal "Chronique de la vie artistique du dix-neuvième siècle" painting quite an acute picture of the artistic landscape of the time (especially the 1830s to the late 1860s) and the aesthetic issues at stake in the crafting of the new movement of Realism, the representation of the modern, and the debate over color vs. line. *Manette Salomon* relates the personal and artistic downfall of the painter Coriolis at the hands of his mistress and former model *Manette*.

This paper will focus on the descriptive techniques of the Goncourts starting with the analysis of their *écriture artiste* and of what Richard Hartzell has called "tableaux littéraires."¹ I will show how the Goncourts have managed to produce dynamic descriptions that read as though they were a painting drawn in front of the reader's eyes.

The Goncourts trace Coriolis's artistic parcours starting with Orientalism, through incursions into Realism in an attempt to define himself, in Baudelairian terms, as the painter of modern life; to his final bout of ambition as the creator of a 'hallucinated' painting reminiscent of Turner's last works. By focusing on the Goncourts' ekphrases of Coriolis's paintings (or lack thereof), I will show how the brothers anticipate the Impressionist movement in painting and the descriptive mastery of Proust in literature through their emphasis on visual observation and color, the sketchy quality of their descriptions, and the elasticity of their syntax. I will conclude however, that the brothers went ahead of themselves and failed to see the potential of their fictional painter's last

work in which they could have painted, with their words, the "folie d'un talent" (530)², the whirlwind of colors he seems to have produced. I argue that their creation and immediate dismissal of this painting betrays their (aesthetic) position in between stasis and progress.

La ligne ingresque, entre fossilisation et évolution du modèle idéal

Nicolas Valazza

Indiana University

Dans cet exposé, je me propose d'examiner la virtualité stylistique de la « ligne ingresque », telle qu'elle se déploie dans quelques tableaux d'Ingres, mais surtout telle qu'elle apparaît au regard des critiques qui les ont commentés, à l'instar de Théophile Silvestre, Gautier et Baudelaire. Tandis qu'Ingres manifeste, dans ses carnets et notes de cours, l'ambition d'assurer dans son œuvre et son enseignement académique la permanence de la « forme idéale » issue de la Renaissance italienne, notamment de Raphaël ; ses commentateurs, pour leur part, constatent que le dessin d'Ingres assume généralement une apparence « bizarre » et, en quelque sorte, difforme. Si bien que la ligne ingresque ne paraît pas tant se conformer au modèle classique qu'elle ne s'en écarte, et que cette sorte de « fossilisation » de la forme déterminerait en l'occurrence son évolution – pour « bizarre » qu'elle apparaisse – plutôt que de l'exclure, selon une tendance spécifique du « maniérisme ».

Or, il me semble que dans la singularité de cet écart formel par rapport à la norme classique s'inscrit l'un des enjeux stylistiques – autant littéraire que pictural – de la deuxième moitié du dix-neuvième siècle, dont le commentaire de Gautier sur *La Grande Odalisque* et les arabesques de Gustave Moreau fournissent deux exemples emblématiques. La question – à laquelle je me propose d'esquisser quelques éléments de réponse – est de savoir dans quelle mesure la ligne ingresque se trouve à l'origine d'un nouveau paradigme stylistique (dont le « dessin » constitue la métaphore), susceptible d'engendrer les formes les plus extravagantes et énigmatiques. Un paradigme qui aurait influencé des peintres (Moreau, Degas et plus tard Picasso) aussi bien que des écrivains (Gautier, Huysmans et les poètes symbolistes).

Musical Evolution as Social Transformation: The Path to Transcendence in the Works of George Sand

Arline Cravens

Saint Louis University

The reciprocal nature of literature and music has fascinated authors, philosophers, and theorists since medieval times. Viewed as sister arts, they have been historically linked through their common emotive powers of persuasion and expression of human passions.

The nineteenth century witnesses a shift in musical sensibilities, influenced in part by the changing aesthetic response of the public to music as well as the very perception of music. A transformation takes place not only in the behavior of audiences, which become increasingly silent, but in the perception of music by the listener. This change in

degree and depth of engagement while listening corresponds to the impression of instrumental music as dramatic and expressive.

Instrumental music plays a prominent role in several of Sand's novels wherein she portrays music as a divine language as well as a guide for humanity in the attainment of higher understanding. As her heroes and heroines mature in musical development, they simultaneously encounter personal growth. Social progress is achieved through an understanding of the arts, specifically music.

This paper explores the evolution of Sand's application of instrumental music as a vehicle in the quest for enlightenment through a study of her novels *Spiridion*, *Les Sept Cordes de la lyre*, *Consuelo* and its sequel *La Comtesse de Rudolstadt*. Through a study of the feminine, this paper furthermore examines the development of the transcendental nature of Sand's heroines, focusing on the significance of instrumental music in their transformation.

Panel III.B. Fashion

Chair: Sara Phenix, University of Pennsylvania

Physiologie d'une prostituée-paysanne-princesse: The Instability of Identity in Eugène Sue's *Les Mystères de Paris*

Elizabeth Erbeznik

University of Texas at Austin

Responding to Paris's population explosion in the early half of the nineteenth century and the subsequent need to understand the new urban types, the popular physiologies, according to Walter Benjamin, "assured people that everyone could—unencumbered by any factual knowledge—make out the profession, character, background, and lifestyle of passers-by." People are rarely so transparent, however, and the genre eventually evolved to incorporate the novel of urban mysteries, a trend spectacularly launched by Eugène Sue in the 1840s. In this paper, I look at Sue's *Les Mystères de Paris* (1842-43) to consider the way he used conventions popularized by the physiologies (such as establishing character through appearance) only to then complicate the concept of stable selves signified by dress or deportment.

If Paris is mysterious, it is because people who live there are often not what they seem. While the most obviously disguised character is Rodolphe, a German prince dressed as a French ouvrier, the female protagonist Fleur-de-Marie is equally unreadable. By turns a prostitute, peasant, and princess, she remains haunted by her past and is punished for her deceptions, while simultaneously struggling to reconcile her "true self" (naturally modest and good) with her many personae. While male characters seem to profit from their false appearances as they evolve to adapt to changing circumstances, any transformation in women is attributed to dissimulation. Looking at the multiple costume changes throughout the text, I explore the extent to which gender and class influence perception and render the distinction between disguise (Rodolphe) and deception (Fleur-de-Marie) inevitable within these discourses of readable appearance.

The Sense of the Passé: Fashion Culture and its Other (Paris, 1830-1848)

Jennifer Terni

University of Connecticut

By the end of the 1840's, commentators had begun to note that Parisian life was increasingly colonized by the logic of fashion. Gustave Flaubert described the phenomenon as "L'immense Nouveau qui déborde de partout" ("the immense New, spilling out from everywhere"). Novelty in the realm of ideas in the sciences, in political thought, and especially in the arts, took on new importance. As successive waves of the "New" patterned Parisian culture, both popular and elite, they deepened the erosion of values that championed tradition and continuity in favor of those that celebrated dynamism and change. In this context, the new was not only associated with the desirable, it also assigned a new status to what was considered "old-hat."

By examining choice examples from a selection of vaudeville plays – considered here as the theatrical equivalents to newspapers in the way they mirrored the velocity of Parisian culture and its self-representations – my paper will map some of the ways in which the values associated with the "old" were being recast in the context of this passion for the new. Notably, it will explore how ideas of the *démodé* or the *passé* came to operate as code for a new system of cultural Othering that variously included the rural, what was slow to adapt, what was associated with the Ancien Regime or simply not recognized as being fashionable. Although the question of how to interpret the "old" remained a vexed issue throughout the century, I will argue that its recasting in pejorative terms was as powerful as the coronation of the new in shaping cultural attitudes towards the past and, more especially, the future.

Dressed to Kill: Fashion and Femininity in Edmond de Goncourt's *Chérie*

Sara Phenix

University of Pennsylvania

So many of the female protagonists of the realist and naturalist novels of the Second Empire are dressed to kill: Emma Bovary, Renée Saccard, Nana, *Chérie*, to name a few. These women are at the height of sartorial sophistication, to be sure, but they also consistently meet terrible fates of dissolution and death because of their fashion fetishes—they are, in other words, dressed to kill. This paper explores questions of fashion and femininity in Edmond de Goncourt's little-studied last novel *Chérie*, a naturalist text widely considered a forerunner of the Decadent aesthetic. I argue that the novel's meditations on authorship and literary composition are intimately tied to its depictions of the evolution of fashion and French femininity in the Second Empire. While the novel features a female protagonist, and is entirely centered on the female milieu of fashionable France, it is nonetheless a male text. Though much of *Chérie* is derived directly from Goncourt's correspondence with his female readers, the contributions of these women are submitted to an authoritative male narratorial voice, and furthermore remain unacknowledged by the author in the paratext. I show how *Chérie*, insofar as it can be considered a male text, corresponds to the more general question of constructions

of femininity in imperial France. It is my claim that inasmuch as fashion was a powerful signifier for French femininity in the nineteenth century (and still today), French femininity was also an essentially male construction: images of fashionable French femininity were created by male designers, illustrators, publishers, journalists, and shopkeepers. I aim to show that depictions of fashion and femininity in *Chérie* can also be read as representative of the larger social and gender politics of Second Empire France.

Panel III.C. Poetic Creation and Transformation
Chair: Virginie Pouzet-Duzer, Pomona College

Continuous Creation in Victor Hugo's *Les Contemplations*
Katherine Lunn-Rockliffe
Hertford College, Oxford University

This paper will examine how Hugo uses the theological notion of continuous creation to dynamize his cosmic poetry. Continuous creation, the doctrine that God plays a continuing role in sustaining the universe, is at odds with the rational deist belief that God created the universe and then stopped working. It persists in nineteenth-century thought, for instance in Fourier and Reynaud, and becomes connected to ideas about interstellar metempsychosis and the cosmos being like a living organism. A variety of intellectual currents thus coincide in this notion in the mid nineteenth century, and this paper will examine how Hugo transforms these into literary form. It will focus in particular on the poem 'À la fenêtre pendant la nuit', which envisages the formation of new constellations. In it, continuous creation is used as a metaphor to explore the familiar poetic themes of artistic creation, metaphysical speculation, and even mourning. It will be argued that although the poem presupposes a role for God, its main concern is not to affirm faith but to explore processes of change, and that the tension between fixity and flux is enacted in the form. Hugo uses a fixed form which owes much to neoclassical convention, and yet the structures are constantly disrupted by an energy which threatens to exceed them. His representation of continuous creation thus reflects the thinking of a period in which views of the cosmos and of aesthetics were both in flux. Hugo hesitates between viewing the divine as (to use Lovejoy's terms) 'the Absolute of otherworldliness' and 'a God whose prime attribute was generativeness', visible in nature's processes, and his representation of moving stars embodies the Romantic aesthetic that art mimics nature by being itself a perpetually self-transforming entity.

Baudelaire's bodies, or Re-Dressing the Wrongs of Pornography
Raisa Rexer
Yale University

In spite of his subsequent re-appropriation into the French literary canon, and his celebrated status in the history of French poetry, Charles Baudelaire is only rarely without the taint of the accusation made against him by Ernest Pinard in 1857: "Son principe, sa théorie, c'est de tout peindre, de tout mettre à nu."¹ Even now, much contemporary criticism on the status of women in his work, particularly the women of the

text targeted by Pinard, *Les Fleurs du mal*, continues to assume Baudelaire's pornographic overtones, and differs only from Pinard in the artistic assessment of these themes. The beauty of Baudelaire's work may be appreciated, but its moral status remains a subject of debate.

Pinard's legacy seems bolstered by the art-historical context of Baudelaire's 1857 collection, which was published at a particularly tumultuous time in the evolution of artistic representations of the body. Daguerre's 1839 announcement of the invention of a new medium, photography, was soon followed by the swift proliferation of nude photographs, predominantly of women, but not infrequently of hetero- and homosexual activity. By the mid 1850s, daguerreotypes of various pornographic degrees were fairly common around Paris and other European capitals; some sources estimate that over 5,000 daguerreotypes "of an erotic nature" were produced between 1840 and 1860, most in Paris.² Baudelaire's poems seem to participate in this new stage in the evolution of representations of the body, sharing some of the most striking of the representational tropes of contemporary pornographic photography.

In Baudelaire's *Salon de 1859*, however, written shortly after the publication of the collection that was to cause him so many legal troubles, Baudelaire denounces the new art form precisely for the obscene representation of the naked body that constituted the accusations against his own poetry, decrying "des milliers d'yeux avides se [qui] penchaient sur les trous du stéréoscope," and the "amour de l'obscénité," cultivated by the new medium.³ In this paper, I propose a new reading of the nude bodies of *Les Fleurs du mal* that reconciles Baudelaire's 1859 diatribe against the obscenities of photography with the 1857 trial of those obscenities in his poems. I suggest that Baudelaire is reacting against, rather than participating in, the rapid evolution of representational techniques, particularly those of the nude body, that came about with the invention of photography. Baudelaire's poetic bodies are an attempt to reveal the threat of extinction brought against traditional modes of artistic signification by the pornographic photograph.

D'un œil impressionniste
Virginie Pouzet-Duzer
Pomona College

«[R]edevenir primitif en se débarrassant des illusions tactiles », voici ce que Jules Laforgue proposait vers 1883 à ses contemporains, louant ce qu'il nomma « l'œil impressionniste » (Laforgue, *Œuvres Complètes* 136). Cet œil-tactile, ce travail dialectique « primitif » entre l'œil et la main qui serait celui du peintre impressionniste, nous révélerons qu'il fut aussi, à la fin du dix-neuvième siècle, celui de l'écrivain.

Prenant pour point de départ l'article de Laforgue, et revenant sur l'usage du terme « primitif » à travers le dix-neuvième siècle, nous verrons en nous arrêtant sur certains écrits théoriques de Stéphane Mallarmé et d'Émile Zola combien ce « voir le plus simple » constituait une sorte d'exploration, de voyage, d'avancée de l'inconscient vers la conscience – soit pour l'écrivain un processus comparable au fonctionnement de la mémoire en ses oublis, ses surprises, ses fossilisations, un travail de plongée vers les

zones d'ombres de l'intime. Pour le peintre – et ici Édouard Manet et Edgar Degas nous serviront d'exemple – il s'agirait d'avoir acquis une grande sensibilité, de connaître toutes les œuvres du passé, et puis soudain de tout oublier ; ce travail du regard autant que de la main supposant un retour à la réalité de la rue et du plein air. Et c'est le paradoxal « demi-savant » que Paul Bourget inventa en 1882 – un personnage amateur de peinture autant que de littérature – qui nous permettra de conclure sur « ce je ne sais quoi de momentané » que l'œil impressionniste permet de saisir avant que de le transcrire (Bourget, *Études et portraits* I 273).

Panel III.D. Late 19th-Century Art

Chair: Christa Dimarco, Temple University

Artist as Preacher, Art as Redeemer: A Study of van Gogh's and Whistler's Ideas on the Role of the Artist

Christa Dimarco

Temple University

The Parisian avant-garde painters of the mid-nineteenth century marked a shift in the spectator's experience of the visual arts, from the epistemological to the phenomenological. Art offered a voyage to the viewer-participant and in turn the role of the artist became one of a guide to the beyond, to a transcendental Beauty. When assessed together, three of Charles Baudelaire's critical and poetic writings – *The Painter of Modern Life*, *The Salon of 1859*, and “The Poem of Hashish” from *Artificial Paradises* – explain the dialectical process of creating art from the imagination, art that would then trigger the imagination of the viewer, allow him or her to escape the restraints of the material world, and succumb to the transitory world pulsing beneath the tangible. Baudelaire's texts gave both the artist and the participant aesthetic directives. Critics such as Stéphane Mallarmé, Edmond Duranty and G-Albert Aurier attested to the spectator's voyage before a canvas painted with enticing artificial qualities – intensified color or laden detail for example. While these critics first explained that their senses had been affected by the unique use of formal elements, Aurier and Mallarmé explicitly stated that their minds had been transported to Idea, Platonic Idea, which is a level of Beauty that exists in the eternal world purely and without pain. Evident in their critical responses is the artist's ability to lead the viewer-participant to the beyond.

One motif that suggests that artists understood Baudelaire's ideals is that of the Preacher. This motif surfaces in Théophile Gautier's introduction to *Mademoiselle de Maupin* (1834) in which he wrote that “every newspaper serial turns into a pulpit; every journalist becomes a preacher” (my emphasis). He made the case that while the public is willing to listen to those who feel that they can determine what art can be, such as a preacher, Beauty will be withheld. A precursor to Baudelairean aesthetics, Gautier felt that art should be useless, impractical -- not didactic. In 1885 James McNeill Whistler declared that he, himself, was a Preacher in his public lecture, “Ten o'clock,” and took up Gautier's call to make art for the sake of Beauty. Similarly Vincent van Gogh's use of religious imagery also speaks to this theme. Analyzing Van Gogh's painting *Sower with Setting Sun* (1888) against this backdrop will contextualize the painter's use of high-

keyed color and performative brush strokes relative to a religious figure. While contemplating Van Gogh's work, Aurier claimed that the painter's use of excessive, saturated color courted his imagination and transported his mind. Moreover, in a transcendental state, Aurier called Van Gogh "a messiah, a sower of truth" (my emphasis). These words suggest that Van Gogh's imagery redeemed the critic's deadened senses, stifled by the monotony of the material world. Aurier's critical account of Van Gogh can be interpreted through Baudelairean aesthetics to explain how Sower was created for and perceived as a catalyst for escape. This paper will reevaluate Van Gogh's *Sower* within the aesthetic milieu of the mid 1880s Parisian avant-garde, an overlooked tenet of his art-making process, and show how Van Gogh's role as a painter was that of an oracle of the viewer's imaginative journey.

Space and Subjectivity in Monet: The Poplars Series

Darci Gardner

Stanford University

In years leading up to Einstein's Special Theory (1905), numerous mathematicians challenged the Newtonian concept of absolute space, which they sought to define in terms of more subjective perspectives. Emerging from this context, Monet's Poplars series (1891) can be interpreted as an exploration of the process of perception. Painted from a boat floating down the river Epte, these paintings depict the fluctuations of space as it appears from a moving reference point. By juxtaposing discrete images, the series paintings contrast discontinuous perception-events that bring into relief the dynamism of the natural world. Depending on the viewing angle and distance, the trees are impressionistic in some paintings but verge on decorative abstraction in others, and this range illustrates the contingency of spaces that the previously dominant paradigm of naturalism had defined as stable.

Through a close analysis of the Poplars series, this paper illustrates how Monet manipulates perspective to project the same space in a range of disparate representational styles. By focusing on the way that each painting visually specifies the location of the painter-beholder, we begin to see how the compression of space in post-naturalist painting relates to the contemporaneous relativization of space in scientific discourses of fin-de-siècle France.

Centres, cycles et cyclopes: Evolution et monstruosité dans *Les Noirs* d'Odilon

Redon

Eloise Sureau

Butler University

Cet essai étudiera le rôle du cycle dans la création du monstre chez Odilon Redon. Le cycle, qu'il suggère celui de la vie à la mort ou qu'il fasse montre d'une évolution darwinienne inversée et renversée, tient une place de choix dans l'univers du peintre. Sera mise en relief, dans *les Noirs*, la place que tient l'homme sur la Grande Chaîne des Êtres, et la relation ambiguë qu'il entretient au XIXe siècle, et selon Redon, avec les autres êtres de la Création.

Grâce aux textes de Deleuze et de Derrida pour n'en citer que deux, seront donc considérés le monstre, et la monstruosité dans la peinture de Redon, tels qu'ils sont liés au cycle en ceci--entre autres--qu'ils aident à dévoiler la création, ou re-création artistique et esthétique d'une identité individuelle et universelle, paradoxalement double : symboliste et décadente, et en même temps ni l'une ni l'autre.

En considérant l'évolution et le monstre, ainsi que l'évolution du monstre chez Redon, cet essai tentera d'exposer une décentralisation, voire une déhumanisation de l'homme. Nous verrons comment cette peinture présente une mise en question de deux mille ans de développement humain, un retournement des idées humanistes. Il s'agira de montrer que l'évolution, selon Redon, se fait dé-évolution.

Underwater Visions: Odilon Redon, the Aquarium, and the Sea

Isabel Suchanek

University of Pennsylvania

Interested in vision as both a physiological and creative process, Redon explored all the facets of the visual in his art, seeking a means of rendering into static form that which was inherently mobile. Rather than represent vision's claims to truth, as he believed the Impressionists did, he sought to create an art that reenacted the processes of vision, representing in the subject matter as well as technique its limitations, untruths, and misapprehensions. If this effort began with the upward-turned eye of his charcoal drawings and lithographs, by the 1900s, the iconography of the eye had disappeared, replaced by fantastic flowers and underwater creatures that—with their references to transformation and metamorphosis—evoked this notion of vision as fluctuating and unstable. This paper will focus upon Redon's pastels and paintings of the underwater world, in conjunction with nineteenth-century conceptions of the ocean—both popular and scientific—that described it as a protean place of hybridity and transformation, its abyssal depths home to an unimaginable variety of creatures. This includes the aquarium, a popular spectacle that amalgamated the passage, galerie, panorama, theater, and museum, and was thus intrinsically related to ideas of seeing. Prized for its kaleidoscopic qualities in the tableaux vivants it offered to the spectators, the aquarium represented a new way of seeing predicated on instability and metamorphosis, proffering for contemplation scenes that were eternally reconstituted and renewed. I will argue that Redon's understanding of vision owed as much to the visual experience of the aquarium and the strange creatures—like the medusa or the seahorse, which seemed to defy the categorical distinctions between the different kingdoms of nature—as it did to contemporary visual theory.

Panel III.E. Women, Power and Social Institutions: Session 1

Chair: Katy Adair, University of California, Santa Barbara

A Network of "Bas-bleus": Around Mme Georges de Peyrebrune

Margot Irvine

University of Guelph

In the years preceding the creation of the prix Vie heureuse in 1904 (renamed the prix Femina in 1917) a network of women of letters who would later form the all-female jury of this prize began to take shape. One figure at the centre of this network was Mme Georges de Peyrebrune. Peyrebrune describes the relationships between her colleagues, as well as their difficult relations with the male-dominated literary institution (editors, directeurs de revues, and men of letters), in her *Roman d'un bas-bleu* (Paris: Ollendorf, 1892) and her play, *Jupiter et les bas-bleu* (Paris: Ollendorf, 1894). When read together with her correspondence with many of the women who would go on to sit on the first Femina jury (Sévérine, Marcelle Tinayre, Gabrielle Réval, Lucie Delarue-Mardrus, Jane Dieulafoy, Mme Alphonse Daudet, Judith Cladel) we are able to determine who were the influential figures and where the factions lay in this community, united in its desire for recognition for women writers from the literary institution of the fin-de-siècle.

In order to organize and classify historical literary networks, Michel Lacroix proposes that we study the representations of such networks available to us through correspondence, memoirs and photographs arguing that « on n'accède jamais à la relation concrète telle quelle, mais à un objet second par rapport à celle-ci et qui la met en scène ¹ ». Drawing on the methods described by Lacroix, this paper will examine the literary network of women writers which surrounded Mme Georges de Peyrebrune from 1890-1917.

***Indiana* ou la femme fossilisée**
Cynthia Harvey
Université du Québec à Chicoutimi

Dans la préface d'*Indiana* (1832), George Sand, reprenant le postulat de Stendhal, affirme que « l'écrivain n'est qu'un miroir ». Elle conçoit son métier comme celui d'une « machine » qui « décalque » et considère qu'elle n'a rien à « se faire pardonner si ses empreintes sont exactes ». Dans cette communication, j'aborderai le thème de la fossilisation, soit le « passage d'un corps organisé à l'état de fossile »¹, d'un point de vue métaphorique en cherchant les empreintes laissées par le corps du personnage féminin, Indiana. Je souhaite montrer comment cette femme passe de l'état de « trésor fragile et précieux »², c'est-à-dire d'objet, à celui de sujet en quête d'identité (lors de sa fugue), avant de redevenir objet entre les bras d'un protecteur, Ralph. Si la femme est souvent présentée comme objet dans les textes masculins (statue, œuvre picturale ou tapisserie chez Gautier), elle tente de sortir de son immobilisation chez Sand, mais faute de moyens dans une société qui soutient l'assujettissement de la femme, elle retourne à un état de pétrification. La conclusion d'*Indiana*, qui a soulevé l'ire de la critique par son romantisme éculé (Indiana et Ralph rappellent Paul et Virginie), illustre bien cette rétrogradation. Faute de pouvoir s'inscrire dans la sphère sociale du roman réaliste, le personnage féminin se replie dans le mythe du paradis perdu. En ce sens, Indiana est bien une femme fossilisée.

A New Man for the New Woman : Feminist Marital Fantasies at the Fin-de-Siècle
Rachel Mesch

Yeshiva University

This paper will consider ways that certain fin-de-siècle women writers used the novel as a forum for a frank, heartfelt interrogation of the role of marriage in modern women's lives, as well as a means of exploring its alternatives. Recent criticism has tended to draw a line between the fin-de-siècle new women, who rejected marriage for its conventional feminine domesticity, and feminists of this period, who hinged their demands for women's rights and equality upon their contributions in the domestic sphere. What I will demonstrate here is that even among women who openly embraced the label of "feminist" (a term which many of their female writing peers readily eschewed) and in other contexts spoke out forcefully on issues ranging from education to suffrage to female workers, views about marriage tended to be much more nuanced and conflicted. Indeed, women's novels during this period betray a deep ambivalence about the role of marriage in the modern, independent and often professional woman's life and dramatize many new conflicts that arose from recent lifestyle changes. Reading popular novels by Louise-Marie Compain, Marcelle Tinayre and Camille Pert, I will sketch some of these conflicts—ranging from the possibility of equality between partners, to reconciling female independence, sexuality, marriage and maternity. I will also explore the particular role the novel served for these authors as a means of expressing views about marriage that were largely absent from the popular female press at the time.

Sex Wars at the Fin-de-Siècle

Gretchen Schultz

Brown University

It has been well established that the fin-de-siècle did not smile upon female sexual liberty. Predatory, demonic, fatal in literature written by men, sexually active women were similarly portrayed by medical doctors, who called upon Darwin's theories to pathologize them as atavistic. At the other extreme, hygienists painted "normal" female sexuality in predictable ways: passive, timid, of limited appetite (e.g., Debay, *Physiologie du mariage*). But rather than critiquing such visions of both hyper- and hypo-sexuality, some of the leading feminists of the third Republic urged women to conform to normative femininity and to circumscribe their desire.

Maria Deraismes (1828-94) argued that fidelity in marriage was necessary for the advancement of women's rights. Virtue, or the suppression of sexual instinct, is « favorable ... à notre progrès » (Eve dans l'humanité, 1891). Deraismes, positivist and Darwinian herself, saw unbridled sexuality as a danger to the family and an impediment to social evolution and women's equality. Deraismes' mistrust of sexual license extended to literature. In *Epidémie naturaliste* (1888) she took aim at the « fanatisme lubrique » of writers such as Flaubert, who « franchissait les limites qu'avait respectées Balzac », and she denounced the « lascivité répugnante » of Zola.

But women also wrote novels that, like Zola's, sought to « tirer [l'acte sexuel] de la honte où on le cache ». Rachilde presents a prominent example, but so does Marie Kryszynska (1857-1908), whose poorly known novels, « Folle de son corps » (1896) and « Force du

désir » (1905) propose complex female characters unapologetic for their sexuality: « [le] rut a de la beauté et de la grandeur ». Curiously, Krysinska disdained what she called “professional feminists,” as did Rachilde. She nonetheless offered a robust defense of sexual pleasure, which counters both Deraismes’ moralistic feminism and dominant constructions of female eroticism gone wild. I propose to read Krysinska’s novels against both feminist and hegemonic discourses, which invoke Darwin for radically opposing political agendas. Such a reading brings to light Krysinska’s nuanced analysis of sexual oppression in marriage and her assessment of the social, economic, and physical price that women pay for the erotic fulfillment she champions.

Panel III.F. Baudelaire: Stasis and Progress

Chair: Joseph Acquisto, University of Vermont

The (D)Evolving Baudelairean Death in 1857: "La Mort" in *Les Fleurs du mal*

Joyce Wu

Duke University

Baudelaire’s portrayal of death in *Les Fleurs du mal* is far from fossilization. Taking cue from the significance of the structural unity and order of the work invoked in the 1857 trial, I look specifically into what is categorized as death through the last section of *Les Fleurs du mal*, eponymously “La Mort,” which, in 1857, consists of “La Mort des amants,” “La Mort des pauvres” and “La Mort des artistes.” “La Mort des amants” suggests the resuscitation of the lovers, whom the poem works to reduce from a duality, to a singularity and finally to a break between stanzas that is their death. “La Mort des pauvres” is a one-sentence sonnet enumerating amorphous descriptions and definitions of death for the poor, who are defined by lack, and yet their death is defined by abundance, which undoes their poverty, such that they are no longer poor in death. “La Mort des artistes” posits that the artist’s self-destruction is part of the artistic creation and leads to the blossoming of artistic conceptions. The poem itself is complete at the poetic decomposition of the artists in question. Close reading reveals that the three death poems of the 1857 *Les Fleurs du mal* present the rhetorical erasure of the lovers, the poor and the artists. “La Mort des amants” ends with the hope of resuscitation, but is in fact more the stasis of death, while both “La Mort des pauvres” and “La Mort des artistes” are more the promise of progress: death is, respectively, a better “life” for the poor and the flourishing of art for the artist. Supposedly a void, if not regress, death is in fact shown to compose of three poems involving stasis but mostly progress, which asserts the evolutionary aspect of the Baudelairean death in 1857.

The Milieu in Baudelaire

Catherine Bordeau

Lyon College

Charles Baudelaire often evokes naturalist conceptions of the milieu, conveying the belief that surrounding conditions shape and influence the individual. However, he suggests that certain individuals maintain ascendancy in their relationship with the milieu. In his “Exposition universelle, 1855” he affirms the ability of the imagination to assimilate the

milieu, appropriate its “vitality” and produce highly individual art. Baudelaire’s notion of the artist’s status within the milieu reflects his belief in God, in the god-like individual, and in the ultimately spiritual nature of existence.

Much as in Balzac, mesmerism often bridges the gap between naturalist and spiritualist concepts in Baudelaire’s treatment of the milieu. In mesmerism, the strong-willed individual manipulates magnetic fluid, the substance conceived as a medium of influence surrounding all beings. Baudelaire affirms as well a related belief in “la vie universelle,” which the artist perceives in the milieu and interprets symbolically, revealing harmonious correspondences between natural and spiritual worlds.

However, Baudelaire also depicts individuals who lack will and energy, describing their physiological response to material surroundings in ways that evoke contemporary notions of degeneration. In “Le Mauvais vitrier,” Baudelaire casts the narrator’s cruelty as a response to the discordant and dirty urban milieu. Nonetheless, the narrator presents two interpretive frameworks, one medical and the other religious: he is either hysterical or possessed by demons. Baudelaire thus raises the question of how one reconciles the naturalist and religious currents in his thought.

Baudelaire’s treatment of environmental influence is situated between the poles of fossilization and evolution: he suggests that the milieu transforms the individual, but rejects the notion of humanity’s progress. He affirms the value of the individual’s inner milieu, which grows through contact with a series of outer milieus, becoming increasingly strange and vital.

Portait de Baudelaire en monument: la réception des classiques, une pétrification?

Mathilde Labbé

Université Paris-Sorbonne

Le 2 septembre 1867, Charles Baudelaire était inhumé au cimetière Montparnasse, et son nom était gravé en dessous de celui son beau-père, le général Aupick, avant que celui de sa mère ne les y rejoignît. En 1892, le projet de lui construire un monument dans ce même cimetière déclenche une polémique dans la presse, mais, en 1902, le cénotaphe est finalement inauguré. Le rôle symbolique de la statuaire et des querelles qu'elle a provoquées peut-il être analysé métaphoriquement ? Le concept de pétrification peut-il éclairer l'étude de la réception de l'auteur classique ? C'est la question que je souhaite aborder dans cette communication, qui examinera les modalités de la réception récente. Du centenaire des *Fleurs du Mal* à leur cent-cinquantième, la critique baudelairienne a exploré des pistes et ouvert des chantiers divers, complétant et parfois réfutant les analyses proposées, comme en une perpétuelle rénovation. Cependant, l'ampleur de la bibliographie semble décourager toute prétention d'une analyse neuve : reste-t-il des pans inexploités de l'oeuvre ? A mesure que cette source risquait de se tarir, d'autres types de discours se sont approprié l'oeuvre pour en donner leur propre lecture. Illustration, adaptation, citation et reprises, utilisation publicitaire, ces transferts sont-ils à même de constituer une nouvelle forme de critique ou bien ne font-ils qu'accentuer la pétrification de l'oeuvre en la réduisant à quelques vers ici et là répétés, figés en une rime une vie de

recherche formelle et esthétique ? Je propose de répondre à cette question en confrontant deux domaines que je considère comme deux formes d'appropriation, la critique littéraire et les réceptions créatrices, afin de montrer comment Baudelaire, tour à tour Janus et Glaucus, est devenu pour la culture française un pilier dont on a de plus en plus de difficultés à apercevoir la base.

The Residue of the Imagination: Baudelaire's *Tableaux parisiens* and Victor Hugo
Karen Quandt
Princeton University

“Il faut tout dire,” Victor Hugo declared in the preface to the *Odes et Ballades* (5th ed., 1828), and he seemed to have reached this goal with his epic *La Légende des siècles* in 1859 (first series).

But for Baudelaire, Hugo’s later poetry did not say (“tout dire”) as much as it eloquently assembled all of the Romantic clichés: Nature, progress, the infinite, the poet as prophet, etc.. In its very ambition, Hugo’s oeuvre was withering into the sapped form of a fossil.

In positing Baudelaire’s fossilization of Hugo as a point of departure, this paper will then ask the following: how did Baudelaire consider his imagination as having evolved out of a clichéd Romantic one? The general narrative of the “Tableaux parisiens” in *Les Fleurs du mal* (1861), I argue, underscores Baudelaire’s realization that the imagination serves only as a temporary anesthetization to the bleak and the ‘miserable’; irony was the ultimate means to the creative, and in the end, the narrator wakes up to a dawn that is exhausted and hung-over...but it is a dawn nonetheless (“Le Crépuscule du matin”).

This paper will focus in particular on the three poems in the “Tableaux parisiens” dedicated to Hugo - “Le Cygne”, “Les Sept vieillards”, “Les Petites vieilles” (all 1859) – and how they form a key point of departure in Baudelaire’s oeuvre as a whole, an ‘ars poetica’ in the form of a micro-narrative which asserts evolution in art not as a drive towards the transcendent, but as an engaged focus on the raw and the intimate. These three poems encapsulate what Baudelaire, when referring to Eugène Delacroix, described as the epitome of the “nouveau”, or of a “plus riche imagination”: “je n’entends par ce mot les capharnaüms de la nuit, mais la vision produite par une intense méditation” (Salon de 1859). The irony of the *Fleurs du mal*, in their aestheticizing of the demoralizing effects of the urban, is a paradoxically fertile and luminous antidote to Hugo’s vast but hollow “bouche d’ombre”.

Friday, October 23, 2009
Session IV: 10:30-12:00 noon

Panel IV.A. Naturalism and Its Discontents
Chair: Sayeeda Mamoon, Edgewood College

Collecting in *A Rebours*: Between Science and Art
Kirsten Ellicson

Columbia University

While it is easier to claim that J.-K. Huysmans' 1884 *A Rebours* enacts the transition between naturalism and decadence in Huysmans' work, it is more difficult to specify the extent to which *A Rebours* embodies the decadent aesthetic in French literature, and the extent to which it remains rooted in naturalist themes and methods. This paper argues that the reason for this difficulty is also the subject of the novel: Des Esseintes' collecting activity, and the metaphor of the collection of language that emerges. The theme of collecting in *A Rebours* looks both forward to the decadent collection of the details of art and artifice, and backward to the naturalist collection of details of the real. Des Esseintes' role as a collector mediates this text's mise-en-scène of the evolution from naturalism to decadence. The self-consciousness and rigor with which both Huysmans and Des Esseintes choose, list, compile, compose, arrange and describe — both objects and language — make explicit the act of collecting that lies at the basis of all writing, but particularly the collecting of naturalist scientific observation. Des Esseintes' pseudo-scientific experiments are founded on collecting and composing art, books, perfumes, flowers. While the outcomes of these experiments at times suggest artistic creation, positing Des Esseintes as an artist or writer, the sheer textual space devoted to the collecting activity that precedes those outcomes troubles their status as creations. Huysmans thus problematizes the foundations of naturalism: is the accumulation of language and details the condition for, or an impediment to, literary creation and innovation?

Durtal and Marchenoir between Fossilization and Evolution

Willemijn Don

New York University

Conversion can be seen as a process of evolution: a formerly skeptic individual's heart and mindset is transformed so that he now accepts the claims he once rejected. During the nineteenth century however, the term of evolution, which often connotes progress and modernization, seems to apply more to the conversion from religious belief to secularism based on scientific evidence than to a secular intellectual's reintegration in the Church, an institution almost synonymous with fossilization.

Durtal and Marchenoir, main characters in Huysmans' *Roman de Durtal* and in Bloy's *Le Désespéré* respectively, go through the latter process of conversion. However, their opinion challenges the view of the Church as a fossilized institution: according to these characters, the church has evolved too much and adapted itself to the norms of the modern world to the point of watering down its message and losing its purity. Scorning the contemporary church, they prefer an even more ancient tradition and retreat in medieval abbeys where the orders have preserved authentic spirituality. Their conversion thus seems to be a flight from modernity to the preserved fossilized faith of the Middle Ages.

Although Durtal and Marchenoir reject the evolution of the faith, even their journeys show that they are not immune from it. A closer examination of their conversion suggests

that their predilection for medieval mysticism and accent on spiritual experience, rather than a return to a fossilized tradition, constitutes a modern way of dealing with ‘fossilized’ religion: mysticism with its emphasis on personal experience can be considered as a modern way of seeking evidence for belief. Through an in-depth analysis of these characters’ actions and experiences, this paper thus complicates the equation of faith with fossilization and secularism with evolution and progress.

Petrification and Disintegration: Artistic (De)Compositions in J.-K. Huysmans's *À rebours*

Sayeeda Mamoon

Edgewood College

Joris-Karl Huysmans’s 1884 novel *À rebours* opens in the ancestral portrait gallery of the Château de Lourps with compelling images of formidable aristocrats in shining armor fossilized in old and dusty picture frames. The lens shifts chronologically to focus on the last survivor—“le rejeton” of this illustrious lineage, the duke Jean Floressas des Esseintes, a frail and effeminate recluse, whose chief preoccupation in his solitary home in Fontenay consists of a delectable quest for unique and fanciful objets d’art to enrich his select and extraordinary collection:

Il songeait simplement à se composer, pour son plaisir personnel et non pour l’étonnement des autres, un intérieur confortable et paré néanmoins d’une façon rare, à se façonner une installation curieuse et calme, appropriée aux besoins de sa future solitude.

Lorsque la maison de Fontenay fût prête et agencée, suivant ses désirs et ses plans, . . . il passa de nouveau et longuement en revue la série des couleurs et des nuances.

In Huysmans’s fin-de-siècle narrative, the duke’s private museum becomes a personal canvas, an intimate installation, which evolves into his own artistic composition before fossilizing into a reliquary, and degenerating into a mausoleum. With each shade, stone, note, or perfume he carefully picks out for the rapture of his senses and the satiation of his taste for “artifice,” des Esseintes reveals himself not only as an aesthete and a dilettante, but also as a creative genius, whose denaturalized and hieratic inventions inevitably succumb to decay and decomposition.

In this paper, I will examine the process of petrification, fragmentation, and dissolution of art objects in *À rebours* through a tour of des Esseintes’s fatal collection. My investigation will also underscore the subversive aesthetics and decadent sensibility of Huysmans’s provocative novel, which signaled the author’s definitive break with Naturalism, and constituted a turning point in his writing.

Panel IV.B. Geography and Space

Chair: Dana Lindaman, University of Minnesota

Mapping Creative Destruction in Zola's *La Curée*

Patrick Bray

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

The second novel in Emile Zola's *Les Rougon-Macquart*, *La Curée*, describes the rapidly gained and ephemeral fortune of a land speculator, Aristide Saccard. Saccard owes his fabulous success to an intimate knowledge of Napoleon III's hand-drawn plan for transforming Paris. In my talk I will focus on a key scene in the novel when Saccard explains to his first wife the emperor's incredible building project while overlooking Paris from Montmartre. The bird's-eye-view of Paris translates into language the apocryphal map of Haussmann's urban plan. At the same time the dense passage reveals how Saccard will exploit his knowledge to turn the destruction of vast neighborhoods into money, which in the light of the setting sun, seems to rain down upon the city. Saccard's panoramic vision of Paris, I argue, takes the static spatial image of an absent map and puts it into motion, deterritorializing city space, like the flow of capital itself. Speculation is shown to be nothing more than the ability to read time in an image.

The dossiers préparatoires for the *Rougon-Macquart* confirm that narrative progression, for Zola, is a question of translating mapped space into language. Zola included dozens of hand-drawn sketches, plans, and maps into his notes for the novels – for *La Curée* there are half a dozen sketches of Saccard's newly-built mansion and greenhouse. Yet there is no bird's-eye-view of Paris and hardly any visual representations of the city at all in the thousands of pages of notes. By comparing the panoramas of Paris in *La Curée* and in Zola's other works (*Une page d'amour*, *L'œuvre*) to the dossiers préparatoires, I will show how Paris resists Zola's profound spatial imagination, ultimately embodying the tension between, on the one hand the visual and spatial representations of a map, and on the other the verbal and temporal instability of the literary text.

Toute école est buissonnière: Progressive Geography in Colette's *Claudine à l'école*

Leon Sachs

University of Kentucky

Ever since the Revolutionary period, the republican school has been torn between competing goals of, on the one hand, training autonomous, enlightened individuals and, on the other hand, of promoting national unity and collective devotion to la patrie. This paper presents Colette's *Claudine à l'école* as an exploration of this tension. Through its manipulation of tropes of geography, architecture, and space, the novel both sets up and overcomes the binary opposition between authority and autonomy that arguably constitutes the (troubled) core of the republican school.

Taking as my point of departure Claudine's opening criticism of the description of her native Montigny appearing in her *Manuel de géographie départementale*, I will argue that the contrast between the official textbook account of departmental geography and Claudine's hands-on knowledge of her village sets up a dialectic between institutional learning and individual experience that structures the remainder of the novel. A symbol

of the disciplinary innovations in the Third Republic's new curriculum, the geography lesson in the novel's opening pages represents an abstract, rule-bound, highly-structured method for representing space and place. This formal, institutional science is challenged by Claudine's idiosyncratic and relentlessly ironic account of her habitat, which is repeated aesthetically by Colette's seemingly unstructured, undisciplined, or “savage,” narrative style. This opposition, reminiscent of Montaigne's distinction between cosmography and topography, reappears in various guises throughout the rest of the novel, manifesting itself, for example, in the opposition between the construction of a new school building and Claudine's longing for the open, untamed space of Montigny's surrounding forest, or, again, in the opposition between conventional heterosexual relations and “transgressive” homosexual passion.

In my conclusion, I aim to show how the novel ultimately moves beyond this well-trodden opposition in the culminating episode of the Fête de l'agriculture. In these carnivalesque festivities, the local flora invades the civilized, Republican space of the village and the boundaries between the institutional and the natural become blurred. In the end, Colette has produced a new educational space that is both structured and disorganized, hierarchical and irreverent, cosmographical and topographical. It is a true republican école buissonnière.

Mapping the Evolving French *Cartes d'identités*

Dana Lindaman

University of Minnesota

By the time PVB wrote his *Tableau de la géographie de la France* in 1903, he had already influenced an entire generation of geographers eager to ply their trade under the new republican government. His approach, what Henri Lefebvre later described as human geography, adopted embodied and organic metaphors to describe the underlying harmony of French geography. Not content with the neatly circumscribed political maps of France, Vidal sought to divorce the various layers of information onto separate maps, overlaying them to show both diachronic and synchronic development. But rather than reading the evolutionary development of France using Darwin's theories, Vidal relied on Lamarck (without ever actually mentioning him), a significant omission that had profound implications for Republicanism. Lamarck's theory of the inheritance of acquired characteristics, I argue, allowed Vidal to sidestep the perceived determinism of Darwinian evolution, especially as it was understood by Spencer in England and Ratzel in Germany.

Through an analysis of various republican texts, including government archives and school textbooks, I will show that Vidal's human geography influenced a contemporaneous remapping of society and the self. In the former case, I will argue that the republican government relied on geographers as it considered crafting a "republican space" out of the new schools required by the Ferry Laws. Providing a republican environment in the form of schools, the Republic intended to form republican citizens. That republican space was dominated by Vidal's maps, front and center in the hist/geog classrooms. In the case of the individual, I argue that the new emphasis on geography in

the school curriculum and its coupling with history gave students new republican points de repères. For both the individual and the collective, Vidal's human geography proved crucial in drawing up a new carte d'identité.

Katherine Gantz

St. Mary's College of Maryland

On the Origin of Species: Learning from Huart's *Flâneur fossilisé*

Once largely confined to literary matters, the nineteenth century flâneur has emerged as the crossover darling of other disciplines. As a term that had historically served as shorthand for modernist notions of leisure and spectacle in western European cities of the 1800s, flânerie is suddenly evolving, taking on hybridized forms as urban studies and media theory in particular look for ways to describe the postmodern urban experience. This paper reverses the trend of further diffusion, instead retracing the steps of the flâneur to the earliest days of the nineteenth century. Louis Huart's seminal satire, *Physiologie du flâneur* (1841), parodies the field guide, cataloguing subspecies of flâneurs, badauds, and musards, while revealing class anxieties playing out in urban life. By unearthing the body and character of the city stroller from the popular French imagination of that period, I will argue that this first model—le flâneur fossilisé—provides unique insights on how to interpret Second Empire public space as it is currently inhabited in postmodern Paris.

While Baudelaire and Benjamin later recast the flâneur in more solemn incarnations, the figure was initially a comic, lighthearted character. At issue for Huart and his contemporaries were questions of how the city was being actively lived and experienced, and not more metaphysical questions of the flâneur's intellectual and emotional composition, a turn that takes place at the end of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth. Foregoing today's predominant understanding of the flâneur as alienated and "interiorized," I will examine present-day photos collected from a number of the most famous public spaces in Paris constructed during the Second Empire (some of them sites referenced in Huart) to situate a twenty-first century flânerie that, like the fossilized form detailed in *Physiologies*, is the product of engaged, dynamic interaction with the urban environment.

Panel IV.C. Chevelures, Restes, Traces

Chair: Franc Schuerewegen, Université de Nimègue

Où est donc passée la chevelure de Nana?

Karen Haddad-Wotling

Université de Paris Ouest-Nanterre

Lisant *Nana* à la lumière d'*Un Amour de Swann*, on ne peut qu'être frappé par ce que Pierre Bayard a appelé « plagiat par anticipation », ou pour le dire en termes proustiens, par « le côté Proust de Zola » ; Proust semble en effet s'être amusé à réécrire *Nana* dans *Un Amour de Swann*, et en ce sens on peut parler de « cocotte fossilisée » en la personne d'Odette, créature du XIX^e siècle qui survit dans la *Recherche* ; mais Proust a laissé de côté un détail : Odette n'est dotée ni de la pilosité, ni même de la chevelure de Nana ; la

coiffure d'Odette, lorsqu'elle apparaît, est une construction complexe, à l'image de ses toilettes qui lui dessinent un corps artificiel, fait de pièces et de morceaux ; tandis que la chevelure de Nana est du côté du naturel, du bestial et du sexuel, des épingles défaits ; deux choix capillaires qui sont autant de choix esthétiques.

Chateaubriand dégarni
Franc Schuerewegen
Université de Nimègue

Si le cheveu n'est pas un fossile, dans les *Mémoires d'outre-tombe* est parfois évoqué cet étrange motif que nous appellerons, faute d'un terme plus approprié, le cheveu-fossile : ce qui reste de l'animal-homme (ou femme) après la mort. « J'ai vu à Rome de beaux cheveux retirés d'une tombe ». Ou à propos du supplice d'Anne Boylen : « Quelle volupté ! le fer avait tranché le col délicat, ensanglanté les beaux cheveux auxquels le poète-roi avait attaché ses fatales caresses ». Chateaubriand érotise le cheveu mais aussi, si on peut dire, le fossilise. Le motif capillaire est lié au fantasme d'une vie après la mort, qui aurait traversé la mort. A Venise : « Le crâne avait encore quelques cheveux de la couleur des miens ». Ou encore : « Le fantôme monarchique, paré de ses cheveux blancs, imprimait encore vigoureusement sur la neige ses pas ineffaçables ». Car c'est aussi, de toute évidence, l'indestructible vigueur du mémorialiste, sa permanence (pour être si bien mort, il peut revenir hanter le monde des vivants), que vient désigner dans les textes le motif du cheveu-fossile. L'écrivain qui s'adresse à nous d'outre-tombe est une figure intermédiaire entre le poète vieillissant, « au front dépouillé », et le roi chevelu.

L'« histoire de fille » en évolution : de *Marthe* de Huysmans à *Nana* de Zola
Jenelle Griffin
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Pendant le dernier quart du dix-neuvième siècle le personnage de la fille de joie subit une évolution curieuse. C'est un sujet artistique représentatif non seulement des glissements sociaux sous le Second Empire mais aussi du statut de l'écrivain qui le représente. *Marthe* de J.-K. Huysmans (1876) est le prototype de l'histoire de fille comme genre. Cette œuvre est souvent décrite comme le descendant avant-la-lettre de *Nana* d'Emile Zola (1880). Ici nous avons deux textes qui montrent un rapport homologue entre la fille publique et l'écrivain professionnel. Si la prostituée vit, dans le récit, grâce au désir sexuel qu'elle vend aux hommes, l'écrivain, lui, vit de la vente d'un désir textuel à ses lecteurs grâce aux annonces et aux préfaces qui suggèrent une histoire illicite tout en défendant la valeur morale du texte. L'évolution de leur métier est parallèle.

Je propose une analyse d'une scène commune aux deux ouvrages : la fille qui fait face à une ancienne représentation artistique de la prostituée. *Marthe*, considérant une gravure de Hogarth, « A Prostitute's Progress » (1731), dans le salon de son nouvel amant devient nostalgique de sa vie libre de fille publique tandis que *Nana*, commentant sa lecture d'une histoire de fille (probablement celle de Huysmans ou Elisa de Edmond de Goncourt), refuse de se reconnaître dans ce portrait. Qu'est-ce qui explique la différence entre ces deux réactions ? Ces deux mises en abîmes de la fille devant une représentation

de son métier permet à l'écrivain de se situer dans une position homologue vis-à-vis de son art. Lire ces images de la fille dans le contexte de leur publication, c'est voir une double représentation de l'évolution de ce type de textes entre Huysmans et Zola.

"Barbey's Fossils and Fossilization *dessous de cartes*"

Allan Pasco

University of Kansas

Among the stories Barbey d'Aurevilly included in *Les Diaboliques* (1874), the most impenetrable has been 'Le dessous de cartes d'une partie de whist'. Though the story follows the pattern of the others, it requires a firm grasp of Barbey's stultified culture, where useless "fossils" find damaging amusements. The author exploits the rules of the game of whist, no longer legal primogeniture, or, perhaps most importantly, militant Catholicism and the moldy aristocracy. With such background, a fairly clear, if circumstantial, case reveals the parties guilty of murder.

Panel IV.D. Stones and Bones

Chair: Gerald Prince, University of Pennsylvania

Le Progrès: À rebours de l'Histoire

Mélanie Giraud

Bucknell University

Selon David L. Pike dans *Metropolis on the Styx*, l'underground, lieu de fascination et de vérité cachée, n'a cessé d'être une image dominante de la modernité depuis la fin du 18e siècle. Il suffit, pour s'en convaincre, d'observer aussi bien la réalité que le discours littéraire. Si chez Balzac se trouvent plus d'une trentaine d'occurrences du nom de Cuvier, l'étudiant Bianchon suivant même les cours du célèbre professeur dans *Le Père Goriot*, c'est l'évocation des égouts qui participe grandement à l'établissement des *Misérables* comme l'un des romans les plus populaires et novateurs de la seconde moitié du XIXe siècle. C'est d'ailleurs au même titre que celle des bas-fonds de la Cité avait fait des *Mystères de Paris* l'œuvre de l'éveil à la conscience sociale.

Il est d'autre part significatif quant à leur inscription dans le genre réaliste que ces œuvres, telles le miroir stendhalien, se fassent véritablement le reflet de la réalité. Ainsi, alors que le début des Grands Travaux haussmanniens avait provoqué l'ire des Parisiens, la découverte des couches fossilifères lors de l'excavation du sous-sol parisien en vue de sa consolidation soulève un engouement nouveau pour ces projets d'urbanisme. Haussmann trouve là une justification parfaite pour ses Travaux, puisqu'« avec les matériaux extraits des entrailles de la terre, tout en construisant nos maisons, nous reconstituons les époques ultra-lointaines¹. » De la fange des origines peut et doit donc naître le progrès : architectural —création d'une nouvelle strate urbaine—, scientifique —étude des origines humaines—, ou encore littéraire —invention du roman préhistorique par Elie Berthet.

Notre communication visera donc à mettre au jour la manière dont la découverte d'ossements préhistoriques et l'exploration des bas-fonds a pu engendrer tout à la fois un processus d'hybridation de formes littéraires —*Les Misérables* de Hugo, *Les Mémoires de Monsieur Claude* ou encore Paris avant l'histoire de Berthet—, l'évolution de l'urbanisme parisien et le développement de services de fouilles et de préservation tels que la « Commission du Vieux Paris ».

"Le Texte Fossile": Geology and Paleontology in Sand, Verne and Flaubert
Nigel Harkness
Queen's University, Belfast

Developments in the earth sciences – notably geology and palaeontology – fascinated not just the Romantic generation, but writers throughout the century. Not only did they force a radical rethinking of the origins, age and evolution of this world, but they also opened up possibilities for the recreation of lost worlds. Balzac's praise for Cuvier as 'le plus grand poète de notre siècle' in *Peau de Chagrin*, and Sand's comparison of the interpretive talents of the geologist to those of Champollion in the conclusion to *Indiana* are just two early examples of the impact the earth sciences would have on the nineteenth-century novel. However, a parallel process of cross-fertilization has been comparatively neglected. At the same time as literature was mobilising geological metaphors, the nascent science of linguistics was also drawing on analogies with the earth sciences as it defined its own methodological principles. These interconnections are particularly evident in the English-speaking world, with geologists such as Lyell including chapters on language development in their work, and linguists such as Donaldson, Müller and Whitney drawing on geology to explain or justify their own practice (equating fragments of dead languages with fossils, evoking stratification as a means of conceptualising the developmental phases of languages, and utilising Catastrophist and Uniformitarianist models). In the French-speaking world they are best exemplified by Adolphe Pictet's 1859 work *Les Origines indo-européennes, ou les Aryas primitifs, essai de paléontologie linguistique*. An exploration of these interdisciplinary connections forms the first part of my paper, and serves as a basis for a re-examination of how, in the work of Sand, Verne and Flaubert, geology and palaeontology are woven not just into the plotlines and referential content of the novel, but also provide productive metatextual models for reflecting on the interconnectedness, stratification and composite nature of the literary text.

Skull Stories: Paleontology and Popular Fictions at the Fin-de-siècle
Andrea Goulet
University of Pennsylvania

The late 19th-century's criminological use of phrenology, with the human skull as site of legible information about brutal tendencies, has been well documented (Nye, Cragin). But how did the 1856 discovery of a neanderthal skull –the first (disputed) fossil of prehistoric man -- change fin-de-siècle notions of criminality, atavism, and human nature? Within the broader context of prehistoric fictions – from Boitard's 1861 *Paris avant les hommes* to Rosny's 1909 *La Guerre du feu* – my paper will focus on two works

by Gaston Leroux: 1) *Le Parfum de la dame en noir*, in which a fossilized human skull serves as both red herring and uncanny link between the crime-fighting hero and his violent father; and 2) *Balao*, whose strange title character, the talking “demon-baboon”, leads me to ask whether Balao is the Darwinian missing link or a Derridean “animal que donc je suis.”

Panel IV.E. Women, Power and Social Institutions: Session 2

Chair: Michael Finn, Ryerson University

Fossilisation décadente dans *La Tour d'amour* de Rachilde

Vicky Gauthier

Université du Québec à Chicoutimi

Rachilde (1860-1957) – Marguerite Eymery de son vrai nom – a publié en 1899 *La Tour d'amour*, roman considéré par l'auteure comme l'un de ses chefs-d'œuvre. Il sera question, dans cette communication, du processus de la fossilisation, entendu dans un sens métaphorique. Je m'intéresserai à la régression des protagonistes de la *Tour d'amour*, Maleux et Barnabas, au contact du phare d'Ar-Men, phare célèbre pour son inaccessibilité et son isolement total de la société. Je montrerai que ce phare – situé en pleine mer et constamment attaqué par elle – cause l'animalisation de ses deux gardiens et les pousse vers un comportement déviant et inhumain. Par exemple, le vieux Barnabas, qui fait corps avec le phare depuis de nombreuses années, se fige en une créature mi-homme, mi-bête. Plus encore, il développe un désir dépravé pour les noyées : il cache certains cadavres et une tête de femme, qu'il conserve dans un bocal, à l'intérieur des placards du phare et il collectionne les mèches de cheveux de ses conquêtes. Quant au jeune Maleux, celui-ci suit pas à pas les traces maudites de son mentor : il perd la notion du temps et de la parole (et bientôt celle de l'écriture) et développe le même instinct quant à la venue des tempêtes et des corps rejetés par la mer. Ainsi, Maleux et Barnabas fusionnent littéralement avec le phare qu'ils nomment la *tour d'amour* : ils ne vont plus sur le continent et délaissent définitivement leur humanité. Bref, *La Tour d'amour* est un lieu de fossilisation des corps, mais aussi des comportements. L'érosion marine subite par le phare et l'isolement des deux hommes en son sein les entraînent vers une régression irréversible où – contrairement à la thèse de Rousseau – la nature corrompt l'individu en lui retirant ce qui le différencie de la bête.

Marie Lafarge – Femme fatale or Victim of Science?

Elisabeth-Christine Muelsch

Angelo State University

Inmates like to tell stories. Their stories serve numerous functions and, sometimes, if prisoners have the ability to write, they compose memoirs or novels to come to terms with their social relegation. The case of Marie Lafarge is not much different in this respect. Accused of murdering her husband she was put on trial in Tulle, a small town in southwestern France. The court found her guilty and ultimately condemned her to life in prison. Once incarcerated, she began writing her memoirs. They were published in

1841/2, and in 1854, posthumously, were published the reflections on her incarceration, *Heures de Prison*. Lafarge's primary intent was to convince her readers of her innocence, to represent herself as a victim of social injustices, while also alerting her readers to the hardships inflicted upon her through life in prison. *Memoires de Marie Cappelle, veuve Lafarge* and *Heures de Prison* should however also be read as a response to the existing discourses on a woman's role in society. Marie Lafarge's trial was spectacular, not only because it was the first one ever to be followed by the daily press, but also because it was the first trial in which a scientific testing method, the Marsh test, was used to convict a woman of murder.

Framed as a compulsive liar, Lafarge had to struggle to make her female voice heard against an oppressive legal and scientific apparatus. Not surprisingly she received strong support from George Sand.

In this paper then, I propose to read Lafarge's prison writings in the larger context of the political, legal, scientific, feminist and literary discourses that existed on her at the time.

**Weighing female intellectual powers: Georges de Peyrebrune
Georgette Véga, Daniel Lesueur and Rachilde
Michael Finn, Ryerson University**

A number of factors converged, in late 19th century France, to reinforce French preoccupation with the idea that the rational mind risked domination by the unconscious. The emergence, out of medical hypnotism, of dual personalities and the flowering of spirit communication via mediums were two of these factors. Another was degeneration theory, which has been called "an imaginary explanation of the unconscious overtaking the will" (Marcel Gauchet, *L'Inconscient cérébral*). Male concern about the invasiveness of the unconscious also centred around another phenomenon: the growing presence of the non-housebound female in society and of women in the professions, an invasion driven by the emotion-based, "natural", impulsive, instinctive, unpredictable, unknowable female psyche, the "inconscience féminine".

The opposition between the masculine principle, seen as rational, governed by the intelligence and willpower, capable of creative reasoning and synthesis, and the irrational female, was of course a commonplace of male discourse in the late 19th century, both socially and in literature. Critics like Mireille Dottin-Orsini and Elizabeth Menon have explored an almost endless set of female figures (the automaton, the serpent, the Salomé, the Amazon-assassin, the nymphomaniac, etc.) that translated male incomprehension and fear of the female in late 19th century France. What I wish to explore is a question that may not have received sufficient research attention, that is, the sometimes confused struggle of women with pseudo- and quasi-scientific male dogma about their psychic inferiority, especially as it pertained to women's education and educability.

In this paper I will assess female views of the structure and powers of the female psyche by investigating texts by four different women writers: an essay by the novelist Georges de Peyrebrune and her implied theory of female mental and emotional (in)capacity, a thesis by the doctor Georgette Déga on preventing female hysteria via education, and a novel by Daniel Lesueur (Jeanne Loiseau), *Névrosée*, which appears to argue just the opposite, that is, that the female psyche can be injured by rational education to the point of madness. The paper will end by highlighting some of Rachilde's

sententiae about the warring nature of the power relationship between the male and female principles in the same individual.

Revolutionary Relics: Women and Politics in Virginie Ancelot's *Madame Roland*

Joyce Johnston

Stephen F. Austin State University

The changing aesthetic over drama during the first half of the nineteenth century posed difficulties for writers seeking to have their works staged. Classical works seemed fossilized while the Romantic theater was still evolving. This shifting aesthetic ground affected women dramatists in particular, leaving them with a choice between writing frivolous plays which would more likely be staged, or to dare to focus on issues of greater social significance in works which had little likelihood of being performed. Considered unsuited to produce full five-act dramas, the majority of women playwrights of the period wrote melodramatic works containing light-hearted plots. Lovers separated by improbable misunderstandings were reunited in these works which have become literary fossils. Discussions of the evolution of Romantic drama almost always exclude women writers.

One writer who merits reconsideration in this area is successful playwright Virginie Ancelot whose 1843 play *Madame Roland* recreates events of the French Revolution. In contrast to Ancelot's other domestically inclined heroines, the title character attempts to create political change during the Reign of Terror. Her only political play, *Madame Roland* presents the evolution of Ancelot's ideal woman: educated and politically engaged as well as devoted to family. The work hinges on fossilized divisions between private and public spheres. The two realms collide as Ancelot considers the interconnections between politics, the basis of respectable drama, and domestic bliss, the focus of melodrama. *Madame Roland*, ignored by contemporary literary criticism, warrants rediscovery as an example of how a woman dramatist staged political ideas regarding women and their participation in public life within a genre that was all but off limits to those of her gender.

Panel IV. F. The Anti-Modern Baudelaire

Chair: Joseph Acquisto, University of Vermont

Ambiguity of Modernity

Claire Lyu

University of Virginia

In "Le peintre de la vie moderne," Baudelaire defines "modernity" in two related but distinct ways: it is both one half of art ("la modernité, c'est le transitoire, le fugitif, le contingent, la moitié de l'art, dont l'autre moitié est l'éternel et l'immuable") and the passage from this one half to the other half ("Il s'agit... de dégager de la mode ce qu'elle peut contenir de poétique dans l'historique, de tirer l'éternel du transitoire"). Modernity presents an ambiguous relationship between 'being on one side' and 'passing over to the other side.' It participates in the duality of art stemming from duality of man, which, for

Baudelaire, refers back ultimately to the Fall of mankind. I would like to explore whether this double sens of modernity in Baudelaire can be thought in relation to the "double sens" Blanchot discovers in death in "La littérature et le droit à la mort." Blanchot sees death as both active negation that ends life (death as we usually conceive it) and endless passivity that cannot exit from life. He discerns the second type of death alongside the first in Baudelaire -- "on ne cesse pas d'exister, on ne sort pas de l'existence, on existe et on existera toujours" ("L'échec de Baudelaire") -- which resonates closely with de Man's reading of the sonnet "Correspondances" in which poetic transport falters and remains within the same unable to cross over to the other side. If Blanchot's and de Man's readings of Baudelaire focus on paralysis (of being stuck on one side) as the chief experience of duality, Baudelaire's account of M.G., the painter of modern life, emphasizes dynamism (of going to the other side) as the chief possibility of duality. Would there be a modern experience of duality? Can we speak of an ambiguity of modernity in its relation to "des traces du péché originel"?

Decrepitude in Baudelairean Modernity

Catherine Witt

Reed College

Baudelaire ends his letter (dated April 1859) to Auguste Poulet-Malassis on an unexpected note: "Sachez que, pour remettre mon cerveau à l'endroit, je viens de relire (pour la première fois depuis vingt-cinq ans peut-être) la Grandeur et décadence des Romains, le Discours sur l'histoire universelle, et Les Natchez ! Je deviens tellement l'ennemi de mon siècle que tout, sans en excepter une ligne, m'a paru sublime." These words in praise of Bossuet, Montesquieu and Chateaubriand, which double as an apparently unconditional rejection of his time, seem all the more surprising that Baudelaire was then working on some of the key texts (*Salon de 1859*, *Mon Coeur mis à nu*, *Tableaux parisiens*) which would eventually lead to his most definitive theoretical articulation of modernity in *Le peintre de la vie moderne*. In this paper, I propose to elucidate this paradoxical gesture by examining the significance and function of the concept of *décrépidité* within Baudelaire's view of modernity as that which pertains to the historical (i.e. transitory or contingent) element of beauty. To begin, I briefly return to the chapter on modernism in *The Paris of the Second Empire in Baudelaire* (1938), where Benjamin resorts to the concept of *Hinfälligkeit* (material and ontological fragility, friability, ruin) to characterize the crucial link he perceives between modernity and antiquity in *Tableaux parisiens*. Rather than follow Benjamin in linking back the thematization of *décrépidité* to the poet's emulation of Hugo and Wagner, I subsequently discuss Baudelaire's reading of Chateaubriand (especially that of *Le Génie du christianisme*) with a view to presenting *décrépidité* as a particular mode of experiencing history.

Baudelaire's History in Pieces

Joseph Acquisto

University of Vermont

Baudelaire articulates a new relationship to history in his *Journaux intimes*, renouncing his prior political involvement in the wake of the 1851 coup d'état. Part of being anti-modern is positing a certain critical relationship to history, but what makes the case of Baudelaire unique is that, while working out ideas on history, he is also working through new notions of time, a question inextricably interwoven with theological and moral considerations. According to Baudelaire, we fall into modernity as we fall into time, or into history: against our will, and with consequences far beyond our imaginings. Hence the particularly modern kind of antimodernism that the middle Baudelaire espouses: not simply ahistorical or antihistorical, nor a critique of progress or revolution, but a deeper misanthropy and pessimism that is worked out through a new relationship to writing that finds its best expression in the fragmentary writings of the *Journaux*.

I will read the *Journaux intimes* as an attempt not merely to record or understand the self but rather as to revalue the fragment or aphorism as an explicit alternative to the coherent and ultimately failed organized narratives of modernity. Philosophy and literature conjoin to reimagine the modern in something other than historical terms. Baudelaire's journals also suggest that repositioning the self is of central importance to this larger project, and in this sense Baudelaire inaugurates a tradition of antimodern writing that continues in authors such as Proust and Cioran, both of whom situate the modern self by adopting an authorial "I" which both is and is not congruent with the author himself. Our fall into history and into time, despite its disastrous consequences, is the motor of a new kind of authorial voice, neither the moralist speaking for all nor the writer speaking only for himself. The unfossilized forward march of time becomes a way of articulating a more dynamic position for the subject both within and beyond historical time.

Le progrès, "doctrine de paresseux"? Le Sacrifice comme "légitimation de la peine de mort" chez Baudelaire

Eve Morisi

Princeton University

« L'envers de Claude Gueux. Théorie du sacrifice. Légitimation de la peine de mort. Le sacrifice n'est complet que par le sponte sua de la victime » (OC I, 598), lit-on dans un projet « de romans et nouvelles » de Charles Baudelaire. Quoique le style soit télégraphique, le projet conçu contre Victor Hugo est clair : il s'agit d'écrire un récit à rebours du roman progressiste et abolitionniste publié par l'homme-siècle en 1832. Quant au reste des propos elliptiques de Baudelaire, ils s'expliquent si l'on a recours à plusieurs fragments de *Mon Cœur mis à nu*, dont le suivant : « la peine de Mort est le résultat d'une idée mystique, totalement incomprise aujourd'hui . . . Elle a pour but de sauver (spirituellement) la société et le coupable. Pour que le sacrifice soit parfait, il faut qu'il y ait assentiment et joie de la part de la victime » (683).

Cette communication a pour but de revisiter cet éloge de l'archaïsme sanglant en le confrontant à la production poétique baudelairienne, à l'aide des écrits critiques de René Girard, Daniel Vouga et Pierre Pachet qui ont traité la violence sacrificielle.

À travers un bref examen historique, on remarquera d'abord que la revalorisation de la peine de mort dans la seconde moitié du dix-neuvième siècle se présente résolument comme un affront à « la croyance au progrès, » définie par Baudelaire comme « une doctrine de paresseux » (681). Dans un deuxième temps, on démontrera que cette posture réactionnaire est intimement liée à l'ambition littéraire du poète qui se doit d'établir sa « situation, » pour reprendre le mot de Paul Valéry, au sein d'une lignée et d'une communauté de « poètes de combat » (691). On en viendra ensuite à l'examen du sacrifice en propre dans la poésie baudelairienne : suivant les préceptes de Joseph de Maistre chers à Baudelaire, ce rituel est source double de spectacularité sanglante et de distinction—d'exaltation plastique et de consécration de la figure du dandy. Mais en dernier lieu, le principe de réversibilité qui régit le sacrifice chez Maistre échoue chez Baudelaire. Il laisse place à une violence pandémique ou « violence essentielle » (Girard) au sein de laquelle l'innocent et le coupable, le bourreau et la victime se révèlent siamois. Par endroits, Baudelaire dénonce lui-même l'exploitation qu'il fait de cette violence et qui, en un sens, explique que le poète et son recueil constituent les figures ultimes du condamné à mort, comme pris au piège de la mise en scène baudelairienne d'une idéologie régressive.

Friday, October 23, 2009

Session V: 1:30-3:00pm

Panel V.A. L'Animal en moi

Chair: Eliane DalMolin, University of Connecticut

Dans la peau de l'ours: De la bête sauvage à la peluche

Eliane DalMolin

University of Connecticut

Je propose une étude de la fausse présence de l'ours dans la littérature du 19ème siècle ; fausse, car l'ours fait partie des animaux les moins littéraires de l'époque. Sa présence est plus largement assurée par la culture du spectacle des montreurs d'ours qui sillonnent la France. Nous verrons comment l'ours est l'animal sauvage le moins adapté à un lectorat adulte et que, comble de perversion, il est presque uniquement réservé à une littérature de jeunesse (Alexandre Dumas) au roman populaire ou conte (Jean Richepin) ou au spectacle comique (Eugène Scribe). Pourtant, derrière ses faux airs de bête domptée, l'ours reste une force sauvage et imprévisible, comme il en est question dans le poème en prose de Mallarmé « Spectacle interrompu ». Dompté par les mots et styles de l'écrivain, comme par le dresseur au spectacle, l'ours poursuit sa fausse route vers un mythe culturel qui finira par célébrer sa transformation finale de bête sauvage en peluche préférée des enfants. Cette analyse du mythe de l'ours au 19e nous amènera à réfléchir à la proposition de l'ethnologue JN Passal : "L'esprit de l'ours ne serait que l'ombre de l'homme?" Se pose alors une double problématique: cette étrange littérature « oursine » du 19e rapprocherait-elle l'ours de l'homme, donnant à la bête une certaine humanité, ou encore, pourrait-elle cacher un symptôme ou un phénomène de sublimation des instincts sauvages de l'homme, révélant son animalité?

Fossilisation animale: Dans la maison du chat qui pelote et plot ...
Anne Mairesse, University of San Francisco

Fossilisation animale dans la littérature : la boutique du Chat qui pelote et plot...

Cette communication s'intéressera à plusieurs figurations ou fossilisations du Chat au sein de la littérature au 19ème: dans son rôle d'observateur silencieux, animal anthropomorphisé et témoin d'une comédie humaine ; représentation symbolique de l'écrivain immiscé parmi les personnages qu'il met en scène, il est au plus près d'eux, au cœur de l'action pour mieux les jouer ou en jouer ; il s'incarne aussi parfois et permet d'examiner la nature symbiotique de la relation entre l'homme et l'animal.

Autre figuration, le chat comme compagnon d'écriture, personnage témoin du roman en train de s'écrire. Il est un interlocuteur silencieux, mais dont la présence se mêle aux brouillons, à l'écriture griffonne dont parle Sara Kofman, l'écriture du chat qui fait sa pelote et son plot ainsi se projette dans la figure de l'auteur. Il se substitue à ou dans son sujet.

Mallarmé: Araignée ou termite?
Jasmine Getz
Université Charles de Gaulle Lille

Mallarmé « Termite silencieux, je creuse et je travaille » écrit Mallarmé au poète anglais John Payne en 1882.

Que veut dire Mallarmé en se désignant comme cet insecte qui d'ordinaire ronge le bois, y creusant des galeries qui finissent parfois par s'effondrer ? En quoi la tâche de l'écrivain serait-elle travail de termite, travail de destruction lent et occulte, dans le « tunnel de l'époque » ? Avec minutie et persévérance, quelle « action restreinte » accomplit Stéphane Mallarmé dans l'obscurité et le retranchement? Que ronge-t-il, que creuse-t-il ?

En 1866, il écrivait à Aubanel qu'il avait trouvé la clef de soi-même, ou centre, « centre de moi-même où je me tiens comme une araignée sacrée sur les principaux fils déjà sortis de mon esprit, et à l'aide desquels je tisserai aux points de rencontre de merveilleuses dentelles, que je devine, et qui existent déjà dans le Sein de la Beauté ».

Araignée ou termite, nous examinerons comment ces animalcules en lesquels le Poète se figure articulent sa relation à son être, au Monde, à l'Action et au Rêve.

Panel: V.B. "Babel": A Pedagogical Round Table
Chair: Scott Carpenter, Carleton College

Is the research presented at conferences like the Nineteenth-Century French Studies Colloquium representative of the work we undertake in the classroom? If so, we are confronting today's students with a startling array of texts, objects, disciplines and

discourses. Whether or not we carry the banner of cultural studies, most of us find ourselves introducing multiple discursive media in the classroom, and it is not uncommon to find literary texts rubbing shoulders with photography, sculpture, architecture, law, medicine, music, political history, and more. Furthermore, we may find new technological media — wikis, Artstor, PowerPoint — at our disposal, supposedly to enhance our blending of discourses.

This panel will address a threefold problem: first, most of us are generally untrained in at least some of the discursive and technical media with which we try to work; second, there is not always a common language allowing us mediate among these multiple discourses; third — and most important for our purposes — it is not clear by what means we might communicate these complications meaningfully to our students.

Our panelists will open speak briefly about their own experiences before opening up the discussion to those in attendance.

Emma's Mirror: The Uses of Film in the Nineteenth-century Lit Class

Mary Jane Cowles

Kenyon College

Description: This discussion will focus on three aspects of the use of cinema in the context of undergraduate classes on nineteenth-century French literature: 1) The visual imagination--"reading" films to "see" texts, especially in the context of the realist novel; 2) (In)Fidelities--exploring what faithfulness to and divergences from the literary source in filmic adaptations can reveal about the text itself; and 3) Sensibilities--harnessing the film's emotional and aesthetic power to raise questions about the reception of a text. A filmography and a bibliography will be made available.

Art and the Art of Close Reading: Storytelling in the Fictive, the Pictorial, and the Psychoanalytic Text

Deborah Harter

Rice University

One of the most challenging aspects of my current book project is the way it plays havoc with the limits of genre. As I bring into dialogue such different texts as Géricault's portraits of the insane, Maupassant's "Mme Hermet," Freud's *Dora*, and the film, *Silence of the Lambs*, I am forced at every turn to re-find my own points of mastery and to re- envision a shifting artistic context so that narrative, the filmic, the psychoanalytic, and the pictorial can all meld together in meaningful ways. When I bring this project into the classroom the challenge grows exponentially, but so do the possibilities for extraordinary exchanges about the nature of art. For me, the art of close reading, that sometimes lost arena so crucial to our apprehension of the single text, becomes critical here, bringing texts together in ways that produce new meaning.

Eugène de Rastignac Has Added You as a Friend on Facebook

Lawrence Schehr

University of Illinois

Social climbing – l’arrivisme – so common in nineteenth-century novels, including Balzac’s *Le Père Goriot* and Maupassant’s *Bel Ami*, is one of the prime forces for the advancement of plots and protagonists in these works. How do we explain this phenomenon to students who believe that everyone is middle class and that everyone networks with everyone else? Do we try to explain the phenomenon of arrivisme for itself, or do we imagine Eugène de Rastignac adding Vautrin, Mme de Beauséant, and eventually Mme de Nucingen to his Facebook page, and ultimately, getting a friend request from Mme de Restaud?

Panel V.C. Rimbaud/Verlaine

Chair: Colette Windish, Spring Hill College

"Le Poète et la Muse": Un Moment de création verlainien?

Colette Windish

Spring Hill College

Cette communication examine un poème de Verlaine, “Le Poète et la Muse”, écrit à un moment crucial de l’évolution du poète, pour déterminer la façon dont il contribue à notre perception des changements profonds dans son élaboration d’une “nouvelle” esthétique poétique. En effet, ce poème est écrit à l’époque du séjour en prison et tente de résoudre les obstacles à l’écriture issus de la relation personnelle et littéraire avec Rimbaud. Ce poème, souvent délaissé par la critique, nous offre cependant la possibilité de toucher le cœur de l’évolution du poète à cette époque. En effet, en 1874, Rimbaud cesse d’écrire et Verlaine se tourne vers Dieu. Il est logique de voir un lien entre ces deux événements de magnitude équivalente dans la création artistique de deux hommes qui avaient tant partagé. Si la conversion de Verlaine répond au silence de Rimbaud, il faut cependant tenter d’élucider comment la conversion est une réponse poétique à une angoisse littéraire, celle de la validité même de l’écriture. Ce poème, qui traite de la cohabitation avec Rimbaud, est donc particulièrement révélateur. Il témoigne en effet d’une préoccupation nouvelle, dans sa présentation du rapport entre sujet et objet lyriques et son lien à la création poétique. Dans ce texte, Verlaine oscille entre l’affirmation d’une nouvelle écriture et la réécriture d’autres poètes, dont le concert de voix semble presque noyer l’émergence d’une voix propre au poète. Le sujet lyrique cherche à y transformer sa relation à l’objet et le processus créateur devient lié à une nouvelle affirmation de la primauté du “je” face à un “tu” menaçant. Cette tension entre l’ancien et le nouveau, que “Le Poète et la Muse” illustre particulièrement clairement, nous permet ainsi de mieux comprendre le contexte de la “conversion” poétique de Verlaine, qui précède et dépasse les limites de sa conversion religieuse.

Verlaine's Contribution to the Decadence of (French) Civilization: Homosexual Imagery in "Parallèlement"

David Powell

Hofstra University

In his *Marges du Premier Verlaine* (2003), Steve Murphy observes that high and low forms of poetry are neither uncommon in the 19th century nor are they less important than similarly consequent forms of narrative.¹ “Parapoésie” – the term with which he designates these marginal literary manifestations – are, he objects, very infrequently encountered in criticism, when in fact it is the very articulation between high and low that offers a wealth of material for critics. Few authors of 19th-century French literature are as well placed as Verlaine to exemplify the nuances of high and low writing. From lyrical to symbolist to ethereal to euphemistic to vulgar, Verlaine’s poetry serves up the whole banquet.

The collection *Parallèlement*, published in its final form during the poet’s lifetime in 1884, reflects the essential features of parapoetics. Some of the texts, originally part of the *Album Zutique*, would find a slightly different version here; other texts that ended up in *Hombres*, which was never published during Verlaine’s lifetime, can be found in a slightly more anodyne version in this “parallel” publication. Others published in *Parallèlement* have more conventional versions in other collections. All in all, many of the poems’ so-called suitable versions display a high degree of transparent irony. It is the irony and the paradox of that mostly self-imposed censorship that interest me. The irony of the “acceptable” versions often exhibits much more subversive qualities precisely because of the need for codes and encryption. The “suitable” adaptations go much farther in satirizing conventional society than in sanitizing their cruder versions.

My paper explores the modes of Verlaine’s “low” poetry while at the same time observing the innovative techniques that characterize his “high” verse. Beyond the similarities between Verlaine’s high and low work, what interests me is his choice to fashion different versions of a same text. I will consider what this tells us about Verlaine’s perception not just of the marketplace, of his contemporary readership, but also of the nature of poetry and art.

Perceptual Flux in Rimbaud's *Illuminations*

Greg Kerr

Trinity College, Dublin

‘Il faudra être académicien, — plus mort qu’un fossile, — pour parfaire un dictionnaire, de quelque langue que ce soit’; underlying the desire Rimbaud expresses in the *lettres du voyant* to lead poetry into a collective consciousness beyond the limits of the individual self is a tension between his project of an ideal expressive form and his poetic method of collapsing familiar meanings. In relation to some poems from his *Illuminations*, this paper will examine facets of Rimbaud’s attempt to forge a poetic language that clusters around the interminable differentiations of present perception without stabilizing the images encountered by the gaze and assimilating them to received linguistic uses.

Poems such as ‘*Enfance*’ intimate the exhilaration of infantile perceptual activity in a manner that overflows established spatial or temporal frames of reference as it attempts to accede to new horizons of being. In this text, Rimbaud explores expressive strategies which, rather than serving simply to confirm ‘what is’, assert a principle of contingency

of situation more in keeping with a dynamic of change and renewal. Similarly, in the poem 'Solde' the complex intertwining of rhetorics of sales patter and social progress serves to compel desires that are disproportionate to their object, and induce a sense of turbulence that foreshadows the dissolution of stable relations between signs and their referents and between subjects and their milieu. As this paper will argue, Rimbaud's textual practice therefore intimates both the foundational affirmativeness of the poetic utterance and cognizance of the transience of the world which that utterance purports to describe. This is a posture that, rather than serving to stabilize the image, secures exposure to, and catalyzes, the potentialities extended in the experience of perceptual flux.

Au Cabaret vert de la démocratie: Etude d'un alexandrin profané chez Rimbaud
Robert St. Clair
University of Minnesota

D'abord, je tiendrai à préciser ce que l'on entend par « profanation » - tout simplement « de faire un mauvais usage des choses précieuses » (Petit Robert). Mais ce « mauvais usage » qui consiste à rendre à l'usage commun ce qui est sacré, n'est-il pas sous la plume de Rimbaud le signe même d'une volonté de faire évoluer le verbe poétique lui-même, de bouleverser le « partage du sensible » de son temps? Comment, par ailleurs, affirmer de cette hypothèse que ce petit sonnet tout anodin de Rimbaud tombe sous le registre d'une poétique de la profanation qui anticipe sur ce bref soulèvement de la démocratie que fut la Commune de Paris? Ce sont les questions que d'emblée je propose dans ma lecture de ce texte qui date de l'année terrible, et qu'il convient de mettre sans doute en rapport, pour des raisons qui tiennent à un semblable travail de subversion de la forme poétique, avec *Le dormeur du val* ou *Qu'est-ce pour nous mon coeur*. Or, dans ma présentation, je me concentrerai sur les points suivants: 1) le jeu de déstabilisations de l'alexandrin, cette « fossile » (rejets à outrance, polysyndètes impossibles, césures qui font « boiter » le vers) qui sont comme autant de petits prolepses qui laissent deviner une révolte, une véritable (r)évolution du poème à venir; 2) le jeu des modes (y'a-t-il un décalage entre le « dit » et le « comment-dire » du poème?); 3) le jeu de la hétéroglossie (voir la magnifique incise du vers 9) qui laisse émerger dans l'espace du poème ce que l'on pourrait appeler avec Rancière le *dèmos*: les gens qui n'ont absolument aucun « titre » à occuper l'espace « sacré » de l'alexandrin, mais à qui le poète donne scandaleusement la parole libre. On verra que dans ce « mauvais usage » de l'alexandrin, l'on retrouve en germe non seulement une révolution poétique à venir dans l'oeuvre de Rimbaud, mais peut-être aussi un regard neuf porté sur le quotidien comme lieu de l'esthétique: posture qui sera celle des surréalistes du XXème siècle, de Duchamp à Bataille.

Je vous saurais gré, dans le cas où cette présentation se verrait acceptée, de bien vouloir fournir un rétroprojecteur.

Panel: V.D. Questions of Genre and Catastrophism
Chair: Edward Kaplan, Brandeis University

Revisiting the Fantastic: An Epistemological Approach

Larry Porter, Michigan State University

The chasm between certitude and belief was seldom more pronounced than in 19th-century France, as the country oscillated between Catholicism and militant atheism, Republic and divine-right Monarchy. Artists and intellectuals sought a broader frame of reference, which might encompass and transcend both extremes, by exploring eccentric domains: history, regionalism, second states of consciousness, and the supernatural. However, they generally failed to elaborate an epistemological framework—considerations of how we “know” what we “know”—even when discussing the fantastic. They generally used the term “fantastic” in relation to the Aristotelian sense of “phantasmata,” perceptions of something that is not real, but merely projected by our minds upon externality. Criticism even today has often not yet gone beyond this simplistic dichotomy of the real and the unreal—forgetting that the “real” we can know is itself a mental construction.

As a test case, consider the collections of Maupassant’s *Contes* recently gathered under the rubric of the “Fantastic.” From an epistemological perspective, we can fruitfully reexamine them in terms of the several distinct modes of literary expression that they represent. 1) The sociolect, or “common knowledge,” contains the fault line between dogma (sets of religious notions that we are supposed to believe) and superstition (widely accepted but institutionally unsanctioned beliefs about the supernatural). The French concept of “le merveilleux,” referring to the intervention of the supernatural in everyday human affairs, attempts to bridge this gap. 2) “Le merveilleux expliqué” (a category lacking in Anglo-Saxon criticism) attempts to shift our perception from a superstitious to a rational understanding of strange events, by broadening our base of understanding with additional factual information, temporarily withheld to ensure “narratability.” 3) Visionary literature perceives the operation of the supernatural, reported by a “narrateur-témoin,” without influencing either it or the real. As Nodier put it, in concluding “Jean-François les Bas-Bleus,” “la vérité est inutile.” 4) The fantastic proper, « das Unheimliche, » « the Uncanny, » or « l’inquiétante étrangeté, » presents events that can be explained only with reference to the supernatural, while withholding any proof of a particular hypothesis concerning the supernatural, and any opportunity fruitfully to test hypotheses through experiments.

“Le Horla,” for example, describes several practical experiments, but these do not establish either the origins or the intentions of the supernatural being whose presence may tentatively be inferred by circumstantial evidence.

The solution, for literary critics who seek to be able rigorously to describe and categorize various stories involving the supernatural, is to invoke the concept of “rhetoric” in the sense of “the use of language to persuade,” and then to analyze, in epistemological terms, the varying effects of hyperbolic novelty or “hypernarratability” sought by authors who place accounts of incredible events on the stage of plausible, familiar settings. The resulting schemata should allow us to account for narratives ranging from Xavier Marmier’s *Voyage autour de ma chambre* to Mallarmé’s “Le Phénomène futur.”

Madame Bovary and Catastrophism: A Study of Pre-Evolutionary Time
Ruth Morris
University of Aberdeen, Scotland

This paper locates *Madame Bovary* within the scientific milieu of 1850s French society by reading Flaubert's narrative as a Cuvierian text.

The French scientist Georges Cuvier, along with many of his contemporaries, formulated the catastrophist theory as a means of explaining the origins of the world. In catastrophism, the world is divided into very discrete time periods which are punctuated by vast catastrophes, or in Cuvierian terminology 'revolutions' that have eradicated life and enabled the world to be repopulated afresh. This has implications for the concept of 'time'.

Cuvier theorises the earth as being relatively recent in origin, with the present epoch being only five thousand years old. This compression of time can be inferred in *Madame Bovary* through references to rapidity and the tempo which increases towards the denouement.

In catastrophism and *Madame Bovary*, time is not constructed in a linear or chronological manner. The 'revolutions' disrupt a realisation of continuous time and Emma is frequently unable to distinguish between past, present and future experiences. The 'revolutions' also serve to puncture and disrupt the status quo of life by creating massive events within the earth's history. Emma's life too parallels this. She regards her existence as being informed by magnitudinous events, such as the ball, which creates dislocated and fragmented time as in Cuvier's theory.

I will also argue for a connection between the suddenness and violence of the 'revolutions' and Emma Bovary's emotional outbursts which occur without fore-warning and border on the hysterical.

A Cuvierian concept of time has implications for other considerations which are arguably the main differences between catastrophism and evolution theory. These include the notions of adaptation, inheritance and death within Flaubert's narrative.

Endangered Genres and Literary Extinction: Brunetière, Lanson, and the Politics of Evolution
Anne McCall
University of Denver

In the debates that marked the turn from 'criticism' to 'literary history' at the end of the nineteenth century, no move incited more ridicule than Brunetière's rapprochement with scientific discourse, in particular, that of evolutionary science, to ground his perspective on literary history. Largely viewed as a desperate, last-ditch attempt to keep institutional territory and remain relevant in a critical debate that was escaping him, Brunetière's theory of literary evolution represented such a prodigious flop that it merits analysis, not

only for its own contradictions but also for the contorted reactions that it provoked, given that some understanding of evolution undergirded litero-historical thought. Lanson's response to Brunetière, by disavowing the use of life sciences in favor of a scientific attitude, sets forth the specificity of literary studies; it fails, however, to address the challenge of understanding endangerment and extinction within a literary context. This paper will revisit the debate around evolution in literature and relate it to the discourse within the many genre-specific manuals on the rise and fall of genres that secondary and university reforms were generating in that same period. One of the questions that then arises is if the works or the authors are the subjects of selection and, in the event that it is the authors, if they, as a group, depend on literary, sexual intercourse; in the final section of my paper, I will, therefore, relate the debate on evolution in literature to the concerted efforts made within literary history to frame ever so narrowly the question of literary genders.

Peace Versus Catastrophe: Michelet's Ideology of Evolution

Edward Kaplan

Brandeis University

In the nineteenth century, scientific debates challenged the authority of Church dogma with significant consequences for political ideology. The historian, professor, and public intellectual, Jules Michelet, wrote a series of four best-selling books on nature, *L'Oiseau* (1856), *L'Insecte* (1857), *La Mer* (1861), and *La Montagne* (1868). The latter two are especially explicit about the debates between creationists inspired by Cuvier, evolutionists inspired by Lamarck and Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, and those soon to be converted by Charles Darwin. (The first French translation of Darwin's *Origin of Species* [1859], by ..., appeared in 1862.) At stake for Michelet was his vision of a peaceful, feminine (if not feminist) theory of natural evolution, starting from minerals, to insects, and mammals – through human beings and nations. Nature was also history. Michelet systematically opposed the violent cataclysmic theories supported by Cuvier and his followers, who also supported the creationist theory favored by the Catholic Church. Michelet combined the most recent contemporary scientific writings, personal consultation with leading scientists, and his characteristic imaginative identification with natural beings to bring the question of evolution to the forefront of his humanism and philosophy of history, his ideology of the common people as the essence of France.

Panel: V.E. Balzac's Social Fossils

Chair: Allan Pasco, University of Kansas

The Naturalist's Gaze: Balzac's Contributions to *Les Français peints par eux-mêmes*

Pauline de Tholozany

Brown University

Balzac often compared his task as a writer to that of a naturalist. The novelist hoped to describe social types just as his scientific counterparts had put to light natural species. This paper will analyze this Balzacian strategy in a selection of his texts from *Les français peints par eux-mêmes*, in conjunction with the illustrations that accompany

them. The project of that collective work was to create a “moral encyclopedia”, composed of small texts that described and sometimes poked fun at moral or social “types”. Les français put these “types” on display as various “species” of French society. Balzac himself often uses the scientific classification metaphor (“RENTIER. Mammifère selon Cuvier, etc...”). The illustrations follow that pattern: the various social categories are always represented as immobile, as if fossilized, and in a way that recalls both fashion catalogs and natural sciences books.

We will see how both text and image work together to expose the process of fossilization that allowed for a type to become one: in many cases, money becomes eventually the ground into which the balzacian figures become fixed and fossilized, “unable to break the magic circle of the type” (Benjamin). Two contradictory movements coexist: on the one hand the circulation of money (and the unfixable, rapid, evolution of “les moeurs”), and on the other hand the accumulation and petrification of wealth (to which corresponds the fossilization of certain types such as the notaire or the rentier, that achieve their status only once they own a certain amount of money). The “type” exists as a product of both evolution and fossilization, and the classificatory gaze of the writer and the illustrator play endlessly with that tension, claiming for themselves the paradoxical position of being naturalists interested in social species.

Evolutionary Balzac
Armine Kotin Mortimer
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

It is perfectly possible to speak of evolution as concerns Balzac, but his use of the word may come as something of a surprise. Not only should we not fix or fossilize Balzac into the time period he covered, we should also read him according to the full play of movement, of disorder, or as Dällenbach says, “en tant qu’ensemble bricolé et pluriel visant à la totalité sur le mode du fragment.” Because the work is “bricolé” and “pluriel,” it will always permit contradictory ideas of evolution. Reading according to the mode of the fossil actually leads to the evolutionary reading, as Balzac’s appreciation of Cuvier shows. Discussing first the uses of the word evolution, I then consider the little-discussed *Lettre à Charles Nodier* of 1832 and finally the example of one character’s evolution in *La Comédie humaine*, Rose Chapotel.

Panel.V.F. Decadent (D)evolution
Chair: Bob Ziegler, Montana Tech of the University of Montana

Baby Doll: Rachilde’s *La Marquise de Sade*
Bob Ziegler
Montana Tech of the University of Montana

In the Avant-Propos to *Madame Adonis*, Rachilde expresses exasperation at the way a book can be refashioned as something other than itself. Having put down 3.50 francs for a novel “dont le titre l’amuse dans un étalage,” the bourgeois reader finds his purchase redefined by the journalists disparaging it. Superseded by critical commentary, the

literary work is no longer the product of a desire to tell a story, but, as in Rachilde's case, is conflated with the femme de lettres' reputation. Compelled to engage in degrading intercourse with aggressive editors and critics, the roman-puceau is violated by monocle-wearing secretaries, who murder the work and leave in its place the corpse of their review. Or if it is metaphorized as a love-child born of discipline and talent, the novel as nouveau-né becomes another statistical infanticide, suffocated by a hostile press before it draws breath in the bookstore.

Here, Rachilde likens writing to evolution/devolution: as a hostile audience effects her regressive transformation – from artist to woman, from girl to infant, and finally to the textual object from its manufacturer is estranged.

In *La Marquise de Sade*, Rachilde examines the writer's relationship with her work, exploring fantasies of retribution against men who usurp her power to speak, defining her work as an opportunity for authorial self-engendering.

In the novel, an image nexus of mannequins, dolls, and babies permits an elaboration of what Melanie Hawthorne describes as Rachilde's "revenge fantasy," while invoking the heroine's reassertion of her autonomy as a speaker. Unlike the anatomical figure Mary Barbe sees in her uncle Célestin's laboratory, a female form covered with numbers written on it by male doctors, Mary imagines begetting herself as "une énorme poupée qui marchait et parlait," walking amidst men with iron collars on their necks and swords in their chests. In these waking dreams, Mary reassumes control over positions of subordination to which society consigned her: the poupée becomes a mother, and the automaton an authoress.

Un Cadavre dans la thébaïde
Marc Smeets
Radboud University Nijmegen

Défunts, morts-vivants, spectres, la chose cadavéreuse a toujours intéressé l'écrivain décadent. C'est que dans la littérature fin de siècle les frontières entre vie et mort, entre énergie et léthargie ont tendance à s'estomper, voire à disparaître. Il est difficile d'élaborer une esthétique des lendemains qui chantent alors que la camarde vous guette. Certes, les romantiques, notamment dans leurs textes fantastiques, avaient déjà exprimé leurs obsessions thanatographiques, mais ce qui semble être spécifique de l'esthétique décadente, est selon nous le flirt avec la mort qui ne cesse d'être évoqué dans ces textes. D'une part, on s'enferme pour survivre et pour fuir les promiscuités mondaines, d'autre part, dans le lieu protecteur, la Mort est présente, et on s'adresse à elle, on la chérit : la Mort at home, en quelque sorte.

Hair, Teeth, Bones, and Blood: The Decadent "Science" of Relic Display
Elizabeth Emery
Montclair State University

The discovery and analysis of fossils was a popular nineteenth-century scientific pursuit mirrored by a less secular (but no less popular) activity: the traffic in and authentication of religious relics. Pieces of tissue, hair, teeth, bones, blood, and other objects having belonged to venerated figures of the past, relics (from *reliquiae* or remainders) were the ultimate rare collectibles in an age of collection. Relic makers, collectors, and worshippers were parodied in songs like Béranger's "Les Reliques" or in short stories like Maupassant's "La Relique" and Mirbeau's "L'Etrange Relique." Yet even some of those who mocked the popular collection of relics, like Flaubert, Zola, Huysmans, and Anatole France proudly displayed their own relics and reliquaries to friends.

This paper situates Decadent representations of religious relics within this late nineteenth-century context of collection and display by drawing examples from Rodenbach's *Bruges la Morte*, Rachilde's *Monsieur Vénus*, Jean Lorrain's *Monsieur de Phocas* and *Princesses* stories. Given their taste for the disembodied, the macabre, and the supernatural, one might expect such writers to devote a great deal of space to the display and contemplation of "fossilized" relics from the distant past. But this is not the case. Tainted by association with bourgeois practices, Decadent fiction's relics evolve, or rather devolve; protagonists' active celebration of contemporary material objects -- hair, teeth, bones, and blood -- return to the pre-Catholic fetish traditions made famous by Auguste Comte in his writings about the evolution of religion.

Parodie clownesque and Decadent Evolution in Gustave Kahn's *Le Cirque solaire*

Jennifer Forrest

Texas State University-San Marcos

Jules Laforgue dedicated his collection of poems, *L'Imitation de Notre-Dame la Lune*, to his close friend Gustave Kahn. In return, Kahn promised to dedicate his next volume to Laforgue, something, however, he never did. Sophie Basch proposes that Kahn's novel *Le Cirque solaire*, however, may function as an "hommage postume" to the memory of his friend through a similar "sentiment" shared by Kahn's *Count Franz* and Laforgue's *Stéphane Vassiliew*, a youthful novella written by Laforgue that wasn't published until 1943, and which Kahn may or may not have read. Basch perceives a shared "sentiment d'ennui mortel" between the two protagonists (494). More plausible perhaps is the shared theme of the protagonists falling in love with a circus performer. But if Kahn pays homage to Laforgue in his novel, it is more likely that he does so less through a repeated theme than through a reproduction of the very methods at work in Laforgue's *Moralités légendaires*, with which Kahn was very familiar, having published them in his weekly revue, *La Vogue*.

Michele Hanoosh has persuasively argued that the *Moralités* are parodies that take a well-known myth, legend, or work, and radically rewrite it in a playfully original way, a way that rather than signal the demise of Decadence (the movement represented in the majority of the collection's references) permits the movement to evolve. That Kahn's novel is parodic becomes evident in the way that it alerts the reader as to how to approach it. *Le Cirque solaire* takes as its initial model both a myth and a specific work: the Lorelei of German legend and the poem "Die Lorelei" by Heinrich Heine, a poet beloved

of both Laforgue and Kahn. Count Franz's old servant Dorothée provides the novel's frame tale of the Lorelei, whose ending she has altered in order to make it pleasant: she transforms the destructive femme fatale of myth and poem into a good and generous circus performer. The novel's title itself frames the frame tale with a reconfiguration of the lunar Pierrot of pantomime in Laforgue's *Imitation* as a resplendently solar lady acrobat. Kahn's use of the circus is not limited, however, by a thematic or a metaphor casually linked to the method that he adopted and adapted from Laforgue, but purposefully draws on the way that parody, especially as a Decadent tool, and circus are both inside and outside of their target/culture.

Saturday, October 24, 2009

Session VI: 8:30-10:00am

Panel VI:A. Archaeologies of Childhood

Chair: Janet Beizer, Harvard University

Corinne ou l'enfance perdue

Evelyne Ender

Hunter College and the Graduate Center at CUNY

Le Journal de jeunesse de Germaine de Staël révèle une enfant extraordinairement précoce dans ses intérêts intellectuels et multiples talents. On pourrait s'attendre alors que à ce que le Bildungsroman que représente *Corinne* en soit le reflet. Bien au contraire, tout se passe comme si l'élan de curiosité intellectuelle s'était fossilisé, faisant place à une histoire qui, comme les critiques l'ont remarqué, tourne autour de peines d'amour et d'un destin érotique. Loin d'inviter à des nouvelles aventures et un enrichissement intellectuel, le roman se conçoit alors comme régression ou réversion de l'esprit.

Je me propose d'explorer dans cette présentation trois réponses à ce schéma. La première est d'ordre historique et montre comment ce roman « de femme » se configure tout naturellement autour d'une idéologie rousseausiste (voir surtout l'influence de l'*Emile*) qui conçoit que l'éducation d'une femme doit être de l'ordre d'une morale et du cœur, sacrifiant donc l'instruction. Une autre explication sera d'ordre psychologique. Nous examinerons brièvement le modèle proposé par Freud à propos des fantasmes constitutifs de la création (dans « La création et le rêve éveillé ») disant que, pour les femmes, c'est l'éros qui prime (alors que l'ambition prime dans une configuration masculine). En dernier lieu, il s'agira d'explorer la validité d'une explication littéraire : le roman comme genre définit un champ « romantique » et va à l'encontre d'un Bildungsroman féminin. On notera alors que, justement, le corpus sandien fait montre de ce même phénomène d'accommodation au genre romanesque et à ses attentes en termes de gender. A côté de *Lélia*, roman d'une épopée intellectuelle, Sand produit ces deux romans « sentimentaux » que sont *Indiana* et *Valentine* (dans *Histoire de ma vie*, elle racontera, en revanche, les aléas de son développement intellectuel). En conclusion, le récit de l'extraordinaire intelligence et créativité de Germaine de Staël devra se faire ailleurs que dans ses œuvres littéraires – il échoiera aux biographies (voir les 4 ouvrages sur elle paru récemment -- de Winegarten, Gray du Plessis, Gooden et Dixon).

Stolen Time in Jules Vallès's *L'Enfant*

Marina van Zuylen

Bard College

The guilty devouring of Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* is one Jacques Vingtras' rare moments of happiness in Jules Vallès' *L'Enfant*. The boy, never allowed to experience anything but the time of others, is utterly changed by the clandestine and liberating possibilities of reading. But reading belongs to a free time that is one of the novel's most powerful hors texte. Everything conspires to keep Vingtras from unstructured time, from an inner world that stretches beyond the structures of school or home. This paper examines *L'Enfant* as providing us with rare insight into the obstacles to and rebellious possibilities of leisure in the world of the nineteenth-century child. A tongue-in-cheek critique of a system where time is brutally legislated, *L'Enfant* demonstrates how school and family conspire to turn time into an impediment to selfhood. What makes Vallès' novel such a landmark is its double critique of the nineteenth-century's uses and misuses of idleness. After using Jacques as their whipping boy, after undercutting his attempts at experiencing un temps à lui, his parents' sudden entrance into the bourgeoisie coincide with their revisiting the distinction between work and play. All of a sudden, Jacques' mother forces her child to flaunt leisure as a sign of class. Whether his lessons in "gentlemanly behavior" or his comical attempts to look unoccupied, Jacques' narrative is a unique document about the role of the child in the nineteenth-century construction of free time.

The Cartographer, the Memoirist, and the Yenta

Janet Beizer

Harvard University

I'll explore the auto/biographical problem of reconstructing childhood, taking as case study the various lives of Alexandra David-Néel that emerge from her own writing, the chronicles of others, and (especially) my own experience working and living among her archived materials and her archivists in Digne. David-Néel's life has been told from very diverse perspectives shaped by widely variant authorial investments in her life and its telling. Her own accounts, dispersed in her travelogues and correspondence, recast beginnings in the image of the end, refracting the early years to correspond to a later standpoint: the toddler is a budding explorer for whom Tibet is forecast in forays through the Bois de Vincennes. For her other biographers, the stakes may be different but are just as high. The published record includes an intimate memoir written by the companion of her last decade, a painstakingly researched geographical chronicle by a professor of cartography, a grand public biography in France, and, in the States, a tell-all "secret life." The paper will focus on a confrontation with the literary lives of Alexandra David-Néel through my very literal venture into her work and life in Digne and beyond.

Panel VI.B. Evolving Performances

Chair: Maurice Samuels, Yale University

The Performance of Work in Adventure Fiction

Margaret Cohen
Stanford University

Before being applied to language or identity, the notion of performance was used to qualify work: tools that worked well, or the successful accomplishment of a job. This paper examines the poetics of performance in sea adventure fiction, using the case of the 19th century sea novel. In particular, it focuses on the difference in the performance of work in the sea fiction of Cooper, and Eugène Sue, who translated Cooper's poetics to France, focusing on Sue's *La Salamandre*, that recounts a shipwreck similar to that of *La Meduse*. I argue that the failure of performance in Sue's version of sea adventure fiction responds to the failure of the French Navy in the Napoleonic wars and Restoration, and relate this difference to Sue's nonfictional writings on the history of the French Navy, which Sue thought should take a leaf from the naval power of the new American nation. However, French naval power has a narrative silver-lining: for Sue takes the power of Cooper's sailors on shore and turns them loose on French society. The result is a superman of social manipulation who will offer the pattern for Balzac's *Vautrin* and Dumas's *Count of Monte-Cristo*.

Sarah Bernhardt and the Performance of Idolatry
Sharon Marcus
Columbia University

This paper takes seriously the notion of a "cult of celebrity" by showing how Sarah Bernhardt's star persona drew on a secularization of the sacred characteristic of the nineteenth century. By secularization of the sacred, I mean not a rupture with religion but a secular appropriation and redirection of religion's characteristic functions and aims: belief, enchantment, hierarchy, representation of the ineffable, and social cohesion. Commonly known as "the divine Sarah" and as a high priestess of art, poetry, and drama, Bernhardt played up her distinctly modern relation to religion. That modern relation, in her case, consisted of 1) the transformation of religion into national and ethnic identity (which helps explain why Bernhardt regularly presented herself as both Catholic and Jewish); 2) the transformation of religion into a media phenomenon (most visible in Bernhardt's little-studied productions of spectacular, pageant-like religious dramas); and 3) the persistence of religion, and especially ideas about Jesus Christ, as models for understanding the relationship of unique individuals (the artist, the genius, the god) to society. After sketching this framework, the paper will focus on Bernhardt's performances in two works that played a key role in her career: Sardou's *Theodora*, one of her first great successes in a play she premiered, and Racine's *Athalie*, one of the last roles she ever played.

Performances of Jewish Identity in the July Monarchy
Maurice Samuels
Yale University

This paper explores how the stage offered French culture a space for the negotiation of ambivalent feelings toward Jews and Jewishness in the period from 1830 to 1848. This

period saw large numbers of French Jews enter mainstream economic and cultural life for the first time, but also gave rise to the first modern anti-semitic attacks. Jews were at once more visible than they had ever been in France and increasingly suspected of engaging in secret, invisible cabals. I want to suggest that these contradictions can be analyzed through the spectacular representations of Jewish identity from the period, from Scribe and Halévy's opera *La Juive* (1835) to Girardin's *Judith* (1843) to Gautier's *La Juive de Constantine* (1846), as well as in the stagings of plays from the classical repertoire that featured Jewish characters, such as Racine's *Esther* (staged at the Théâtre Français in 1839). I will examine the ways in which these plays, though set in times and places as diverse as ancient Persia and medieval Germany, struggled to answer what would later be known as "the Jewish Question," which asked whether Jews belong in modern France, and if so, on what terms. I will also examine the careers of the surprisingly large number of Jewish performers from the era—Rachel (who starred in both *Judith* and *Esther*) being the most famous—and the degree to which they crafted their theatrical personas in answer to the questions being asked about them in the very plays in which they performed.

Panel VI.C. Balzac and the Fossilized Body

Chair: Scott Sprenger, Brigham Young University

The Travails of Degenerate and Transformative Flesh: Feminine Desire in Balzac's *Le Curé de village*

Rajeshwari S. Vallury

University of New Mexico

My paper explores the complex ambivalence of Balzac's positions with respect to the historical and material forces that shape the French Revolution and post-revolutionary France. I read *Le curé de village* as the third element of a triad composed of *Le père Goriot* and *La peau de chagrin*, and as a continued reflection on the consequences of the politico-economic transition from feudalism to capitalism. Beginning with the heteroclit pile of objects in the old curiosity shop of *La peau de chagrin*, the fossilized remains of the past that attest to the inevitable and indifferent rise and fall of civilizations, I suggest that *Le curé de village* expresses Balzac's tensions regarding the degenerative decline of three powers: L'église, la famille, et le monde, reflected in the phantasm of a sickly and decomposing society. Often assimilated to the figure of an artist, Veronique Graslin crystallizes the tension between the sterile, conservative, and static passion of avarice, and the fertile, productive desire that inseminates, creates, and transforms. Herself the product of a broken and disintegrated family, Veronique symbolizes the sins of adultery and contaminated paternity; a degenerate flesh that can only be redeemed through spiritual repentance and physical mortification. But the novel rehabilitates the family, only to inscribe its corruption with greater force. What starts out as a moral tale of chastity and purification affirms the productivity and transformative power of the feminine flesh outside of conventional norms of morality. Veronique's hair shirt functions as a vividly material writing of her desire at the very moment of its narrative sublimation. Veronique paradoxically echoes the amoral evolutionary ethics of *Vautrin*: what propels a society and allows it to move forward are forces of creation, innovation,

transformation, and adaptability, beyond considerations of good and evil. My paper ends by considering how Veronique's desire avoids the excesses and failures of Vautrin and Valentin.

Fossils and Body Parts in *La Peau de chagrin*

Dorothy Kelly

Boston University

In Balzac's *La Peau de chagrin*, dead body parts lead an uncannily active life, one that is intimately linked to language. The wild ass's skin, the preserved body part of a dead animal, acts on the world through the intermediary of language. Once one verbally accepts the pact with the peau, one needs simply to express a desire and the peau realizes the wish. At the same time, the peau itself undergoes active change: it shrinks. Conversely, the fossilized remains of a mammoth's foot can grow into an entire population of giant beasts by means of Cuvier's scientific language, just as Cadmus, by sowing teeth, grew warriors who built a city. These two active yet dead body parts "act" contextually to bring to the fore other odd body parts, strangely active objects, and dead people in motion. The list includes a woman's excess number of toes, women's shrinking skin, noisy money, a skeleton that shakes its head, a mummy that resurrects ancient Egypt, a "wax" child from Ruysch's renowned collection of preserved bodies. These objects emerge from the background of the text, as Cuvier's beasts emerge from the mammoth foot, to make their own hidden meanings come alive. I will investigate these odd body fragments and objects as fetishes: remains of the past, they promise to reinstate plenitude. Desirable or fascinating, they are also imbued with death, with loss. I will explore their significance and the role of their fetishism in relation to Raphaël's life and loves, as well as to the role of language and texts represented in this novel.

Scars and Fossils: Evolution of the Individual in Balzac

Beth Gerwin

University of Lethbridge

The writings of Honoré de Balzac are often read in the manner in which the self-appointed "secretary" of the early nineteenth century explicitly intended them to be: as socio-political documents. From the Napoleonic wars to the Restoration, Balzac continually dug through the rubble of the recent past, on which dust was only just beginning to settle, in order to reveal how the doom of misguided ambition was already imprinted in the fossils laid bare by social unrest. While the material fossils categorised by Cuvier were being read as evidence of evolution in the distant past, the immediate preoccupation of Balzac's generation was with the question of how an outmoded and calcified society would manage to evolve enough to survive. As Darwin's theories of natural selection were about to suggest, evolution necessitates a strategic break with the past. But such rupture brings up the question of the degree to which past traits can be lost before the identity of the evolving creature has been entirely changed into something new and unheard of. It also provokes the question of whether an individual can evolve, by shedding the fossilized scar tissue that ties him or her to a past regime, and emerge anew into the present.

Even as he himself forges into uncharted literary terrain to describe the growing tide of the bourgeoisie, Balzac seems fixated on the need to examine recent history and its continuing impact on post-Revolutionary identity. As many of his writings from the early and mid-1830s attest, the physical and especially psychological injuries incurred at the turn of the nineteenth century were still borne as deep scars by the time of the Monarchie de Juillet. These traumas threaten to lock the characters he describes in the past; yet by the very force of will that makes them Balzacian characters in the first place, they insist on their defining place in the present moment of France's new identity. What remains an open question in Balzac is how the fossilized traces of a past existence—borne by the unrecognisable Colonel Chabert, the traumatised Philippe de Sucey or the aggrandized Armand Montriveau, to mention just a few examples—influence their individual evolutionary adaptation to a new world order. The proposed paper will explore Balzac's representation of trauma and its outcomes in these and contemporary works.

Panel: VI.D. (R)evolution Hugo

Co-Chairs: Stéphanie Boulard, Georgia Institute of Technology and Anne Berthelot, University of Connecticut

Transformative Discourses? Words, Images and the Political Implications of Hugo's Grotesque

Vanessa Merhi

Drew University

In the revolutionary preface to *Cromwell*, human history appears as three distinct epochs: the primitive, the ancient, and the modern. Such unambiguous division, coupled with Hugo's insistence on the vital role of grotesque imagery in modern thought, creates an inescapable sense of forward momentum; once the grotesque emerges from the shadows, there is no going back.

This artistic program is realized, even surpassed, through such characters as Quasimodo (*Notre-Dame de Paris*, 1831), Gwynplaine (*L'Homme qui rit*, 1869), and the transfigured faun of *La Légende des siècles* ("Le Satyre," 1859). Each of these represents a marginalized figure with potential transformative power, thus performing within the fictional context a role akin to that of the Hugolian grotesque within art. Indeed, both "Le Satyre" and *L'Homme qui rit* go beyond merely elevating the grotesque to the level of the sublime by explicitly depicting the emergence of "sublime" order out of "grotesque" chaos, a theme with obvious political implications.

This paper traces the development of Hugo's grotesque in the context of the tumultuous historic events of his lifetime and his evolving public role. I argue that the Hugolian grotesque is significant not only in terms of the aesthetic upheaval urged in the preface to *Cromwell*, but also as a barometer of the author's hopes and anxieties concerning political change, a question about which he is decidedly less assured. Although Hugo's misshapen and hybrid figures function first and foremost as spectacles, deriving their symbolic impact from a capacity to visually shock, they are increasingly endowed with

agency and discursive power. While the deaf Quasimodo is situated to a large extent outside language, both “Le Satyre” and *L’Homme qui rit* enact the passage from object-of-discourse to speaking subject. Yet, only when the visual and the verbal function in tandem, as they do within the mythical setting of “Le Satyre,” does the grotesque subject engender lasting transformation. In contrast to the epic “Le Satyre,” the grotesque figures of Hugo’s “historical novels,” *Notre-Dame de Paris* and *L’Homme qui rit*, evoke a tension between change and permanence that remains unresolved.

Faire du nouveau avec de l’ancien: Le recyclage de la grisette fossilisée dans *Les Misérables* de Victor Hugo

Alain Lescart

Point Loma Nazarene University

La grisette, pauvre ouvrière en textile, coquette, prototype de la femme simple amoureuse est un ingrédient habituel des chants populaires et de la littérature Romantique française entre 1815 et 1850. Elle tend à disparaître du paysage des nouveaux littérateurs suivants, remplacée par un nouveau personnage plus ambigu, négatif qui cadre bien avec le nouveau paradigme Réaliste : la lorette. Victor Hugo revient cependant sur le modèle ancien de la grisette dans « Les Misérables » (1862) avec un personnage central représentatif de la condition des femmes pauvres: Fantine.

Davantage, dans le chapitre seize de *Marius*, Hugo recycle de manière anecdotique et déguisée un des chants importants de la première pièce de théâtre sur la grisette : *La Semaine des Amours* (Dumanoir, 1828) par le biais d’Eponine Thénardier qui n’est cependant pas grisette. Il en fait également le titre de ce chapitre : « *Où on retrouvera la chanson sur un air anglais à la mode en 1832.* » Ce retour à un modèle désormais antique surprend. Victor Hugo est-il en déphasage avec son temps ? Que signifie l’utilisation de ce chant par Eponine ?

Nous nous proposons de démystifier et d’analyser l’originalité ou le manque d’originalité de Hugo dans ce texte et la raison de ce choix déphasé.

***In Pace* ou l’égout (r)évolutionnaire**

Stéphanie Boulard

Georgia Institute of Technology

Des graffitis de prisonniers, des taches de sang, des affiches de spectacle, des trous de mitraille dans les murs, des mots tracés dans la neige : tout ce qui fait empreinte est omniprésent dans l’œuvre de Victor Hugo. La guillotine ne fait pas exception, qui laisse sa marque sur la géographie de la ville, le nom des places et qui vient placer son sceau fatidique sur le cou des condamnés à mort. Référence spinozienne de *l’horreur sacrée*. Car il est important chez Hugo de penser le mélange du sublime et du grotesque, comme il faut méditer sur l’alliance de ce qui appartient au stellaire et au souterrain. La question se pose : si la tête décollée monte au ciel, que deviennent tous les restes des corps de guillotins après avoir été marqués par la fatidique lunette ?

Nous voulons démontrer qu’il y a une trace sanglante qui *circule* dans l’œuvre, qui passe d’un lieu à l’autre, se faufile d’un nom à l’autre, saute d’une tête à l’autre, d’un

instrument à l'autre et dont nous voulons suivre le fil. Fil qui nous mène tout droit à l'égout des *Misérables*. Egout où viennent se concentrer et s'évacuer tous les restes fossiles des crimes de surface, les reliquats ou les reliques de personnages bien connus de l'Histoire, des restes humains, des débris sédimentaires qui viennent incruster la pierre souterraine des édifices. L'égout est le lieu de mobilisation du passé, un *in pace* qui prend sa substance dans les larmes et le sang des hommes – et que devra traverser Jean Valjean, sorte de paléontologue avant l'heure, qui descend, littéralement, dans la fosse.

Notre présentation étudiera la place centrale de l'égout et de l'*in pace* dans l'œuvre hugolienne – et plus particulièrement dans *Les misérables* avec les trajets de Jean Valjean et de Thénardier – comme un lieu où s'accumulent objets, matières, empreintes organiques, inscriptions et écritures venant faire éclater l'arkhè platonicienne. Car l'égout digère et évacue tout ce qui veut ou voudrait se fossiliser en surface : contre la fossilisation pour la (r)évolution.

Panel VI.E. Flaubert, interrogations de la science et scepticisme philosophique
Chair: Jacques Neefs, Johns Hopkins University

“Au fracas de la foudre, les animaux intelligents s'éveillèrent”: De la "Genèse" de *Salammbô* à la théorie de la génération spontanée

Agnès Bouvier

ITEM-CNRS Paris

Félix Pouchet, dans le *Traité de la génération spontanée* qu'il publie en 1859, défend, contre Pasteur et Milne-Edwards, l'idée d'une « force génésique » qui aurait présidé à la création et qui continuerait de s'exercer dans la formation et la transformation des espèces¹. Le livre fait partie des lectures de Flaubert pendant la période de rédaction de *Salammbô*. Le 5 août 1860, il écrit dans une lettre à Madame Jules Sandeau : « J'entremêle mes lectures puniques (qui ne sont pas légères) d'autres facéties graves. Je me livre maintenant au volumineux bouquin de mon ami le docteur Pouchet sur les générations spontanées. » C'est la nature de cet entrelacement que nous proposons d'interroger, à travers l'étude génétique d'un passage du chapitre III de *Salammbô* où Flaubert réécrit la cosmogonie phénicienne à la lumière du spontanéisme moderne.

The Pyrrhonist's Progress: Flaubert's Reading Notes on Montaigne's "Apologie de Raimond Sebond."

Timothy Chesters

Royal Holloway, University of London

In summer 2008 there resurfaced, in a UK private collection, an 80-page manuscript of Flaubert's reading notes on Montaigne. This trouvaille offers the chance to reassess a much-discussed literary relationship, one aspect of which ³/₄ the two writers' sceptical view of human knowledge and its progress ³/₄ is the subject of my paper.

Critics have long observed a number of parallels in the lives and thought of Montaigne and Flaubert, most prominent among which their shared epistemological pessimism.

Montaigne's great pyrrhonist experiment, the 'Apologie de Raimond Sebond', is often held to have marked Flaubert's juvenilia, where the young novelist transmutes the essayist's equanimous doubt into an impassioned, anguished mode. Even in the later works, where the echoes are more muted, Montaigne's 'que sçay-je?' can still be heard beneath Flaubert's denunciations of human stupidity. Progressivist narratives of scientific advancement come in for particular scorn in a world where, according to one Flaubertian stroke recorded in the notes, 'la fin et le commencement de la science se tiennent en pareille bestise.'

And yet my paper argues that the extent of Flaubert's subscription to Montaigne's doubt may have been overstated. The reading notes reveal admiration for the 'Apologie de Raimond Sebond', certainly. But they also record an ambivalence towards that essay which was, as I shall show, widespread among Flaubert's contemporaries. Several entries show Flaubert still cleaving to the certainties of science ³/₄ mathematics in particular ³/₄ so dear to post-Enlightenment progressivist thought. Interceding on behalf of those certainties appears another of the novelist's formative heroes, Voltaire. My paper will argue that this residual epistemological faith seeps out of the reading notes into the published work, where a series of intertextual echoes quietly rebel against Montaigne. I shall suggest that, in the end, what the 'Apologie' bequeathed to Flaubert was less sceptical thought than sceptical style.

“Égalisation de tout.”

Jacques Neefs

Johns Hopkins University

Quand il aborde à nouveau l'histoire des religions, avec la troisième version de *La Tentation de saint Antoine*, Flaubert déroule un protocole de figures, de mythes, d'êtres fabuleux et d'êtres « naturels » qui conjugue évolution, succession et régression vers l'archaïque, vers l'élémentaire. Quand il aborde le registre des sciences, des sciences appliquées et des disciplines, avec *Bouvard et Pécuchet*, Flaubert construit un jeu complexe de contradictions et d'aporées, jusqu'à l'amont d'une sorte d'ascèse ironique, qui produit une œuvre « sceptique » d'un style singulier, mettant en prose traces, fragments, morceaux, empreintes. Flaubert confie ainsi à l'art de la prose – art nouveau, et désignant un avenir de l'art, selon lui — une fonction philosophique et épistémologique profonde, pour soumettre les univers de croyances et d'idées à l'incertain, au jamais définitif.

Panel VI.F. Types and Physiologies

Chair: Aimée Boutin, Florida State University

Poseurs and Types in George Sand's *Horace*

Aimée Boutin

Florida State University

George Sand intended her eponymous character Horace as a recognizable modern type (the law student), referencing and rewriting the physiologie de l'étudiant as it appears in

Émile de la Bédollière's essay « L'Étudiant en droit » in *Les Français peints par eux-mêmes*. When Sand's prefaces draw attention to the number of readers who recognized themselves in Horace, they testify to the ubiquity and cultural currency of the physiologies fixed in the collective visual and textual imagination in the 1830s and 40s. But this legibility flies in the face of the character's narrative becoming: unable to sustain any fixed identity, the protean Horace constructs his identities in relation to images and books, and constantly morphs into different recognizable pre-scripted types (student, dandy, bohemian, aspiring writer). His self-fashioning can be productively contrasted with Marthe's metamorphosis from grisette to actress, and with the series of jobs the more genuine Arsène assumes out of necessity to make a living. As one critic put it, Horace is a "collection of physiognomies" in which all the characters are caught in a web of imitation, some successfully using it to break out of their illusions, others less so.

Sand's 1852 "Notice" proceeds to distinguish two types of readers, the 'jokers' (farceurs) and the 'suckers' (jobards). While jokers will mock the anti-hero Horace as a pastiche of the type and delight in his realism, the suckers will forgive him and uphold the ideal he fell short of. Building on the work of Catherine Nesci, Anne McCall and Deborah H. Schocket, the paper will examine how, in Horace, types are alternatively fossilized and made to evolve through a complex play of pathos and irony. How we view this interplay influences how we interpret Sand's realism and idealism.

Le Type dans tous ses états: Le regard panoramique sur la bête humaine

Catherine Nesci

University of California at Santa Barbara

La littérature panoramique est largement physiologique : à partir de l'observation et des études de cas menés dans toutes les circonstances de la vie sociale, et de préférence dans la rue par le flâneur, le littérateur cherche de fait à accéder au type. Ainsi, la littérature panoramique vise à définir des objets homogènes et des identités génériques par fragmentation et par division. Toutes les sciences de la physionomie comme la phrénologie, la physiognomonie et la physiologie sont convoquées pour composer une sorte de description mondaine qui rivalise avec le diagnostic en médecine. Les sciences de la physionomie transposent donc pour les Français les pratiques sémiologiques de la médecine dans le domaine de la vie quotidienne. Et dans le même temps, l'usage fréquent de la statistique authentifie le réalisme de la description. Dans cette communication, je me propose de renouveler l'approche de l'objet qui donne une unité sociale à la littérature panoramique, c'est-à-dire le type.

L'autre référence analogique, qui traverse aussi la transposition des autres discours savants, est la méthode descriptive et classificatoire des sciences naturelles : les types permettent de découvrir des classes et des espèces. C'est pourquoi je me pencherai sur un volume peu connu, qui propose ouvertement une parodisation de la méthode zoologique. *Le Muséum parisien* (1844) s'affiche en effet comme une suite à toutes les éditions de M. de Buffon. On trouvait déjà une parodie d'histoire naturelle dans l'ouverture de la Monographie du rentier (reprise dans *Les Français peints par eux-mêmes*), qui constitue un essai de sociologie humoristique, après la « tête de page » (lequel illustre

normalement le milieu familial au type). Dans la célèbre illustration de Grandville, le flâneur est spectateur de l'espèce du « rentier mâle » dans un Muséum d'histoire naturelle, dont le squelette est exposé entre celui de la grue femelle et de l'oie. Grandville représente donc le rentier par le biais d'un animal exposé dans une collection zoologique, sise dans une galerie d'ossements-étalons. Grandville développe donc le parallélisme entre la visite au muséum et la découverte des « bêtes curieuses » qui peuplent la grande ville. En même temps, cette sociologie humoristique rend Paris plus lisible, en organisant ses habitants selon une topographie fiable et une hiérarchie sociale compréhensible. Louis Huart et les illustrateurs de son *Muséum parisien* développent la même écriture analogique, avec un double souci de description et d'ordonnancement. Je soutiendrai donc ici que *le Muséum parisien* de Huart, tout comme de nombreux textes de la littérature panoramique, dessine les doubles contours de la bête humaine et de l'homme machine, mais que, par le biais de l'humour, du dialogisme et de l'intertextualité, ce volume parodique s'interroge également sur les fondements de la vie sociale et les modèles performatifs des identités modernes.

Sortir du "Cabinet des Antiques": Anciens nobles et anciennes représentations

Olivier Tonnerre

University of Mississippi

Souvent, lorsque l'on pense à la noblesse de *la Comédie Humaine*, on pense au Cabinet des Antiques, scène d'une vie de province où le temps semble s'être figé, où les êtres se sont momifiés au point que ces vestiges de l'Ancien Régime apparaissent plus comme le fruit d'une pourriture des âges, d'une lente dégénérescence, que d'un arrêt. Ces anciens nobles sont des fossiles en état de putréfaction, et sont présentés comme tels. Cette image est néanmoins trompeuse : la noblesse balzacienne est bien plus diverse. Mais dans ses représentations, elle reste fossile, mais autrement. Il y a un type du noble dans *la Comédie Humaine* : ce n'est ni le dégénéré, ni le dandy, ni la grande dame, ni même le parvenu. Ils ont cependant tous un trait commun : d'excellentes manières héritées de leurs aïeux. Ces manières sont l'émanation d'une essence ancienne et véritablement fossile : la grâce, telle que l'entendait Saint-Simon, et avant lui Castiglione. C'est ce rapport étroit unissant noblesse et grâce qu'il s'agit de dévoiler dans cette communication.

Between Social Reform and Stasis: Gustave Courbet and Rural *Physiologies*

Lauren Weingarden

Florida State University

The discursive influence of the nineteenth-century genre of physiologies, such as *Les Français peints par eux-mêmes* has escaped the attention of art historians. The Realist painter Gustave Courbet however made extensive references to both the techniques of representation and the represented types presented in these texts. This paper will show that Courbet engaged in a socio-cultural discourse on physiologies which, in turn, aligns him with earlier proto-Realist writers, such as Balzac and Sand. In these writings, characters are often described with physical attributes and manners of dress and within topographic locales through which authors and readers identified the characters' social

status. This method of description and interpretation replicates the verbal-visual hermeneutics of the physiologies and their didactic functions.

Courbet defined his Realist agenda by a commitment to portray individual types associated with the Franche-Comte town of Ornans, his place of birth and artistic return. This agenda likewise signified the artist's rejection of and freedom from the French academy, its conventional practices and its prescribed "Old Masters". While scholars have identified Courbet's alternative models in popular imagery, especially the "images d'Epinal," they have not considered how Courbet referenced the physiologies as a subversive strategy and as a shorthand for identifying social, and especially, provincial types. As I will show, both his own and his critics' writings support visual evidence of Courbet's use of physiologies in his paintings. The latter is especially signified by the individuation of figures within their landscape, interior or social surroundings as well as by the (formal and material) specificity of their clothing, stature and physiognomies. Finally, I argue that although Courbet intended his Realist methods and iconography to signify his own modernity and the changing mores of provincial life, his typological figurations fossilized the characters' social status as rural types in the eyes of his urban viewers.

Saturday, October 24, 2009

Session VII: 10:30-12:00 noon

Panel VII.A. Nerval and Models of the Past

Chair: Robert J. Hudson, Brigham Young University

Falsified Fossils and the Fabrication of Folklore in Nineteenth-Century France

Jennifer Gipson

University of California, Berkeley

In nineteenth-century France, "fossils" need not be excavated from history—they can also be contemporary creations. For example, invented or adapted materials presented as folkloric survivals of the past actually comment on present concerns about modernity, industrialization, or progress. Prosper Mérimée published original poetry as traditional Serbo-Croatian ballads in *La Guzla*. Later, Mérimée's story "Lokis" shows the narrator, in search of folklore, falling victim to a similar mystification. By ascribing the voice of the storyteller to countries besides France, Mérimée and others subtly play into the nationalistic idea that French modernity has evolved past traditional ways that persist elsewhere. On the other hand, Nerval deploys the traditional genre of the folktale for regionalist—and environmental—aims. "La Reine des Poissons," part of the folklore collection appended to "Sylvie," features fish pleading for their lives and trees crying not to be cut down. No matter its "authenticity," this tale's association with the land and people grants authority to Nerval's plea for "green" consciousness. Finally, I ask how the literary invention of folkloric "fossils" resonates with movements to preserve or reinvent material and architectural patrimony. In "Sylvie," the scenery is dotted with ruins of ages past. Mérimée, as Inspecteur des monuments historiques, was charged with preservation

of some such remnants. If historic preservation, documentation, and collection are characteristic of nineteenth-century France, I ask how folklore provides a unique canvas for historic “creation” where authors grapple with supposedly fading oral traditions and the role of these traditions in literary and cultural modernity.

Medieval Narrative Models in Gérard de Nerval's "Aurélia"

Brandy Hancock

The Pennsylvania State University

Gérard de Nerval’s “Aurélia”, while resisting generic categorizations, demonstrates an uncanny affiliation with the medieval grail romances when read in consideration of texts such as those belonging to the thirteenth-century Lancelot-Grail cycle. The adventures of “Aurélia’s” narrator’s quest take place within an otherworldly dream space that becomes a place of revelation of the mysteries he seeks, and the tension between the worldly, or terrestrial, and the spiritual, or celestial, hearkens back to a similar opposition within *La Queste del Saint Graal*. “Aurélia” is a narrative of the inner quest for forgiveness that can be read as Nerval’s grail and is partly defined by the structures of analogy and interlace common to the medieval French romance. Indeed, explicit mentions of Artus, Ginèvra, Lancelot, and Merlin are found in the fragments following the second part of the text and reveal Nerval’s familiarity with medieval literature, and more specifically with the Arthurian legend. More importantly perhaps than thematic references to the medieval Matter of Britain are the stylistic features of the text that echo medieval literary structures. In this presentation, I will examine instances where the figures of analogy and interlace mentioned above strongly indicate that such an intertextual reading is not only warranted but brings to light the modernity of the Middle Ages within the nineteenth century and helps us better establish “Aurélia’s” narratological complexity.

The Cult of the Nobility: Nineteenth-Century Heraldry and Arms

Melanie Robin Conroy

Stanford University

Under the Ancien Régime, heraldic symbols appeared everywhere, on everyday objects, cups and plates, hearths and fountains, school insignia, on frontispieces and letters; and yet they were little understood. Heraldry, as it became detached from its ancient functions, lent credibility and the illusion of antiquity to the new literary elite, while the new fictions which appealed to it modeled a new way of relating to symbols of a bygone era. In the nineteenth century, coats of arms were seen mostly on antiques and objets d’art; they became even more rarified, marks of Romantic affiliation, and signs of a bourgeois cult of nobility.

And yet even when they were completely incomprehensible, these aristocratic symbols were heavy with implied historical significance and dug into real material objects; they imposed upon the viewer. This paper asks why heraldic symbols, despite their obsolescence, appealed to readers and to writers as a class, even to supposedly anti-Romantic writers such as Flaubert. Examining Nerval’s use of aristocratic references and heraldic signs in *Les Chimères* and *Sylvie*, I show how heraldic symbols maintained much

of their prestige, even as they were stripped of both the fixed and the quotidian meanings that they once had.

Gérard de Nerval, seiziémiste: Excavating the Valois in "Sylvie"

Robert J. Hudson

Brigham Young University

Prior to initiation into the petit Cénacle of late Romantic poets and the spiritual journeys upon which his legacy is founded, Gérard de Nerval was a seiziémiste, a young erudite, accumulating encyclopedic knowledge on Renaissance France at the lecterns of Parisian reading rooms. Cutting his literary teeth with an 1829 historical essay on 16th-century poets and raised in France's once noble Valois region, Nerval infuses a mythical image of the Valois (as a royal house, region and era) into nearly all of his subsequent literary output. As such, extracting the Valois and analyzing it in terms of Nerval-as-seiziémiste is essential to understanding the determining forces at play in Nerval's creative imaginary.

In connection with a larger project dealing with Nerval's early fascination with (his odelettes), subsequent rejection of ("Je ronsardisais..."), and ultimate return to 16th-century poetics (*Les Chimères*), this paper will examine the mythical lure of Valois France as witnessed in Nerval's "Sylvie", *Souvenirs du Valois* and in what I term his Bohemian wanderings (*La Bohême galante* and *Petits châteaux de Bohême*), which are likewise rich in Valois imagery. Beyond simply identifying the Valois as a mythologized/mythologizing source in Nerval's œuvre, I will also argue that his historical affinity with the sixteenth-century contributed to his eventual reconciliation with Renaissance verse and auspicious adoption of the most Valois of poetic forms—the sonnet—for his crowning recueil and poetic tombeau: *Les Chimères*.

Panel VII.B. Private Men and Public Women: The Limits of the Ideology of Separate Spheres in Nineteenth-Century French Visual Culture

Chair: Heather Belnap Jensen, Brigham Young University

Flowers, Furniture, and the Masculine Interior

Temma Balducci

Arkansas State University

Edgar Degas's 1895 photograph of Stephan Mallarmé and Pierre-Auguste Renoir in the apartment of Julie Manet memorializes the three men as they gather around Manet's fireplace—a quintessential symbol of domesticity. Indeed, the scene is utterly domestic and it is the intimacy of the gathering and the evident intellectual camaraderie in a private home that resonates in the photo. Images such as Degas's that depict men in domestic settings, though they are quite common across the cultural spectrum in late nineteenth-century visual culture, are woefully understudied. Their refusal to fit within a conventional Baudelairean gender framework that theorizes masculinity and the public sphere as mutually exclusive and mutually defining means that such images, when not overlooked, are often misread as feminizing to the men depicted.

Paintings by Manet, Caillebotte, Renoir, Tissot and other artists of the period that represent men in the home suggest, on the contrary, that the private, domestic interior was as significant as the café, the boulevard, the billiard room, or the study in constructing a modern, urban masculinity. Using the evidence of visual culture along with the writings of architectural theorists, interior designers, novelists, and cultural critics, my paper looks in detail at such images and the ways in which they construct masculinity as inseparable from the domestic sphere, challenging narrow interpretations of such spaces as exclusively feminine.

"Why Can't a Woman Be More Like a Man": The Space of Cross-Dressing in Nineteenth-Century France

Johanna Ruth Epstein
Hollins University

In 1887 the novelist “Rachilde”, female cross-dresser and self-proclaimed “homme de lettres,” appeared on the cover of *La Vie Moderne*. Why did the editors of *La Vie Moderne* choose Rachilde as the new face of Modernity?

Using Marjorie Garber’s definition of transvestitism as “a space of possibility structuring and confounding culture,” this paper examines cross-dressing both as a prominent visual theme (in magazines, political satire and photographs) and as a viable professional strategy for women in late nineteenth century French visual culture. Though personally risky, mercilessly ridiculed and legally punishable, cross-dressing afforded Rachilde, George Sand, Rosa Bonheur, and Sarah Bernhardt access not only to public space but to unprecedented professional status. High-profile women in the arts who cross-dressed did so in order to be viewed as serious professionals. Ambiguous attire allowed them to enter stables, circuses, cafes, museums of anatomical wax models (spaces hitherto off-limits for women), and become authorities on cycling, juggling, horse-back riding and other activities judged unfit for ladies. Rosa Bonheur’s and Rachilde submitted legal applications to the prefecture of police to request permits to dress as men.

This paper presents the possibility that, through transgressing conventional norms, these high-visibility cross-dressing icons granted a generation of bourgeois women permission to engage in the public sphere. If, as Janet Wolff has recently acknowledged, the sociology of modernity must be rethought in terms of women’s experiences, the negotiation of public space and culture by women dressed as men destabilizes the notion of defining a female experience of public space. The presence of cross-dressed women in homosocial public space eroded the notion of a categorically feminine experience of public life, deconstructing, even as it participated in, the separate-spheres ideology.

At Home in the Studio: Two Artists Portraits from the 1870s by Frédéric Bazille and Pierre-Auguste Renoir.

Alison Strauber
Institute of Fine Arts, New York University

This paper uses Frédéric Bazille's *Studio in the rue la Condamine* (1870) and Pierre-Auguste Renoir's *The Artist's Studio, rue Saint-Georges* (1876), to investigate how male, avant-garde artists of the mid-1870s engaged with domestic ideals in depictions of themselves and their artistic practice. I argue that these two paintings portray painters and their studios in terms of bourgeois ideals of home and leisure, and I explore the implications of this portrayal for conceptions of male artists. Specifically, I argue that the paintings depict comfortable, companionable domesticity as the foundation of masculine creative endeavor. These scenes open up fresh perspectives on the constructions of gender, class, and space that shaped artistic identity during the period.

I trace precedents for Bazille and Renoir's studio scenes in bohemian studio portraits of the 1840s, which brought a new degree of intimacy to representations of artists and their workspaces. With these earlier images of artistic private life as a background, I then examine Bazille and Renoir's use of particular activities, poses, and décor to associate their depictions of private time in the studio with bourgeois, male domestic life. I discuss how the two artists manipulate the gender connotations of the studio and the home, creating all-male artistic environments in which the professional and domestic realms are integrated into harmonious, self-sufficient wholes. Viewed in relation to period definitions of manhood, their portraits indicate the breadth of culturally acceptable masculine domestic experience in the mid-nineteenth century, a broad scope that has been under-acknowledged in modern scholarship. I conclude that Bazille and Renoir's studio portraits depict a complex and expansive form of masculinity in which domesticity is an integral part of male artistic identity.

The Post-Revolutionary Salon and the Scrutiny of Women

Heather Belnap Jensen

Brigham Young University

One of the most significant spaces for the construction of a woman's social identity was the public art museum, an institution born out of the Revolution and thus marked by its demands. The discursive structures framing this institution were myriad, and while political concerns were certainly important, the economic and religious motivations at play deserve due consideration. With the Revolutionary desacralization of holy spaces and concomitant reification of art, the museum became a potent substitute for the church. At the same time, however, this nascent institution, and particularly the Salons that highlighted this space, was construed as a marketplace in which the art (and its viewers) were commodities. These two paradigms were held in tension at this formative moment, and at its center stood the figure of the bourgeoisie.

The fashioning of the museum as an institution and the social construction of the bourgeoisie occurred in tandem in the years immediately following the Revolution. Images culled from high art and popular culture, along with texts ranging from aesthetic treatises and education manuals to items in novels and fashion magazines, attest to this phenomenon. Women's presence in the museum as artists, observers, subjects, and critics was a subject of great interest; indeed, it would seem that this space became a "proving ground" for women's participation in the public sphere at large. Significantly, the tropes

of shopping and worshipping—public activities deemed not only suitable but necessary for women to perform—figured prominently into this cultural discourse. Thus, an evaluation of these words and images puts pressure on conventional ways of framing women’s positions within the public field(s) of early nineteenth-century France.

Panel VII.C. Zola: Body and Soil

Chair: Nick White, Cambridge University

Inheriting Hermaphroditism in Zola's *La Curée*

Anne Linton

Yale University

According to Émile Zola, hermaphroditism is a regrettable fact of life. Its daily proof ranges from those born with sexually “uncertain” physical appearances to ambiguous body parts and “unnatural” same-sex desires. Zola makes these claims in his 1895 preface to the Roman d’un inverti-né, but his fascination with androgyny is most fully explored in his 1871 novel, *La Curée*, where hermaphroditism becomes a terrifying nexus of scientific, moral, and social anxiety.

Whereas most critics have argued that literary hermaphrodites bear the hallmark of mythology and share no resemblance with contemporaneous real world observation, I show how the nineteenth century theory of degenerate heredity informs Zola’s conception of hermaphroditism. As the final expression of a “société qui pourrissait” Maxime is a “homme-femme” and his aunt, Sidonie, embodies “cet hermaphroditisme étrange de la femme devenue être neutre.” But while Zola’s representation of Sidonie’s acquired hermaphroditism and Maxime’s innate androgyny in *La Curée* relies on contemporary “science,” it also destabilizes those very scientific models. Despite Zola’s pejorative view of homosexuality and hermaphroditism, his fiction subverts the heteronormative two sex model. As an androgynous amalgam of her twin masculine and feminine vocations, Sidonie exists outside of binary gender and her “neuter” status even gives her an edge as a go-between in her profession as a “living inventory of supply and demand.” Although Maxime’s degenerate heredity already marks him as a “strange hermaphrodite,” it is his transient homosexuality in boarding school which “strikes a lasting blow to his virility.” Zola’s portrayal of unstable gender identities in *La Curée* thus undermines the seemingly inexorable calculus of degenerate heredity inherited from scientific theory and invites us to see literary naturalism in a new light—less as a derivative of science than as a critic of it.

Ultimately, I suggest, Zola’s portrayal of hermaphroditism as an expression of degenerate heredity and the corrosive effects of boarding school anticipates and may have even contributed to the popularization of the ubiquitous psychological models of perverse sexuality of the 1880s.

A Fossil in the Family: Metamorphoses of the Elderly in Zola

Andrew Counter

Cambridge University

Émile Zola appears to have had a macabre obsession with the bodily degeneration occasioned by aging. It is not uncommon for Zola's elderly characters to be reduced before their death to some intermediate, inanimate state whereby their physical bodies appear to outlive their functional humanity, and become objects. The fate of the malignant – or at least maligned – matriarch of the Rougon-Macquart dynasty, Adélaïde Fouque, is a particularly significant example of such a transformation: at the boundary of animal and mineral, her brain-dead body persists for many years, buried in the local asylum, a senseless fossil record of the original corruption that blights her progeny.

My paper will explore this kind of grotesque fossilization in its relations to the family and the aging process within the family, with particular reference to *La Terre* (1887), a novel which presents a disturbing series of transformed, tortured, and stubbornly irreducible elderly bodies. The novel will be shown to be cluttered with problematic remains, traces of life, both organic and inorganic, that prove ethically, conceptually and physically embarrassing to the people whose duty it becomes to square those remains away. These people are, invariably, family, and Zola's metamorphoses will prove to be intimately connected with questions of familial authority and tradition, and with tensions and power struggles within the family unit. Certainly, Zola takes the suffering or inanimate elderly body as an object of simultaneous pathos and revulsion in its own right, and the rhetorical hesitation of Zola's text between these two responses will be teased out. Yet, anticipating absurdist texts such as Eugène Ionesco's *Amédée ou comment s'en débarrasser* (1954) and Donald Barthelme's *The Dead Father* (1975), these cumbersome physical remains also become metaphors for family secrets and family history; their awkward, insistent physical presence records and embodies the past.

The Soil of *La Débâcle* and the Geography of War

Nick White

Cambridge University

Zola conceived of *La Débâcle* as a pendant to the earlier *La Terre*, and in this historical closure to the Rougon-Macquart cycle, Jean Macquart the peasant farmer is re/presented as the loyal soldier. This paper will explore the ways in which this penultimate novel in the cycle maps out the soil of France as a geo-historical repository of national identity. By focussing on relationships of fraternity (not least in the relationship between Jean and Maurice), I shall examine the ways in which such a sedimentation of identity (the evolution of Frenchness and rootedness) is disturbed in extreme fashion by the revolutionary and counter-revolutionary excesses of 1870-71 (when the identity of the land is uprooted and transformed in brutal ways).

Panel VII.D. Fossiles en évolution

Chair: Paule Petitier, l'Université de Paris 7

Ruines et désordre

Michel Pierssens

l'Université de Montréal

Les bouleversements politiques et sociaux qui marquent le passage du XVIIIe au XIXe siècles ne relèvent-ils que de la contingence historique ou d'une causalité plus complexe? Sont-ils d'ailleurs des causes ou des conséquences? Le déterminisme qui les expliquerait relève-t-il d'une physique ou d'une métaphysique? Les formes et les thèmes qui en accompagnent l'émergence dans les arts et la littérature sont-ils les stigmates d'une décadence ou les premiers éléments d'une culture nouvelle? Quel sens faut-il reconnaître, s'il en est un, aux ruines accumulées en un demi-siècle? Ces questions, les contemporains se les posent parfois avec angoisse, parfois avec espoir. Elles sont à la source de nombreuses œuvres comme des constructions conceptuelles qui fondent les sciences émergentes, également indissociables de ce procès de la modernité qui fait se confronter ordre et désordre. Confrontation à penser, à illustrer, à transformer en créations intellectuelles, artistiques et littéraires. Examiné sous cet angle, la thématique des ruines, si prévalente dans la période qui nous intéresse, ne relève pas d'un effet de mode ou de contagion mélancolique, mais d'un très ample effort de figuration de l'inconnu sur lequel ouvrent les temps nouveaux.

Arrêt de développement

Paule Petitier

l'Université de Paris 7

L'idée est de partir de la notion d' « arrêt de développement » (forgée par Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire pour expliquer des faits de monstruosité résultant selon lui de l'arrêt du développement de l'embryon ou d'une partie de celui-ci à un moment donné). Michelet en particulier s'empare de cette notion pour caractériser certains personnages historiques (Mme de Maintenon par exemple) ou certains blocages de l'Histoire.

La Mort de la terre de Rosny aîné: S'adapter pour mourir

Claude Millet

Université de Paris 7

Dans un avenir lointain mais inéluctable, l'espèce humaine fera place aux « ferromagnétaux » (eux-mêmes voués à disparaître plus tard encore, quand aura triomphé le règne minéral). Cette évolution est la résultante de transformations climatiques auxquels les humains ont dû s'adapter dans leur morphologie, dans leur psychologie mais aussi leurs structures sociopolitiques. Les trois sont corrélés par une interaction morbide, avec la constitution très particulière d'un « biopouvoir » démocratique, fondé sur un eugénisme citoyen qui se retourne en principe suicidaire, les derniers hommes, « fossilisés » dans leur rationalisme, finissant par lutter non pour vivre, mais pour mourir. L'instinct des oiseaux, l'amour des héros ne suffiront pas pour conjurer une catastrophe systémique. Le roman de Rosny aîné peut se lire comme une confirmation du darwinisme et une dénonciation du darwinisme social, rationalisation entropique et morbide de la communauté des Hommes.

La Poésie scientifique, une poésie fossile?

Muriel Louâpre, Université Paris Descartes

Relevant à la fois du genre didactique et épédiclique, la poésie scientifique s'est donnée pour objet principal au XIX^e siècle la célébration du progrès, en ses grandes découvertes comme en ses grands hommes, héros positifs d'un merveilleux renouvelé. De la découverte du microbe aux techniques de l'accouchement, tout savoir scientifique et technique du siècle a été mis en vers, et le plus souvent, passé à la toise de l'alexandrin. Est-ce de cette tension entre une forme désuète et des savoirs en révolution constante que procède son irrémédiable déclin comme mode légitime de diffusion des savoirs au cours du siècle? C'est à partir d'un corpus de poèmes consacrés à la genèse de l'univers et à la naissance de l'homme, à commencer par « Les Fossiles » de Louis Bouilhet, qu'on se propose d'examiner si la poésie scientifique, conservatoire des savoirs et témoin des dépôts successifs de théories sédimentées, était intrinsèquement condamnée à jouer les fossiles de l'histoire des sciences.

Panel VII.E. Models in Evolution

Chair: Kathryn Grossman, The Pennsylvania State University

Understanding the Republic? Geographical Discourse in G. Bruno's (Fouillée) *Le Tour de la France par deux enfants* (1877)

Kory Olson

The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey

The early French Third Republic worked to foster a uniform national identity through a standardized educational system that promoted a shared language and history. To complete this evolution, politicians and academics pushed to add geography to that curriculum. One seminal history textbook, G. Bruno's (Fouillée) 1877 *Le Tour de la France par deux enfants* in effect "introduced" French political geography to generations of school children as they followed André and Julien, the two orphaned central characters, from city to city. However republican the overall message – reinforced through the boys' good citizenship (education, hard work) – the text's geography remains a stubborn counterbalance to the government's agenda.

This paper will examine how the Bruno preserves a fossilized, pre-revolutionary view of France at the expense of the republican one championed by its protagonists. First, she divides the book's contents largely not by department but by Ancien-régime provinces and cities, upon which she extols adjectives. For example, as they sail from Marseilles to Perpignan, André and Julien meet a man from "le joli comté de Nice" and, in discussion with other sailors, hear that Provence is "le plus beau [pays] du monde" (189).

When present in the text however, Bruno's depiction of the republican-created administrative division appears almost as an afterthought. For example, the reader learns of the "quatre départements de la Bourgogne avec leurs chefs-lieux: Auxerre, Dijon, Mâcon et Bourg," but not their names (104). Later, the department of Saône-et-Loire is mentioned only as the two children leave Le Creusot on their way to the province of Nivernais (116). The acceptance and use of the département was therefore far from complete almost one hundred years after its conception. My analysis of Bruno's

geographic discourse, drawing on her use of place names and their context in the narrative, recognizes the difficulty for the nation's school children to comprehend French republican space before the introduction of cartography and geography in the coming decades.

Playing with Preconceptions: The Criminal in Mirbeau's *Journal d'une femme de chambre*

Deirdre McAnally

The Pennsylvania State University

In *Reading for the Plot* (1984), Peter Brooks explains how secularization in France entailed the “loss of providential plots” and could “explain the nineteenth century’s obsession with questions of origin, evolution, progress, genealogy, its foregrounding of the historical narrative as par excellence the necessary mode of explanation and understanding” (6-7). Octave Mirbeau’s *Journal d’une femme de chambre* (1900) illustrates this idea through a satirical depiction of the Belle Époque as a time of sweeping injustices and inequalities. One of the ways that he does this is to take to task conventions from the newly-established field of criminology, a domain heavily influenced by notions of heredity and evolution. Lombroso’s vastly influential work, *L’Homme criminel*, only translated into French three years before Mirbeau’s novel, attempts to scientifically classify the characteristics of the common criminal. *Journal d’une femme de chambre* devotes considerable space to the character Joseph, a gardener who may have committed both murder and vandalism, the ambiguity being central to Mirbeau’s complication of attempts to classify human beings.

This study will examine Joseph as an exaggerated portrait of the “criminel né” that Lombroso, among others, saw as very real. Through Joseph, the supposed “rare pearl” of a servant who escapes all punishment, Mirbeau condemns the supreme hypocrisy of society. Mirbeau clearly demarcates Joseph as a malefactor by the description of his various tattoos and brutish body and behavior, all ways Lombroso argued as ways to “read” the criminal body. Previous criticism has too often taken the portrait of Joseph literally, missing the humoristic aspects that reveal new readings of the text. Through satire, Mirbeau complicates the very idea that bodies can be read correctly, and thereby presents an acerbic view of society’s attempts to classify and separate people into normative categories.

Works Cited

Brooks, Peter. *Reading for the Plot*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1992.

Martyrs de l'ancien régime, pionniers du progrès

Janice Best

Acadia University

En 1879, le Conseil municipal de Paris entreprit un vaste projet de réaménagement de la capitale dans un but pédagogique. Lorsque la Ville de Paris ne commémorait pas les

précurseurs de la Révolution et les fondateurs de la liberté, elle honorait la mémoire des martyrs de l'Ancien régime ou encore celle des scientifiques considérés comme les pionniers du progrès. Chaque 'grand' du passé était choisi parce qu'il incarnait une valeur républicaine, mais aussi pour les souvenirs historiques et politiques qu'il évoquait. Plusieurs de ces monuments devinrent des lieux de cérémonies annuelles où différentes factions dans la société pouvaient donner voix à leurs revendications. La statue du *Chevalier de la Barre*, ce jeune homme de dix-neuf ans qui en 1766 fut torturé et brûlé pour ne pas avoir salué une procession religieuse devint le point de ralliement pour différents groupes laïques. Même après sa disparition sous le régime de Vichy le socle vida resta sur place et continua à attirer autant de manifestants. Le monument à l'astronome François Arago, érigé en 1893 près de l'Observatoire de Paris, connut un sort semblable.

Aujourd'hui ces deux statues ont été remplacées par des œuvres nouvelles. Un nouvel hommage au *Chevalier de la Barre* par le sculpteur Emmanuel Ball a été inauguré en 2001 sur le socle original du monument. En 1994, le sculpteur néerlandais Jan Dibbets a conçu un « monument imaginaire » réalisé sur le tracé d'une ligne imaginaire, le méridien de Paris, dont le socle original forme le centre à partir duquel l'œuvre s'étend dans deux directions.

Dans cette communication, je compte retracer l'histoire des monuments originaux ainsi que celle de leurs réincarnations modernes. Je chercherai à analyser leurs dimensions idéologiques afin de comprendre de quelle façon chaque monument contribuait et continue à contribuer à ce projet d'enseignement par les rues.

Panel: VII.F. The Smelly Nineteenth Century
Chair: Cheryl Krueger, University of Virginia

Opera Stinks
Kevin Kopelson
The University of Iowa

Those chorus girls from Georges Bizet's *Carmen* (1875) - cigarette factory workers on break - caused quite the stir. Even the very sight of them: female singers smoking, and in public! Even, at the premiere, the very sound of them. Unaccustomed to tobacco, they gasped and choked their way through the most important part. (In rehearsal, moreover, they'd complained that the "cigarette chorus" was impossible - but only, they'd thought, because they couldn't both walk around and sing at the same time.) Even, for at least audience members close enough for a kind of "smell-o-vision" experience avant la lettre, their very aroma. Yet less than fifty years later, with the song *Fumée* (1921) by Reynaldo Hahn (text by Jean Moréas), we find a quasi-operatic singer, sometimes female, claiming quite beautifully to in a way be smoke: *Compagne l'ether, indolente fumée, / Je te ressemble un peu ...* We shall see, perhaps smell, how we got there - or what Parisians had either learned or disavowed en route.

Baudelaire, Scented/Unscented
Cheryl Krueger
University of Virginia

Throughout the nineteenth century, Parisians worked to eliminate the foul odors of their streets, homes and bodies. At the same time, writers and poets evoked the sense of smell for its aesthetic and transgressive power. Baudelaire is one of the poets most cited for his evocation of odors, from the steamy rot of “Une Charogne” to the transporting beauty of “Le Parfum.” Known for his poetic evocation of musk, benzoin, incense, flowers, warm skin, pungent hair, fetid exhalations, and the lingering smell of cat on the hand that caressed it, Baudelaire, nonetheless, did not ponder scent in his letters and other writings. In fact, I argue that the majority of Baudelaire's poems are unscented: they make no overt reference to fragrance or they do so only in general term. In this paper I will examine the stench of city streets, the fragrance of perfume, olfactory perception, the relationship between odor and language, and the surprising absence of scent references in Baudelaire's verse and prose

The Stinking Page
Elisabeth Ladenson
Columbia University

One of the major contributing factors for the Second Empire's case against *Les Fleurs du mal* was Gustave Bourdin's simultaneously admiring and censorious article in *Le Figaro* proclaiming: "le lecteur se bouche le nez; la page pue." Baudelaire's poems are notorious for their unusual emphasis on olfactory description, both positive (e.g. perfume) and negative (e.g. putrefaction), a characteristic that takes its cue from Dante's remarkably smelly *Divine Comedy*. The terms of Bourdin's opprobrium were later taken up by later commentators such as Barbey d'Aurevilly, who took Zola in particular to task for what he perceived as excessive realism in olfactory terms, repeatedly observing that the novels in the Rougon-Macquart cycle stank of the sewer. This paper takes as its focus the history of odor as critical metaphor and literary device, with particular attention to the relation between actual olfactory depiction in 19th century French literature and the deployment of odor as a term of critical derision. I will argue that this critical topos, which became a commonplace, contributed to the increasing attention devoted to the olfactory in literature of the second half of the 19th century.

Saturday, October 24, 2009
Session VIII: 1:30-3:00pm

Panel: VIII.A. Soldiers and Workers
Chair: June Laval, Kennesaw State University

Fossilized Errors and Military Creationism: Written Records, Truth, and the Gospel according to Balzac, Hugo, Dumas, Flaubert and Zola
Michelle Cheyne
University of Massachusetts Dartmouth

Like their respective authors, *Le Colonel Chabert* and *J'accuse* stand as bookends for the 19th century. While Balzac and Zola mark the evolution of a literary effort to pen a greater truth, from Romanticism to naturalism, their texts roughly bracket military mistakes. Both *Le Colonel Chabert* and *J'accuse* pose the problem of a truth willfully buried. Each excavates the fossilized errors that prop up a fictitious account of reality. Each gives lie to the Army's infallibility and to the honorability of its words. Do the two attest to a static vision of the military as an untrustworthy source of information on the one hand, and the novelist as guarantor of truth on the other? This paper studies canonical texts from Balzac, Hugo, Dumas, Flaubert, and Zola focusing on the question of military accounts and their status as fact or fiction and analyzes the trajectory of truth presented.

An Army of Bachelors: Combat Buddies from Bonaparte to Balzac

Brian Martin

Williams College

Due in part to longstanding military restrictions on marriage and to soldiers' notorious reputation as undesirable husbands, thousands of bachelor veterans haunted the drawing rooms and boarding houses, cafés and brasseries, memoirs and novels of post-1815 France. While some soldiers succeeded in finding wives and fathering families, thousands lived out their lives as veteran couples, military buddies, and bachelor pairs, taking comfort in one another's care. For many soldiers, military bachelorhood thus represented a lifetime of masculine companionship, during which men shared both the hardships of their military service and the continued challenges of their veteran retirement. This paper will look at the enduring intimacy of many military friendships, as Napoleonic soldiers became veterans following Waterloo in 1815. For some veterans, these battle-tested friendships would long outlast Napoleon, his Grande Armée, and the Empire. As the Bourbon Restoration demobilized Napoleon's soldiers, tens of thousands of veterans were offered meager half-pay pensions, placed under surveillance by local royalist authorities, and denied the respect and support they felt so entitled to after years of sacrifice and service to the nation. Regarded by many of their contemporaries as fossilized Napoleonic dinosaurs, these veterans could rather be said to represent an evolution in military friendship and male homosociality in early nineteenth-century France. Faced with a bleak and disappointing future, many veterans relied on each other during their retirement, sharing their homes, tables, and pensions with one another, in the same way that they had endured the privations of Napoleon's final disastrous campaigns. Through readings of Napoleonic military memoirs and Balzac's military fiction, this paper will examine the legacy of military friendship established during the Empire in the shared retirement of Napoleonic veterans during the Restoration.

Entre Archaïsme et modernité: Les figures de l'ouvrier dans l'enquête sociale et la littérature du premier XIXe siècle

Jean-Dominique Goffette

Université de Paris 8

En concurrence avec classes laborieuses, prolétaires, travailleurs, le terme ouvrier s'impose vers 1831-1832. Dans les années 1830-1848, le travailleur, défini par opposition à ceux qui l'exploitent, entraîne, au profit de la catégorie générale de l'ouvrier, un recul des significations qui l'associaient au monde des métiers et de l'artisanat. Vers 1848, perdant son acception saint-simonienne (ceux qui souffrent du temps présent), le terme prolétariat finit par désigner ceux qui vivent de leur travail. Témoignant d'un changement de perception de l'ouvrier, ces mutations lexicales se produisent sous la monarchie de Juillet alors qu'en 1840 est établie la relation entre classes laborieuses et classes dangereuses dans les enquêtes de Buret, De la misère des classes laborieuses en Angleterre et en France et Frégier, Des classes dangereuses de la population dans les grandes villes. Vecteurs de stéréotypes, ces catégories marqueront l'écriture de Sue, Hugo, Balzac. En 1839 a débuté la publication de l'ouvrage collectif, portant la trace des travaux du Dr. Villermé, Les Français peints par eux-mêmes, dans lequel l'ouvrier n'a pas de visage univoque. Dans un premier temps, tenant compte de l'essor de la presse qui structure l'opinion, l'exposé s'attachera de montrer comment, procédant par emprunts à des schèmes représentatifs anciens (barbares, sauvages) un certain discours a contribué à créer et à diffuser la figure de l'ouvrier pris dans le magma des significations des classes laborieuses-classes dangereuses. Dans un deuxième temps, il envisagera la manière dont un autre discours, dominé par la figure idéalisée de l'ouvrier des métiers mais recourant à des schèmes mythologiques (par exemple les Cyclopes) réussit à rendre tangible la diversité et la singularité de figures de l'ouvrier à l'identité problématique. En conclusion nous nous interrogerons pour savoir comment la littérature ultérieure à cette époque a pu utiliser ces figures.

Panel: VIII.B. Mallarmé

Chair: Pamela Genova, University of Oklahoma

Fossilisation et évolution: Regard sur la ponctuation dans "A la nue accablante tu"
Myriam Krepps, Pittsburg State University

Un grand nombre de poèmes de Stéphane Mallarmé se présentent au regard du lecteur dans leur état fragmenté, sans explication, fossiles d'une forme poétique utilisée jadis, mais dont il ne reste plus que la trace imprimée incomplète sur la page à lire. A cause de l'ambiguïté syntaxique de la phrase mallarméenne, squelette d'un texte en évolution, le lecteur oublie de voir le schéma visuel des poèmes auxquels il tente de trouver un sens.

Si l'on considère la forme du sonnet comme la trace fossilisée d'une forme poétique traditionnelle, reconnue par tout lecteur au premier coup d'œil, on ne peut alors qu'être d'accord avec la mise en garde de Julia Kristeva¹ contre l'utilisation des artifices typographiques qui réduisent effectivement le champ d'interprétations du lecteur en s'établissant comme modèle / mode d'emploi de lecture trop puissant, nous faisant rechercher dans la trace laissée la forme connue, et oblitérant de notre vue l'évolution poétique inscrite dans l'absence-même de la ponctuation. Le poème imprimé se présente à la vue du lecteur tout à la fois fossilisé (forme classique, un sonnet) et en pleine évolution (ponctuation défaillante).

Parmi les poèmes mallarméens aux relations syntaxiques équivoques, le sonnet « A la nue accablante tu » (Poésies) présente à la lecture un cas d'ambiguïtés sémantiques, tant lexicales que syntaxiques, qui découlent de l'absence de toute aide visuelle concrète, caractérisée dans ce poème par l'absence totale de ponctuation en fin de vers, à l'exception du point final qui le clôt. Ce sonnet se révèle au lecteur dans sa suite de vers désemboîtés, sans mode d'emploi semble-t-il, pour reconstruire une organisation linéaire discursive visuelle cohérente. « A la nue accablante tu » constitue ainsi un parfait fossile : parfait par l'absence de ses éléments hormis la trace, troublant pour l'observateur minutieux qui ne pourra le classer et le reconnaître pleinement sous sa forme nouvelle qu'en étudiant l'évolution subie par le système de ponctuation. Notre étude se propose de découvrir l'espèce poétique visuelle qui émerge du sonnet mallarméen.

La Dernière Mode: Fashion or Fossil in Mallarmé Studies?

Pamela Genova

University of Oklahoma

In the development of nineteenth-century French letters, it becomes increasingly clear that the elaboration of aesthetic theory and the production of the art more and more frequently take place within a new framework, the literary journal. Despite early experiments, it is arguably the Symbolists who expanded the domain of journalism to the most striking degree, by actively transforming it into an arena for aesthetic activity. Indeed, Stéphane Mallarmé found himself at the center of many of the most controversial discussions in the literary press, and the introduction of his singular view of poetics helped bring about the explosion of an aesthetic and critical uproar that continued until well past the turn of the century, known as *la guerre des petites revues*.

In the mid-1870s, Mallarmé founded his own journal, *La Dernière Mode*, administered under his sole direction. In this odd magazine, which carried the subtitle "Gazette du monde et de la famille," the poet wrote articles addressing a vast array of cultural phenomena grouped around the notion of *la mode*: dress styles, jewelry, popular menu items, and the most fashionable theatrical soirées. *La Dernière Mode*, characterized by Jean-Pierre Richard as "cette extraordinaire encyclopédie de la frivolité," may seem an unlikely enterprise for Mallarmé, le poète de l'absolu, and he himself later disavowed the project. Yet the prose of *La Dernière Mode* holds more interest from a literary perspective than first seems apparent. In fact, the endeavor can be understood as a logical reaction to the years of crisis through which Mallarmé had suffered in the 1860s, described by the poet himself as a fearful experience of near madness. To find his way back from ethereal abstraction to the concrete nature of daily life, Mallarmé thus can be seen to immerse himself in the banalities of hemlines and petits-fours, and the images of the quotidian that fill *La Dernière Mode* stand as an illustration of the "aboli bibelot" of Mallarmé's verse, as a tangible form of protection from the haunting image of Icarus and the dangerous temptation of transcendence.

Dead Languages and Ancient Books in Stéphane Mallarmé

Aiko Macphail-Okamoto, Indiana University

My communication deals with the notion of grimoire as the collection of ancient and dead words in Stéphane Mallarmé and his *Igitur* in the evolutionary context of French verse from Aloysius Bertrand to Gustave Kahn. In the preface of *Gaspard de la Nuit*, Aloysius Bertrand talks about a book of magic, a grimoire, held by an old man. That book is *Gaspard de la Nuit*, a collection of prose poetry. Stéphane Mallarmé adapts and transforms Bertrand's notion of grimoire into a poetic ur-text of the past and projects it to the ultimate work of the future. The grimoire contains a pure language as the legacy of the past. In *Igitur*, the grimoire is the book that Igitur carries with him from his ancestral room and down the staircase. Igitur's grimoire contains the words of old poets who knew how to express the Idea. The story starts when Igitur as the modern poet lights the candle in order to read the grimoire, and ends when he closes it. Igitur's task is to know the essence of old languages, and to apply it to the ultimate work or le Livre. Mallarmé positions his Livre at the evolutionary height of human language, and Igitur's trajectory draws the symmetric mirror images of reading the grimoire and writing the new one with the essence of old words. Mallarmé called the extraction of linguistic essence from old words a comparative grammar or linguistics in his project of doctoral dissertation "Notes sur le langage". Kahn's free verse is based on his criticism of Mallarmé's poetics and Symbolism. My paper talks about Mallarmé's grimoire, the science of evolution in his poetics, and the transition of nineteenth-century French verse.

Fugitive Impressions of Movement: Gesture and Reading in Mallarmé's Poetics

Stacy Pies

New York University

Bertrand Marchal suggests that the difficulty of reading Mallarmé's poems draws attention to language by slowing down or disrupting the act of reading. In placing the focus on words, this disruption also creates moments of indecision, changing the direction of reading. In his prose, difficulty disturbs what Mallarmé calls the fixed movement of reading, "le va-et-vient successif incessant du regard," thus forcing the reader to move within the text to establish meaning (*Oeuvres complètes* 2:226). Difficulty thus also draws attention to movement. This paper will discuss the evolution of the role of movement within Mallarmé's work, detectable by examining his revisions and proofs, particularly of "Monologue d'un faune" (MNR Fol. 23) and "Mademoiselle Georgette Leblanc produit. . ." (MNR Ms 1235). The kind of reading this movement requires works against the fixity or fossilization of genre and invites an inquiry into Mallarmé's re-creation of prose in his later works.

In his handwritten copy of "Monologue d'un faune," the poet has written stage directions in thick red pencil. These notations may be the first indications of what become the blanks in Mallarmé's later prose, sites for what he sees as movements of thought, produced in the act reading. These mental gestures, akin to the movements of the dancers in the ballets about which Mallarmé was writing concurrently, are one of the ways that Mallarmé's writing absorbs movement. In revising, too, as in the draft of "Sur Georgette Leblanc," Mallarmé changed the placement of phrases and added punctuation in ways that create indecision and disruption, thus producing textual mobility. This mobility

embodies the evolution in writing that Mallarmé imagines in "La Musique et les lettres" and the "Bibliographie" to Divagations.

Panel VIII.C. Origins, Degeneration, and Visual Representation

Sponsored by the Association of Historians of Nineteenth-Century Art (AHNCA)

Chair: Fae Brauer, The University of New South Wales/University of East London

Dirt and Degeneration: The Laundress's Brutish Body

Robyn Roslak

University of Minnesota, Duluth

Professional laundresses were active in large numbers throughout France between 1850 and 1900, because only the poor washed their own clothing. They also were popular subjects in art. Their ubiquity coincided with their prominence in the nation's hygiene movement, the success of which was a sign of national progress.

The middle class, especially, considered laundresses important. Clean personal linen signified not only good hygiene but also exemption from manual labor. But while the middle class depended upon laundresses, it also held them in contempt and fear due to their association with dirt and their lack of feminine discretion.

Laundresses were working class and thus considered carriers of disease. They also handled soiled undergarments, which their well-to-do clients believed led to their moral degradation. Laundresses' reputations were further eroded by their public mobility (they delivered laundry alone to men) and by their power as 'readers' of laundry who revealed their customers' secrets.

Artists (including Degas, Toulouse-Lautrec, Steinlen, and Daumier) perpetuated the myth of the laundress as deviant by representing her as physiognomically abnormal, i.e. as degenerative, echoing the era's interest in the body as an indicator of the moral self. She often appears 'brutish,' with a protruding jaw, receding forehead, strangely-elongated limbs, and a lunging gait (reminiscent of animals). She also is pictured bent double with loads of laundry, recalling beasts of burden, or trudging alongside pack horses. In short, she appears biologically regressive, in common with prostitutes and other supposedly corrupt individuals whom writers also classified as degenerate and to whom she was compared.

Origins, Desire, and Loss in Gauguin's *Tahitian Eve*

Martha Lucy

Barnes Foundation

Gauguin's painting *Te nave nave fenua*, also called *Tahitian Eve*, is the artist's primitivist reinvention of the Garden of Eden story. Gauguin's brown-skinned model, Tehamana, stands naked, her hand poised to pick a flower—a stand-in for the biblical apple. Desire is the painting's subject, thematized first and foremost by the hand on the flower and Tehamana's sidelong glance, a hint that she is about to do something forbidden. But

desire operates on other levels as well: there is the desire aroused in the viewer for this sensual beauty, and, above all, the desire to return to a pure, pre-industrial time, to recover an untainted "origin," a fantasy that Gauguin often expressed and which we know drives so much of his Tahitian work. This paper aims, first of all, to consider the origins fantasy in such works as something larger than one artist's personal fixation. It examines Gauguin's painting in the broader context of the nineteenth-century fascination with origins that dominated the discourses of science. The relatively new disciplines of prehistory and paleontology were driven by the goals of uncovering and reconstructing an ancient past, but were also pierced by a certain melancholia about that very past's irrecoverability. I argue that Gauguin's painting, like the quest for origins, is a complex operation riddled with desire, anxiety, and loss.

Fernand Cormon's *Cain*: Man between Primitive and Prophet.

Isabelle Havet

University of Delaware

Fernand Cormon's painting *Cain* was the sensation of the 1880 Paris Salon. Monumental in scale, the work is equally imposing in subject matter. Cain leads his tribe, a motley prehistoric troupe, as they trudge through the barren desert, clad only in ragged pelts and carrying primitive tools. Through *Cain*, Cormon became one of the first artists to incorporate an explicitly scientific visual vocabulary (which saturated popular visual culture) into the arena of academic history painting.

Traditionally, *Cain* has been viewed as an attempt to depict prehistoric man in an anthropologically accurate manner. While this interpretation recognizes Cormon's interest and participation in the scientific debates of his time, it fails to acknowledge the painting's multivalence. In my paper I argue that *Cain* does not merely represent a prehistoric genre scene poorly veiled in biblical imagery, but shows man in the various stages of evolution, from the animalistic to the classically proportioned.

Cain is a complex vision that would have held particular currency in France during the late 1870's and 1880's. In addition to reflecting the period's debate over evolution, Cormon's scene also responds to the growing interest in degeneration theory, particularly the notions of savage regression and mob psychology, explored in the wake of Franco Prussian War and the brutal repression of the Commune in 1871. The painting reveals not only the savage origins of the French people, but also the possibility of a resurgence of "animal passions" and primitive state of being. By engaging with the question of man's trajectory upwards and downwards on the evolutionary ladder, Cormon addressed the nationalistic concerns of the Third Republic to educate the state within a positivist framework, while also speaking to growing concerns regarding the violence and depravity that seemed characteristic of modern life.

"Les Colonies Animales": Neo-Lamarckism and Le "douanier" Rousseau's Primates

Fae Brauer

The University of New South Wales/University of East London

When Edmond Perrier's "Les Colonies Animales" was published in 1881, it provoked uproar. Rejecting Darwin's Malthusian-inspired theory of competition for scarce resources as the main driving force of evolution, Perrier argued that animals evolved less through 'natural selection' than through laws of association and cooperation. In his research documenting the growth and complexity of hydra, coral and other coelenterata, he found that not only had they developed physiological divisions of labour, but also 'linear colonies' in which "solidarité" and "la vie sociale" prevailed. Following Jean-Baptiste Lamarck's theory of Transformism, he deduced that through transmission to descendants of their reciprocal adaptation, "higher organisms" would evolve. That these animal colonies could, according to Perrier, "enable us to foresee the future of our societies, to regulate their organization" and "to cure the profound plagues of the present time" was recognized by Léon Bourgeois, Élisée Rèclus, Piotr Kropotkin and the artist, 'Le Douanier' Rousseau.

When Bourgeois was formulating Solidarism, "Les Colonies Animals" provided him with a health model of interdependency to negotiate the crisis of degeneration and an alternative to laissez-faire capitalism based on cooperation not competition. In response to Perrier and in opposition to T. H. Huxley's concept of evolution as a "gladiator show", Kropotkin located associations of animal units in his Mutual Aid as the key to evolutionary progress. Fusing Proudhon's mutualism with Perrier's 'animal colonies', Rèclus insisted they not only provide the model for mutualist society but be granted equal status to humans. Yet, as this paper will reveal, it was the 'wild beasts' and 'tame primates' painted by Le 'douanier' Rousseau in Paris from 1891 that provided the most poignant response to Perrier's treatise. Played off against one another, his destructive 'wild beasts' epitomize 'survival of the fittest', while his primates appear able to live in mutual harmony with one another and other species. In so doing, they seem to embody the association not rivalry, cooperation not competition of Perrier's 'les colonies animales'.

Panel VIII.D. Fécondité
Chair: Martine Reid, Université de Lille 3

Revitalizing the Republic: Degeneration and Depopulation in Emile Zola's
Fécondité

Eduardo A. Febles
Simmons College

Had Nadya Suleman given birth to her octuplets at the end of the 19th century, perhaps she would have become the heroine of Zola's *Fécondité*. Indeed, fertility in the novel is construed as the ultimate value of goodness, the way to attain universal harmony through overpopulation. Zola's novel is inscribed within a larger debate about depopulation raging during the 1890s. Indeed, at the end of the 19th century, France confronted the new-found reality that its population was growing at a much slower rate than that of Germany and England. Depopulation also got commingled with theories of degeneration circulating at the end of the century—Max Nordau published *Dégénérescence* in 1892--and was used as further proof of a weakening French race embodied in a decadent

esthetic. The colonial enterprise was touted as a possible solution to France's conundrum and as early as 1868, Prévost-Paradol wrote in *La France Nouvelle* that "colonial expansion would assure the livelihood of 80 to 100 million Frenchmen living on both coasts of the Mediterranean, keeping alive the name, the language, and the legitimate respect of France" (quoted in David Baguley's seminal work on *Fécondité*). I will argue in this paper that *Fécondité* foregrounds an inherent contradiction in the Republican model, a juggling act between nationalistic tendencies on the one hand and universal aspirations on the other: the fault lines formed by the shock of these tectonic ideologies are untenably assuaged through a utopian wish-fantasy resolved in a colonial ailleurs.

The Evolution of Obstetrics and the Birthing Body in Zola's *Fécondité*

Jessica Jensen

University of Pennsylvania

While French physician François Mauriceau (1637-1709) is today considered to be the founder of modern obstetrics, obstetrics was not officially professionalized in the medical field until 1806, shortly after the term was introduced into the French language. Interest grew as the field developed and investigated the different stages of the female reproductive body's life cycle. In 1812, French doctor C.P.L. de Gardanne studied the aging body and coined the term "la ménèspausie," which later became the term "la ménopause." Yet, the impressive understanding of the female reproductive body once achieved in Antiquity was lost to the West in the Middle Ages and not recovered until 1838, when a manuscript of the *Traité des maladies des femmes* by Soranus Ephesius (1st/2nd century) was discovered and scrutinized. Gradually, as the field evolved, the accoucheur began replacing the midwife as new technologies and techniques surfaced, and birthing became increasingly medicalized. By the turn of the century, the University of Paris was the European center for obstetrical studies and national interest in understanding and mastering the female body's mysterious interior intensified.

Bodies, Births and Babies: Impediments to Progress in Zola's *Lourdes* and *Fécondité*

Hannah Thompson

Royal Holloway, University of London

Emile Zola's post-Rougon-Macquart protagonists are known for their passionate beliefs in scientific progress, secular education and social equality which closely echo those of their creator. However a closer reading of the novels which showcase these opinions, and which have almost exclusively been read as didactic – even unwieldy – vehicles for Zola's opinions, demonstrates that Zola's investment in progress is tempered by a fondness for the status quo and a reluctance to trouble established paradigms. This paper shows how the descriptions of illness, sexuality and childbirth found in Zola's later fiction undermine the author's overtly stated views. *Lourdes*, for example, has traditionally been read as an example of Zola's contempt for the out-moded beliefs of the Catholic church. However, by reading Zola's descriptions of the ill and disabled female pilgrims alongside elements of modern Monster Theory, I suggest that Zola's prose in fact works to reinforce the old-fashioned hierarchies employed by the Church to maintain

its grasp on power. Recent feminist readings of Zola's Rougon-Macquart novels have suggested that Zola was something of a feminist avant la lettre however this is not always the case in his later works. In *Fécondité* Zola argues forcibly for progress in methods of contraception, child-birth and post-natal care. Yet a close reading of his depictions of pregnant and breast-feeding women shows that the very people who are supposed to benefit from his polemic are oppressed rather than liberated by the very ways in which they are described. My paper concludes that rather than celebrating, announcing and enabling progress, Zola's post-Rougon-Macquart novels represent a surprising resistance to change which suggests that Zola cared much less about progress than his novels, and generations of scholars, would have us believe.

Lourdes et la grande pitié de Zola
Brigitte Mahuzier
Bryn Mawr College

Partons d'une hypothèse: ce que les Pères assumptionnistes ont tenté de faire à *Lourdes*, canaliser, contrôler les masses de pèlerins, leurs désirs de croyance et de miracles, Zola a tenté de le faire avec sa grande épopée naturaliste, Les Rougon-Macquart. Dans les deux cas, les enjeux sont immenses (le catholicisme comme le naturalisme sont en perte de vitesse, voire en crise dans la dernière partie du 19ème siècle). Dans les deux cas, les moyens sont modestes-- petites saintes (les petits enfants de La Salette, Bernadette Soubirous, Thérèse de Lisieux), comme petites gens (mineurs, lingères, prostituées, etc.)- -, et les effets sont inversement proportionnels à la paucité des causes. C'est sur la petite sainte et la grande pitié de Zola pour un sujet qu'il exploite avec tant de succès (succès de scandale dans bien des cas et dans le cas de *Lourdes* d'un scandale bien particulier) que je porterai mon attention dans cette communication qui traitera du phénomène "Lourdes", son histoire et sa fictionnalisation aussi bien par les pères assumptionnistes, dont la grande réussite dans le développement des pèlerinages et du culte marial est incontestable, que par Zola lui-même. En effet, dans ce premier volet de la trilogie qui suit mais ne fait pas partie des Rougon-Macquart (*Lourdes*, *Rome*, *Paris*), le naturalisme, en passant du modèle "naturel" de l'arbre à celui de la pierre construite, s'aventure sur un terrain à la fois étrange et familier, celui de la religion et des "miracles". Ce terrain que nous-mêmes, lecteurs modernes, tendons à éviter, Zola y entre sans hésiter, participant au grand débat post-révolutionnaire entre science et religion, modernisé par le développement des sciences médicales, et en particulier des affections nerveuses. A l'hystérique de Charcot et Bernheimer, Zola oppose la miraculée du Docteur Boissarie, et à la grande salle de la Salpêtrière de Paris, le "bureau des constatations" de **Lourdes**, dans un débat où science et religion se confrontent, et souvent se confondent. Le roman tout entier, d'une construction rigide (cinq parties, traitées comme une tragédie classique et un roman d'initiation), est habité par un phénomène d'empathie, le mot "pitié" et ses dérivés apparaissant un nombre incalculable de fois, pitié pour les "petites gens" (tous petits au regard de dieu, ce grand démocrate, selon Zola), pitié également pour la "petite sainte", non seulement Bernadette dans ce cas de *Lourdes*, mais toutes les petites saintes fabriquées par la grande machine politico-religieuse, et dont le petitesse-même a le pouvoir de fausser la machine, y compris la grande machine naturaliste de Zola. *Lourdes* ou le roman d'une rencontre avec ses propres démons.

Panel: VIII.E. Unearthing Balzac
Chair: Lawrence R. Schehr, University of Illinois

Balzac's Archeology of War
David F. Bell
Duke University

Readers of Balzac are familiar with the last scene in the story of Laurence de Cinq-Cygne recounted in *Une ténébreuse affaire*. In order to do penance before the emperor in an attempt to save the lives of her co-conspirators, Laurence travels to Napoleon's latest European front in Prussia, where his armies are gathering for what will be the battle of Iéna. An easy reading of this scene might describe it as a confrontation between old and new social orders, in other words, as just one more scene of an old nobility's capitulation in the face of the unstoppable forces that transform Balzac's post-Revolutionary France. But why in the world does Balzac insist on staging this scene in Prussia? There is something strange about the fact that Laurence must - and perhaps more tellingly, is able to - travel to the front, as if the soon-to-be Prussian battlefield were nearly transparently an extension of French territory. What is the meaning of this restructured space, this re-configuration of distant territories into an unobstructed field of armed adventure, transforming them into a sort of flat plane through which armies and people freely roam? Beneath the surface of Balzac's numerous narrative treatments of the originating events that lead up to the Restoration are occasional emblematic descriptions of the transformation of the space of Europe into a realm of total war. This paper will explore a set of Balzacian archeological probes, staged at key moments of *La Comédie humaine*, revealing the tell-tale traces of the creation of a war machine, a revolutionary legacy that haunts us even today.

"Money Makes the Words Go 'Round": Value and Language in *Illusions perdues*
Lawrence R. Schehr
University of Illinois

In *Illusions perdues*, writing is alternately undervalued and overvalued, given false value because of notoriety, or given surplus value by book-sellers, authors, reviewers, journalists, and frankly, by the vagaries of public taste. Early on, prey to his own illusions, Lucien overvalues his work, inspired by what he perceives as his vatic impulse and encouraged by Mme de Bargeton. He soon learns that in the literary world of Paris, words do not have the value he ascribes to them, but are rather part of a capitalist system in which shares of words can be split - he can write two articles instead of one or in which, in a retrospective glance, the words are deprived of real value, but are nothing more than a commodity: "les livres étaient comme des bonnets de coton pour des bonnetiers, une marchandise à vendre cher, à acheter bon marché."

And yet there is an undoing or an undercutting of this basic economic semiotics by the fact that words - novels, sonnets, newspaper articles, book reviews - are not in reality a commodity in the same way that a cotton bonnet is. The latter implies an agrarian

beginning, perhaps a triangulated economy once based on the slave trade, the establishment of the cotton industry in Europe, the development of sales, and so forth. At each step along the way, value, understood as human labor is added to the raw materials. But with a novel, while there are printing and publication charges, who is to say what the original labor is worth? Balzac offers his readers a model of literary endeavor, be it success or failure, based on the money-commodity-money exchange that Marx (famous fan of Balzac) will codify years later in *Das Kapital*. At the same time, Balzac is speculating on the difference - the *écart* - from commodification that literature in specific and that all writing in general might have.

From Folklore to the Feuilleton: Balzac's Culture Wars

**Bettina Lerner City College
City University of New York**

Soon after the first *dixain* of the *Contes Drolatiques* appeared in print, Balzac remarked in a letter to Amédée Pichot: “Quoi que ce soit à mon avis l'expression la plus rare de la littérature, je ne veux pas être exclusivement un contier.” The archaic-sounding term *contier* registered the ambivalence Balzac felt towards the *conte* and the privileged place that genre held in the Romantic fascination with folkloric texts and popular traditions. Balzac may have insisted that “*autre est ma destinée*,” but *La Comédie Humaine* nonetheless draws heavily on fable and fairy tale, on the carnivalesque and the mythical, on *la danse des morts* and magic skins.

When not focusing on questions of influence, critics attentive to the popular texts and contexts that surface in Balzac's fiction have read them as evidence of the strategic ideological containment deployed by the realist novel. By incorporating folkloric or other popular codes into realist narrative, the author asserts control over other signifying systems. While many of these approaches successfully call attention to the contradictions and limitations inherent in the realist gaze, they tend to overlook an equally important confrontation in many of Balzac's texts between the so-called traditional and folkloric repertory and modern forms of popular spectacle, media, and serial novels that emerged in the first half of the nineteenth century.

In this paper, I reexamine the folkloric elements in Balzac's fiction in order to better understand how his work problematized the transformations in popular culture, the growing dominance of print within it, and the possible threats this posed to the realist project in particular. It was during the decades of the July Monarchy that folklore was apparently in danger of being replaced by the *feuilleton*, and when *colporteurs* and street hawkers whom Balzac labeled “*héros de la place publique*” were being replaced with advertisers' false claims printed on the fourth page of newspapers. I argue here that the relationship between traditional and modern functions and definitions of *le populaire* organizes many of Balzac's narratives in ways that help us reconsider the emergence of distinctions between high and low.

**Modes et codes à la table de Balzac
Philippe Dubois**

Bucknell University

“Cette manière de retenir le chapeau par l'occiput, le triple gilet, l'immense cravate où plongeait le menton, les guêtres, les boutons de métal sur l'habit verdâtre, tous ces vestiges des modes impériales s'harmoniaient aux parfums arriérés de la coquetterie des Incroyables [...]. » Ainsi nous est présenté le Cousin Pons dont le spencer, en vogue sous Napoléon, apparaît bien démodé en 1844, date à laquelle Balzac situe l'action de son roman. Le détail de ses obsessions monomaniaques accentue la caricature du personnage que « sa passion pour le Bric-à-Brac » classe et fige dans la catégorie des collectionneurs. Enfin, un dernier trait complète le tableau: “Cet homme plein, de délicatesse [...] était l'esclave de celui des sept péchés capitaux que Dieu doit punir le moins sévèrement: Pons était gourmand.»

En formidable historien des mœurs, Balzac fut très sensible au développement de la gastronomie qui naît, comme lui, avec le siècle et va prospérer au contact de la physiologie, de la chimie, de la technologie, de l'industrie, et bien sûr de la littérature. La prose de Balzac, empruntant souvent à ces mêmes domaines, se fera un relais récurrent du discours culinaire. Déjà en 1833, il proposait de pénétrantes réflexions « Sur Brillat-Savarin et de l'alimentation dans la génération. » La trace dans les romans de ces traités et autres physiologies sous forme de fragments plus ou moins conséquents, est l'occasion pour Balzac de saisir maints aspects de la vie sociale inobservés avant lui et de pressentir, comme ici, l'importance des politiques de l'alimentation.

Notre analyse considèrera donc sur la figure du célibataire gourmand comme marqueur social et point d'articulation essentiel entre la nostalgie d'un passé révolu et le désir d'un nouvel ordre des choses dont les enjeux politiques, économiques et nationaux marqueront les générations à venir.

Panel VIII.F. Futurism

Chair: Philippe Mustière, Ecole Centrale de Nantes

"Ce temps d'ineffables et de délicieux progrès": Decadent Paradoxes in Barbey, Rachilde and Jean Lorrain

Karen Humphreys

Trinity College

Twentieth-century exegesis of decadence struggles with the characterization of the concept, especially in a literary context. Works that are composed in a decadent style are not necessarily those that are included in the canon of decadent literature or shaped by decadent subjectivity. Most thinkers, however, seem to agree that the idea of paradox is central to the conceptualization of decadence. In the following essay I show how the trope of the decadent paradox is represented in texts by Barbey d'Aurevilly, Rachilde, and Jean Lorrain.

Specifically I focus on three manifestations of paradox: first, monolithic images of stasis or stagnation (represented as either statues, objets d'art, or plaster models) contrast with

the dynamic proliferation of details that is characteristic of these authors. Second, the notion that decadence is progress is apparent to different degrees in *Monsieur Vénus*, *Monsieur de Phocas*, and *Les Diaboliques*. For Barbey and Lorrain, the figure of the dandy most accurately sums up the avant-garde stance of the artist on the margins. He rejects the customs and attitudes of contemporary mainstream society by embracing aspects of the past and juxtaposing them with the unforeseen or unfamiliar. *Monsieur Vénus* and *La Jongleuse* by Rachilde similarly enact the beautification of crisis. Finally I show with the support of Freud's investigation of eros and thanatos and Charles Bernheimer's study *Decadent Subjects*, how each of these authors, represents eschatological preoccupations and the inevitable human trajectory toward death.

"L'heure de l'Idéal à jamais faite prisonnière": Static Evolution in Villiers's *L'Eve future*

Rachel C. Hart

Princeton University

In Villiers's *L'Eve future*, the android Hadaly initially reveals a quest for evolution towards perfection. A blend of science fiction and fantasy, the android represents if not a manufactured human being, then a superior humanesque simulation, a machine created with all the beauty of Ewald's beloved Alicia but also supplemented with the intellect lacking in that human original. The android is ultimately a machine, a composite of recorded speech and replayed images whose sole function is to replay those recordings infinitely. It also never truly represents an innovation, in the sense that it is a copy of a copy, a reproduction of a woman herself imitation of the Venus. Even with the supplement of the spirit Sowana, Hadaly can only be uncannily reminiscent of an ideal person, but never exactly human. However, this degree of difference paradoxically represents the fulfillment of her purpose: Hadaly's role is not to be human, but rather to become superior to Alicia through the very lack of human dynamism. Edison aims to create a superior entity precisely through the subtraction of the untidily human traits of inconsistency and change. Exempt from transformation, Hadaly offers a certain unmoving immortality: she represents, according to Edison, "l'heure de l'Idéal à jamais faite prisonnière."

Edison can only imagine progress as an imprisoned, unmoving ideal, and Hadaly's story represents his (and Villiers's) restructuration and reappropriation of the creation myth, complete with a subterranean Eden and a new, mechanical body. This Eden is neither an imagined lost paradise nor a paradise regained, but an Eden reforged with mechanical technology. The name "future Eve" establishes an artificial body as the locus of a new genesis, but that origin proves barren, destructive, and impossible. Sterile and unchanging, Edison's superior prisoner stands static at the threshold of evolution, and the "future Eve" can only engender repetition.

Jules Verne, paléontologue et minéralogiste: Entre grotte et volcan, entre Cuvier et Darwin, vingt-mille lieues au sein de la terre-mère

Philippe Mustière

Ecole Centrale de Nantes

Jules Verne aime la géologie, la paléontologie, les sciences de la terre, bien plus que l'on ne l'imagine. C'est un naturaliste averti et cultivé, au fait des avancées scientifiques relatées par les meilleures publications du moment. Jules Verne lit et relit le texte de Charles Figuiet *La terre avant le déluge*; et les échelles du temps géologiques développées par Charles Lyell .

Quand on lit Jules Verne, on s'aperçoit vite que l'obsession majeure est celle des centres, des grottes et des volcans. En fait, on baigne sans cesse, chez Jules Verne, dans la genèse et dans le mythe. Entre contractions de la tectonique des plaques et éruptions en tous genres, entre séismes et catastrophes, Jules Verne inscrit ses « Voyages extraordinaires », dans une fusion psychanalytique et incestueuse avec la terre. Pour se sauver, pour « naître », il faut « connaître »

Mais, à côté de cela, le roman vernien participe avec passion du débat qui a traversé tout le 19^e siècle concernant l'évolution biologique. Deux grandes théories, on le sait, se sont affrontées qui entendaient rendre compte de l'existence du monde vivant: le fixisme et l'évolutionnisme. L'une pose la fixité des espèces vivantes créées telles que nous les connaissons, et donc immuables. C'est la position de Linné. L'autre, avec Lamarck et Darwin, pose que l'évolution a permis la transformation progressive d'une espèce vivante en une autre. Or, la paléontologie - ou science des fossiles -, et *Voyage au centre de la Terre* est le roman de la paléontologie, permet d'observer l'évolution des êtres dans le temps et offre des arguments à une théorie explicative de l'évolution. Jules Verne exploite dans son roman des éléments de découverte qui divisent la communauté scientifique de son temps et suscitent des débats passionnés.

Charles Fourier's *Nouveau Monde amoureux*: Revolution or Stasis?

Laure Katsaros
Amherst College

Charles Fourier's utopian system is revolutionary in the sense that it inverts all the moral values of what he pejoratively terms "civilization". In Fourier's new world of "Harmony", that which society usually considers as natural is shown to be perverse, whereas what is commonly branded as perversion expresses men's true nature. Key to his ideological system is the radical critique of the family as a perverse institution that "fossilizes" society. Fourier sees the traditional monogamous family, which is almost universally viewed as the "natural" basis for all social and economic activities, as the main obstacle on the path to progress—a fundamentally selfish and conservative mechanism. In his attempt to eradicate the family, Fourier invents a "new amorous world" (*Le Nouveau Monde amoureux* is the title of a book that was never published in his lifetime) that revolves around polygamy, free love, and the sharing of sexual resources. There, multiple relationships and perpetual movement are the norm, ennui is the enemy. But Fourier's vision of Paradise as a state of perpetual transience is contradicted by his desire to immobilize the inhabitants of "Harmony" inside an immobile and divine time.

In this paper, I would like to show that Fourier's extraordinarily progressive attitude, his desire for a radical transformation of "civilization", paradoxically leads him to the vision of an Edenic, never-ending present which achieves an almost perfect state of stasis. Further, I would like to ask the broader question of whether any revolutionary utopian system must, by its very nature, "fossilize" itself; in other words, whether the vision of an ideal state of contentment and stillness, from which violence is erased, necessarily implies that the course of time should be suspended, so that further change becomes an impossibility.

Saturday, October 24, 2009

Session IX 3:30-5:00pm

Panel: IX.A. Stasis and Change, Character and Class in the Novel

Chair: Brigitte Mahuzier, Bryn Mawr College

Henry James, Vernon Lee, and "the So-Called Decadents"

Cecily Swanson

Cornell University

In his scathing review of Zola's *Nana*, Henry James offers, despite himself, a suggestive pun. "The obstacles to interest in *Nana* constitute a formidable body," he writes, inadvertently evoking his true objection to (and his fascination with) Zola's novel: its descriptions of *Nana*'s Amazonian flesh. Although James claims in this review that he cannot plumb the "deep mystery of the French taste" for explicit sexuality, his own fiction – as has been well-documented by many critics – is ripe with erotic desire. Furthermore, as his correspondence from Paris and his reviews of these "unscrupulous" French authors attest, James was deeply intrigued by "the little coterie of the young realists in fiction." If Maupassant has for James an "abnormal development" of the "embarrassing" "faculty of smell," we might argue this proclivity for all types of sensory description is appropriated by James, whose characters "come to know perfectly by their smells" suggestively ambiguous "solids and fluids" ("In the Cage"). Moreover, James' characters probe into that even more redolent world, the supernatural, where they must reckon with "evil, odious, blatant, [and] vulgar" images ("The Jolly Corner").

Are James' ghosts a remonstrance of Zola's more prosaic naturalism, or are they his concession to the "monstrous [French] uncleanness" that he claims "stops the English reader's way"? Vernon Lee, prolific writer and friend of Henry James, proselytized Zola to the squeamish British, claiming that "this network of complicated evil, this spiritual hell, which catacombs our life with its intricate circles, is what Zola has made us see and feel in his terrible set of novels...It is salutary to be horrified and sickened when the horror and sickness make one look around, pause, and reflect." As if she internalized her ideal reader within the world of her fiction, Lee's supernatural tales describe horrors that confound and alienate her protagonists. Stripped of their lovers, their artistic vocations and their own historical settings, Lee's subjects are forced into chilly reflection. Compared with *Nana*'s rosy cheeks and cheap thrills, Lee's *Hauntings* (1890) offer a much more disturbing account of the passions undergirding conventional society. This

paper will consider how French naturalism is first characterized in the critical writings of James and Lee, and then transformed into the “incense, blood...and white ghost[s]” of their fictions. In so doing, I take seriously Jean de Palacio’s contention that “[il faut] redéfinir les grandes catégories, jusqu’ici violemment séparées par la critique, du ‘naturalisme,’ de la “Décadence” et du “symbolisme.” If the identification of these “grandes catégories” originally enabled scholars to trace the transnational migration of genre, it is now their generic dissolution that will let us more fully appreciate the cross-pollinations of the French and British fin-de-siecle.

Evolution et fossilisation: Masculin et féminin chez Stendhal

Martine Reid

Université de Lille 3

Qui travaille à interroger la nature des représentations sexuées présentes dans le roman du XIXe siècle ne peut manquer d’être frappé par le fait que, le plus généralement, la modernité, sa force, sa créativité et son inventivité, sont du côté du masculin, alors que le féminin est assimilé à ce qui ne change pas, voire à ce qui stagne, à ce qui régresse. Cette étrange et comme « naturelle » appréhension des sexes sur un axe temporel qui va du passé au futur, s’observe chez la plupart des auteurs, et notamment chez Stendhal.

Mon analyse portera sur la manière dont, dans *Le Rouge et le Noir*, Stendhal entrelace avec adresse des figures d’hommes modernes, soucieux de libéralisme et de promotion sociale, avec des figures de femmes étrangement empêtrées dans des scénarios de type maternels (comme c’est le cas pour Mme de Rênal) ou dignes de romans historiques d’un autre âge (comme c’est le cas pour Mathilde de La Môle se rêvant en héroïne des guerres de religion). Les implications politiques de cette distribution des rôles sur l’échiquier d’une France qui vient de s’offrir une révolution « moderne » et un régime monarchique « moderne » (*Le Rouge et le Noir*, chronique de 1830) seront prises en compte. Elles permettront de revenir sur quelques-unes des critiques formulées à propos des femmes chez Stendhal au moment où, dans les années 1970-1980, cette question a rencontré la curiosité de la critique. La lecture proposée en montrera les limites, aujourd’hui qu’une compréhension beaucoup plus complexe des « genres » permet de dépasser quelques évidences pérennes.

Parisian Social Studies: Comte and the Novels of Paul de Kock

Anne O’Neil-Henry

Duke University

As scholars from Richard Terdiman to Priscilla Ferguson have demonstrated, early to mid-nineteenth century Parisians, eager for stability in a time of urban and social change, attempted to classify (fossilize) cultural signs and codes in order to understand and navigate city life. This desire for categorization brought about what Terdiman has identified as a series of “curious subgenres providing orientation within this mysterious world of social signs,” literary texts which boomed under the July Monarchy, and which Walter Benjamin famously dubbed panoramic literature. Concurrent with the flourishing of these texts, such as the *Nouveaux Tableaux de Paris* and the *Physiologie* series, was

the publication of Auguste Comte's *Cours de philosophie positive* between 1830 and 1842. While many studies on panoramic literature focus on urban upheaval as the motor for this popular literary phenomenon, intersections among these "curious subgenres" and Comte's social theories are undeniable.

In this essay I will analyze two novels by Paul de Kock, a prominent figure in the movement of panoramic literature, though perhaps more for his literary guides to Paris than for the myriad novels and plays he wrote on the Parisian petit bourgeois, which earned him an extraordinary amount of money and almost universal scorn from nineteenth-century literary critics. Through close readings of *Le Cocu* (1831) and *Un homme à marier* (1837), I plan not only to situate de Kock's novels more solidly within the context of panoramic literature, but also to examine the intersections among these literary texts and the early sociological work of Comte. As texts which attempt to categorize popular modern life in July Monarchy Paris and which appear to draw on the progressive positivist theories of Comte circulating at the time of their publication, these novels by Paul de Kock serve as the site of a fusion between fossilization and evolution.

Panel IX.C. Economic Crises in Nineteenth-Century France

Chair: Sara Phenix, University of Pennsylvania; Organizer Stéphane Pillet, University of Puerto-Rico Mayaguez

Balzac and the Stock Market

**Melanie Robin Conroy
Stanford University**

Looking primarily at *La Maison Nucingen* (1838), *César Birotteau* (1838), and *Mercadet, le Faiseur* (1851), Ms. Conroy demonstrates how Balzac interprets investing on the stock market as a type of betting. She argues that because it is neither localized like the gambling house nor delocalized like debt, the Bourse has the same de-individuating function as the public gambling den, but without the guarantee of face-to-face presence. It is thus open to tricks of the sort that the banker Nucingen plays to enrich himself and his inner circle in *La Maison Nucingen*, as well as pacts made outside the usual channels. Better than any novelist (except perhaps Zola as we shall see in the next presentation), Balzac understood the flaws inherent in the new, poorly regulated bourse, as well as the fear of the public for the ever more complicated modes of speculation. But more than this, Balzac saw in the stock market the manifestation of abstract forces which were dehumanizing France.

Money in the Making: The Use of International Economic Crises in Guy de Maupassant's *Bel-Ami*

**Alison Lam
Dalhousie University**

The nineteenth century was for France an era of growth and development in politics and economy. Such progress made possible a period of great industrial advancements and the

country found itself becoming a strong international power, leading to colonial expansions as France began to exercise its influence abroad.

In 1881, Jules Aimé Bréart entered Tunis on the instruction of the French government. Armed with the Bardo Treaty, he was tasked with establishing a protectorate on Tunisia. Under the threat of French troops, and against the advice of his cabinet, the bey of Tunisia accepted the terms of the treaty. This marked the beginning of the French occupation of Tunisia, which would not come to an end until 1956.

Such is an example of the way that economic institutions took advantage of the weak in an international setting. French society was vocal in expressing its opinions on what had transpired and writers were inspired to recreate these real-world events in their works.

In *Bel-Ami*, Guy de Maupassant describes a similar event where France invades Morocco. Through the eyes of his main character, the writer describes the economic hardships of the foreign country, the role played by the French government, and what it meant for France financially. Although « l'affaire du Maroc » is clearly a reference to the Tunisian occupation, the events described in the novel, both personal and political, as they pertain to the economic situation take on a literary flair. This paper proposes a study of the Tunisian occupation and its portrayal in Maupassant's novel, what this political situation meant for financial sectors of Paris, and how the writer used this event as a stepping stone in the meteoric rise of the arriviste.

Reassessing Zola's *L'Argent*: A Missing Link in the Evolution of Modernism **Holly Waddell** **Seattle University**

The first and second decades of the twentieth century brought modernism to France, and to most of the West, a stunning cultural shift that was nevertheless anticipated by several nineteenth-century artists, including many with whom Zola associated--Monet, Manet, Flaubert, and Huysmans.¹ Zola however has been denied his place among these forerunners, largely because of his assumed simple program of journalistic fatalism. Yet, with *L'Argent* (1891), Zola produced a novel which subverted his naturalist's pretext to "know everything" ("tout savoir").² Instead, he presents the nearly mythic figure of the maternal.³ Her controlling image, I shall argue, embodies the financial failure of a central Parisian bank and also sets the stage for artistic collapse. Zola grimly identifies miscarriage, abortion, and a barren womb as signifying the corruption of both monetary and linguistic systems of exchange. *L'Argent*, perhaps not a success as a traditional novel, was at the same time, a protomodern work in its awareness of centripetal failure the woman implied.⁴

Zola's boldest step in *L'Argent* was to link the wild fluctuations of the Stock Market to the breakdown of referential language, for with this decision he exposes the frailty of his naturalist monolith. In fact he wavers between his desire to provide in journalistic detail the bankruptcy of Eugène Bontoux's *Union Générale* and his attempt to convey the uncertainty of linguistic representation through stock trading. When Zola juxtaposes

money with language, he effectively lifts the “painted veil” of the realist narrative by implying that, like the worthless stocks, it too is made up of lies.⁵ Shell explains the implications: “The great danger to literature is not the argument that literature subverts citizens by teaching them falsehoods; it is the argument, implicit or explicit, that literature has no real value or potential to affect either good or evil, that it has no role in human affairs and ought not to be taken seriously.”⁶ For Zola, however, this lack of seriousness is deadly, since the arbitrary logic of the Stock Market contaminates linguistic exchange, and thus the maternal, once a symbol of art’s creative power, is doomed to destruction. This paper will analyze the reciprocal relationship of language, commerce, and the feminine in Zola’s novel as a profound critique of the limitations of realism.

"Faites vos jeux, rien ne va plus": Dreams, Speculation, and Irrational Exuberance in Zola's *L'Argent*

Stephane Pillet

University of Puerto Rico, Mayaguez

Zola's *L'Argent* recounts a story of a market condition “favourable to one of those wild growths of speculation which every ten or fifteen years block and poison the Bourse, leaving only ruin and blood behind them” (139-140). This type of debacle is not extinct and it is no surprise that the novel was republished in 2007, in the United States. The current economic crisis was predicted in a now celebrated book, *Irrational exuberance* written by Robert Shiller, a professor of economy at Yale. His main thesis is that speculative market moves are caused by human imagination and social psychology, and not by rational minds. He also argues that financial journalists addressing the general public and brokers selling stock often use forms of storytelling to convince people, not quantitative evidence. Using Shiller's theories, I discuss how dreams, speculation and irrational exuberance drives *L'Argent* up to the financial collapse of the stock market. Bankers, such as Saccard, “the poet of the millions”, “the bard of money” achieves “a poetry of result” that seduces investors in a way all too familiar. Inspired by the bankruptcy of L'Union générale and the crash of the stock market of Paris in 1882, *L'Argent* takes place in the 1960s. For its movie adaptation in 1928, Marcel L'Herbier presciently moved the story to his time. Zola indicates that “Years are needed for confidence to be restored, for the great financial houses to be built up anew, and time goes slowly by until the passion for gambling, gradually reviving, flames up once more and repeats the adventure, when there comes another crisis, and the downfall of everything in a fresh disaster” (300). And therefore the story could also take place in 1987, 2000, and 2007. As the Nobel Prize of Economy, Joseph Stiglitz said in the newspaper *Liberation* in September 2009, “Finance still looks like a casino... our trust in the markets makes us blind.” Certainly, the flagrant lack of evolution of this type of belief in the stock market and behavior in decision making so well described in *L'Argent* should deserve close scrutiny.

Panel IX.D. Visual Art

Chair: Pratima Prasad, University of Massachusetts-Boston

Créationnisme et évolutionnisme: La Double genèse de la bande dessinée
Philippe Willems
Northern Illinois University

La BD est un genre narratif dont la définition a toujours été problématique. Ce flou ne date pas d'hier, et l'on trouve les premières traces d'incertitude quant à sa désignation dès les années 1840. Rodolphe Töpffer avait bien nommé ses propres séquences de vignettes légendées et agencées en bandes « histoires en estampes », mais la désignation n'a pas fait souche. Une autre la remplace un temps, celle d'« album Jabot » ; cependant elle ne s'applique pas aux histoires « à la manière de Cham » qu'un plus large public découvre dans des périodiques tels que *la Caricature*, *le Charivari*, *la Revue Comique à l'usage des gens sérieux*, *le Journal pour rire* ou *les Fliegende Blätter allemandes*. Cette indétermination s'explique en partie par un manque d'unité conceptuelle. La bande dessinée procède en effet d'une genèse double, mi- créationniste mi- évolutionnaire. Sortie toute armée de l'esprit de Töpffer à la fin des années 1820, la BD s'est développée dans la presse périodique au cours des années 40. C'est là qu'a pris place un phénomène de mutation moins connu : celui de l'imagerie panoramique en bande dessinée. Ce polygénisme a donné deux espèces de vignettes humoristiques en séries, similaires en format, mais distinctes au niveau narratif : les suites chronologiques et les suites thématiques. Leur coexistence paisible sur le même territoire a temporairement uni ces deux sous-espèces narratives en une même catégorie dont la définition s'arrête à leur dénominateur commun : le format qui les différencie des autres formes d'expression figurative. Ces deux branches cousines se côtoieront dans la presse pendant près d'un siècle avant que la sélection naturelle ne cause l'extinction de l'une d'entre elles et que l'autre perpétue leur format de vignettes multiples en vainqueur absolu.

Henri-Gabriel Ibels: Fanfare for the Common Man
Gorica Hadzic
City University, New York

This presentation concerns the work of Henry-Gabriel Ibels (1867-1936), the least-known among the founding members of the Nabis. I will examine his place in the evolution of the French caricature, as well as his desire to disrupt the dominant views of artistic representation.

Ibels published his caricatures in numerous Parisian journals which he used as counter-power and in order to stigmatize the system of constitutional monarchy. The reopening of the Dreyfus Affair in 1896 (one of the first political issues in history to be managed and manipulated by the press), incited in Ibels a personal obligation to devote his work to the defense of the captain Dreyfus. As a result, his work offered an alternative way for publicity of the current debates on the Affair, as well as artistic practices. This is where we can see not only satirical but also artistic and political function of Ibels's drawings, as well as his own political involvement. He seizes this occasion to formulate a theory of one genre of art, the caricature, and to make a case for its place in fine arts.

The specific transmediality of his work was the main reason his contemporary critics compared him with the Renaissance masters Da Vinci and Rembrandt. This comparison points out to several stylistic particularities of Ibels as a modern artist: first of all to his sensibility to the medium, and his ability to explore several different forms of artistic expression, and to apply to his lithographic work his knowledge of the painter and draftsman. His place in the evolution of the caricature, however, is marked by his insistence that images retain an apparent symbolic system which is culturally specific and changes over time to meet cultural needs.

The Pre-Darwinian World in Gautier's Art Criticism

Cassandra Hamrick
Saint Louis University

To mark the 200th anniversary of Charles Darwin's birth (1809) and the 150th anniversary of the publication of *The Origin of Species* (1859), a special exhibition entitled "Endless Forms: Charles Darwin, Natural Science and the Visual Arts" has been organized by the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge in cooperation with the Yale Center for British Art. The exhibition is the first to be dedicated to Darwin's interest in the visual arts and the effect of his thought on artists of the late nineteenth century.

Yet even before the publication of *The Origin of Species*, some of the basic elements underlying Darwin's observations were beginning to permeate the artistic world in France. As early as the 1830's, interest in nature and in diverse forms of life was revolutionizing the way art was perceived and classified. Concurrent with Darwin's scientific explorations were the rediscovery of nature by a new school of landscapists and a mounting interest in flora and fauna from around the world that could be seen at the Jardin des Plantes. At the same time, increased travel thanks to improvements in transportation was having a broadening effect on the traditional notion of beauty as artists took into account variable factors such as geography, climate, and local mores.

As an art critic and a witness to these developments, Théophile Gautier is one of the first to promote a break with the fossilized forms of Academic art in favor of artistic renewal through direct observation of nature: "le temps est venu d'étudier directement la nature" (Salon de 1846). Yet the artistic world as seen by Gautier and other forward-looking critics such as Baudelaire remains inevitably pre-Darwinian. Nature is to be consulted, not copied. Rather than "natural selection" determining the outcome of artist's paysage (as is the case for the naturalist who reproduces nature), it is the artist who selects the particular elements from nature that correspond to his or her inner vision of the world.

This paper sheds light on the striking, albeit ironic parallels between Darwin's observations and Gautier's own reflections on nature and art, as each moves beyond a fossilized vision of the world to embrace evolution in paradoxically different ways.

The Spectrum of "La Divine": Sarah Bernhardt's Photographic Performativity

Melissa Bailar
Rice University

During the last decades of the nineteenth century, images of familiar stage faces circulated in newspapers, magazines, theater programs, posters, and collectors' items, but none so prominently or in such a multitude of personas as "the Divine" Sarah Bernhardt's. Bernhardt deliberately performed her identity in these images, alternately appearing feminine and masculine, ordinary and eccentric, soulful and exuberant, sickly and robust. Because each photograph in ways contradicted the others, admirers avidly collected them and advertisers exploited them because they regularly showed a "new" Sarah. Far from fossilized into a stagnant physical appearance in her photographs, Bernhardt demonstrated her constantly evolving nature.

At a moment when actresses struggled to break free from their reputations as glorified prostitutes, Bernhardt's insistence on capturing her physical self in fact solidified her status as far more than the object of a gaze. While other actresses were admired for their legs and face to the exclusion of their talent, Sarah's abundant pictures had the contrary effect; she insisted in the images that she remained outside the standards of beauty, outside her gender, even outside of the living, and thus drew attention to her remarkable capabilities as a performer (and self-promoter). One senses that she is other than physically present in the images, and peering out from a half-shadow or from beneath a startling costume, she invites our gaze. Her physical image both draws us into the photographs and eludes our grasp. In this sense, Bernhardt exemplifies what Roland Barthes in *La Chambre claire* termed "spectrum," the absent subject who exists somewhere outside the borders of the photograph. In examining Bernhardt's photographic legacy, the modern viewer is struck by her self-termed "double life;" she offers up to our gaze carefully orchestrated images that suggest that she can never be contained within their boundaries.

Panel: IX.E Balzac's Influences

Chair: Scott Sprenger, Brigham Young University

Buried Bones and Hidden Treasure: The Neurotic's Language of Money and Death in Balzac's *La Grande Bretèche*

Sasha Santee

Yale University

In Balzac's *La Grande Bretèche* (1842), the physician Horace Bianchon begins a story like one of his delirious patients might. Recounting to a group of friends how he discovered the decaying country manor "La Grande Bretèche," Bianchon's tale of legacy, memorialization and relic evolves out of his singular and seemingly disordered attention to detail. The overrun garden at La Grande Bretèche announces to the passerby's eye a lost life of provincial pleasures. It reminded the doctor of divining the past existence of a "bon négociant" based on the epitaph of the latter's tombstone.

Written against Western literature's traditional progression from pursuit of riches to satisfactory realization of plot, Balzac's *La Grande Bretèche* excavates unfinished analyses and symbolic remainders to transform and reverse the treasure-seeking genre. While *Beowulf*, "The Pardoner's Tale" of *The Canterbury Tales*, Poe's *The Gold Bug*,

and *Treasure Island*, for example, align the death of their heroes or narrative conclusion with financial fulfillment, Balzac's narrative introduces a twist. Bianchon's characterization of the profiteer's gravestone as the enigmatic birthplace of artistic vision (the money-inflected eulogy signifies a "dead language" that strangers can imaginatively resurrect) shows how the steady accumulation of wealth alone fails to produce enclosure and dénouement in *La Grande Bretèche*. I argue that "hermeneutic hyperactivity," marked by a pathological desire to seize upon presumably ossified public language (here a tomb's epitaph) and invest it with individual significance, is the unexpected result of Balzac's profit-driven plot. The professional anxiety that unexplained death may cause the physician Bianchon notwithstanding, this paper legitimizes the doctor's detail-obsessed approach to language (it is also Freud's, Dali's, Deleuze's and Schor's), to argue that the true satisfaction of Balzac's financial drama comes not from money itself but from the manner in which the unconventional thinker "reads" and revives material commodity.

Balzac's *Lys dans la Vallée* and the Literary Fossil Record

Vicki De Vries

Calvin College

In Balzac's novels, the contact between fossils of the Ancien Régime and the changing social order of the 19th c. is a common reoccurrence. The *Lys dans la Vallée* is no exception: aristocratic families pour their resources into their oldest children, neglecting the youngest members, marriages are made for political and social advantage, and social advancement is next to impossible without the right pedigree. But deeper excavation reveals fossils not only present in Balzac's characters and social milieux, but in the plot structure itself. Balzac took his inspiration for the novel from Marguerite de Navarre's *Heptaméron*, nouvelle 26. A side-by-side comparison reveals similar bone structure: the same dichotomy of sage and folle, the same use of influence and expertise to the protégé's advantage, the same repression of love that leads to the sage's death. More important to the interpretation of the novel is the same tendency by readers to undervalue the narrative frame. In Marguerite's tale, Saffredent, the narrator, turns the meaning of his story on his head by suggestion a reversal of category for the two women, calling into question the wisdom or folly of each of the women pursued by the young seigneur d'Avannes. Balzac engineers a similar reversal, but with the opposite effect. Saffredent's commentary lends a clearly misogynist bent to his tale that seemed to praise feminine virtue, but Balzac's narrative frame, the exchange of letters between Félix de Vandenesse and Natalie de Manerville, significantly undermines the misogyny Balzac is often accused of. A return to the literary ancestry of Balzac's novel sheds significant light on its interpretation.

Le Type unique et la pensée transformiste à l'œuvre dans la *Comédie humaine* de Balzac

Dominique Massonnaud

Université de Grenoble

La notion de « type » balzacien et les travaux critiques ont parfois installé de façon doxique la prégnance du modèle fixiste de Cuvier sur l'écriture balzacienne. Cependant, l'« Avant-Propos » de *La Comédie humaine* en 1842 affirme le choix de Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire et de Goethe contre les positions de Cuvier. Ce texte peut être considéré autrement qu'un pur « discours de circonstance ». L'hypothèse de faire crédit à cette affirmation liminaire de Balzac permet en effet de considérer la question de façon éminemment productive.

Des preuves biographiques concrètes montrent que Balzac a effectivement connaissance des travaux d'Etienne Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire très tôt –avant même leur rencontre effective en 1834 : par exemple, grâce à la Duchesse d'Abrantès, dans les années 1820-1830. De plus, la lecture « de près » des textes de Cuvier, de Geoffroy –également du botaniste Pyrame de Candolle dont il connaît les travaux - et de Goethe permet de dégager de façon plus précise la teneur des débats¹ et de montrer les points de parentés ainsi que les effets du désaccord de fond.

Ainsi peuvent apparaître la proximité des choix méthodiques entre Etienne Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire et Balzac : la place de l'observation puis des analyses de résultats, que doit suivre la quête des lois ou des principes correspondent à l'architecture de *la Comédie humaine*. La construction pyramidale - telle qu'elle est par exemple évoquée dans la Correspondance - renvoie très précisément au projet de *la Philosophie zoologique* (1830) en ce qu'il s'oppose à la méthode de Cuvier.

Le caractère discriminant du « détail » est également à reconsidérer, au vu des travaux de Geoffroy en anatomie comparée. Celui qui identifie, dès son voyage en Egypte - sous le Consulat - les effets électriques chez les raies « Torpille » - ou qui montre la présence de « germes » de dents au niveau de la formation du bec chez les embryons d'oiseaux - permet de comprendre le fonctionnement du portrait balzacien ainsi que des textes analytiques de Balzac, comme *la Physiologie du Mariage* (1829) ou *la Théorie de la démarche parue dans l'Europe littéraire* en 1833.

A terme, on pourra donc comprendre en quoi la pensée du « type unique » était la plus apte à séduire la curiosité balzacienne : héritée d'un modèle littéraire - depuis le « liseron » de *l'Histoire naturelle* de Pline, jusqu'à la « petite fleur » de Goethe – elle est celle qui permet de privilégier, de la façon la plus déterminante, le « milieu » et les « circonstances » comme agents de transformation radicale des espèces. A ce titre, elle permet à Balzac de fonder, sur le modèle de Geoffroy, les bases de l'étude sociologique des transformations de l'homme par son espace de vie et par les accidents de l'histoire.

Panel IX.F. Approaches to Poetry

Chair: Deborah Jenson, Duke University

The "Vers roturiers" in Marceline Desbordes-Valmore's "Le Ver luisant": Socialist Harmonies, the Silk Trade, and Mimesis

**Deborah Jenson
Duke University**

Early socialist thought, in which France was a leader, was theorized in tandem with utopian thought in a number of domains, including popular Catholicism, Fourierism, Saint-Simonianism, and the interdisciplinary “harmonian” ideology of revolutionary and spiritual social integration of a divided polis. In a post-Marxist era, scholars such as Etienne Balibar are beginning to reengage with this critical link between the secular religion of Kantian cosmopolitanism and Marx’s critique of the religious fetishization of the commodity.

Marceline Desbordes-Valmore is an important writer in the Social Romantic association of lower-class poetic voice with the spiritual, philosophical, and political ambitions of early French socialism. Unlike her colleagues Lamartine, Chateaubriand, Sand, Sue, and Sainte-Beuve, she came to the conjunction of people and poetry from the marginalized rather than the mentoring classes. In this presentation I will link Desbordes-Valmore’s social(ist) political engagements in Lyon, as discussed by Marc Bertrand and Francis Ambrière, with the thought of Saint-Amand Bazard and others in the *Exposition de la doctrine de Saint-Simon*. I will interweave historical considerations with a close reading of Desbordes-Valmore’s poem “Le ver luisant” as a manifesto of working class poetic action. In this poetic fable, the glow worm, “insecte lumineux,” celebrates his hierarchical relation to “ces vers roturiers,” the silk worms, who are arguably identified by metonymy with their working class cultivators in Lyon. The glow worm’s proud light, however, makes it a beacon for Philomela, transformed of course into a swallow in Ovid’s tale of her metamorphosis, who devours the worm in order to better nourish her own song of pain. The “worms” are homonymic of “verses,” making this a moral that can be read on social and poetic levels. My reading will connect the traumatic poetics of Philomela’s spinning with Desbordes-Valmore’s implicit framing of a literary metamorphosis for the French working class, specifically with regard to the social Romantic cult of the “harmonious analogy that reveals and makes real” (Bowman, 125). Desbordes-Valmore’s “vers roturiers” ultimately showcase the tense but potentially revolutionary relationship between mimetic and political constructs of likeness.

"Choses innommables et inouïes": Synesthesia and the Evolution of Rimbaud's Poetry

Eric Lynch

City University of New York - Graduate Center

Rimbaud, in his famous letters on the seer, seeks an evolution of poetic language that coincides with his efforts to push sensory perceptions to their limits. Synesthesia, or confusion between the senses, is alluded to by Rimbaud as a means to renew language and poetic imagery in order to break with the petrified language of the past. Inspired by the poem “Correspondances” by Baudelaire, Rimbaud contrasts the innovative character of speech evoking synesthesia with the “fossils” of common poetic expression:

Donc le poète est vraiment voleur de feu... si ce qu'il rapporte de là-bas a forme,
il donne forme ;

si c'est informe, il donne de l'informe... Il faut être académicien, - plus mort qu'un fossile- pour

parfaire un dictionnaire, de quelque langue que ce soit... Cette langue sera de l'âme pour l'âme,

résumant tout, parfums, sons, couleurs, de la pensée accrochant la pensée et tirant.

I will weigh Rimbaud's claims to renew language through synesthesia in his early effort "Voyelles" by comparing it to "Correspondances" before turning to two prose poems in *The Illuminations*. "Enfance" and "Being Beateous" use synesthetic images to make particular statements about the generation and petrification of poetic language and imagery. I am interested in a Lacanian reading of "Enfance" by the critic Charles Minahan, where I see synesthesia as signaling the possibilities inherent in the pre-linguistic state in opposition to the alienation produced by the mature subject's use of language. Conversely, "Being Beateous" presents a chaotic scene of poetic inspiration where synesthesia marks the indefinable state of flux whereby new meaning is born. Finally, at the conclusion of the scene, particular phrases emerge that resume the action of the poem, presenting examples of language in a renewed, revitalized state.

Practicing Theory in Baudelaire's "La Musique."

Jesse Hurlbut

Brigham Young University

In this paper, I propose to examine Baudelaire's sonnet, "La Musique", in the light of the principles of basic music theory. The poem, which consists of an extended maritime metaphor for the experience of music, stands out from the rest of the *Fleurs du Mal* by virtue of its unique heterometric design. Of particular note are the five-syllable lines that alternate between alexandrins. The dominant numbers governing the poem's design (e.g., 12 syllables, 5 syllables, 14 lines) invite a comparison to musically relevant number: 12 notes in a chromatic scale, the Perfect Fifth, 14 notes in a double ionian octave. While it is difficult to establish Baudelaire's familiarity with the properties of music theory, his well-known appreciation for the musical arts, including certain musicians, suggests he may have had opportunity to explore the aspects of music theory most closely related to his poetic interests, notably metrics. In the text of the poem, Baudelaire explains music by comparing it to the sea. This paper hopes to show how the structure belies a distinct harmony with the principles of music theory.

5 syllables = black keys (sharp or flat: too much or too little)

Louÿs' Classical Chiasmus: Poetic Sexuality and Sexual Poetics

Lowry Martin

University of California, Berkeley

In 1894, Pierre Louÿs's *Chansons de Bilitis* became a literary cause célèbre when his supposed translations of lost Greek poetry were revealed to be the product of his own

voyeuristic imagination. When Louÿs dedicated this literary mystification to “the young girls of the future society,” an allusion to Sapphic love, he could hardly imagine that it would inspire Nathalie Barney’s influential Parisian salon and touch the evolution of French literature. This wildly popular collection of prose poems turned literary fraud had won critical as well as popular recognition partially because of their claim to be the fragmentary traces of lost poetry by Bilitis. These “fossilized” cultural artifacts had allegedly been unearthed in a tomb. It was Louÿs’s erudite craftsmanship that convinced at least one professor of Greek archaeology of their authenticity. Anchored in the poetics and poetry of a distant classical past, Louÿs evokes the eroticized triangular relationship between the Ninth Muse, and two of her students, Bilitis and Mnasidika. Current scholarship has labeled *Chansons de Bilitis* as an example of the vulgar exploitation of same-sex love among women for male titillation. I nuance this critical dismissal by arguing that few works illustrate more clearly how sexual positionality can alter the reader’s perceptions of the text—as a result, Louÿs’s recounting of poetic sexualities of Classical Lesbos inspired the poetics of “Lesbos-sur-Seine.” While his poetic subterfuge relies on Hellenistic antiquity for legitimization of its sexual content, he actually gestures towards a contemporary concern for moral and intellectual freedom that is further elucidated in his subsequent works.