

## **Research Informed Teaching Project 2007-8**

**Project Title:** Resources for Victorian and Modernist Studies Website

**Project Team:** Dr Liz Farr and Dr Rachel Christofides

This project was designed to assemble and collate a wide range of web resources relating to the Victorian and Modernist period which undergraduate and postgraduate students could make use of on a number of taught modules and research programmes relating to the period. In our attempt to collate the wealth of resources available on the web we sought to include those that were specifically useful to readers of literature from the period and also those who were adopting a wider interdisciplinary approach. To this end we included sites devoted to authors and also more general sites on the visual including early film and visual technologies, crime and social issues, fashion and philosophical ideas, to name but a few.

We filtered all our researches to make sure that sites were of a sufficient quality to merit inclusion with a view to acting as a wide ranging research tool for a number of users. We also made links to the University's own library resources and to databases with primary materials from the period such as the modernist literary magazines and art history sites that gave reproductions of paintings. So many important archives are now available on the net, e.g. Darwin's manuscripts, that students are often not aware of the resources on offer directly without having recourse to inter-library loans. Similarly there are a number of dedicated sites, such as the Victorian Web which provide connections to commentaries by specialists in the period. We spent a considerable amount of time grouping the materials under headings which would aid students in their searches for particular topics and also tried to select those sites which were the most reputable and wide ranging in their scope. The end result is now, thanks to the computer technician, available on the English Community page as one item on the menu.

Ideally this site should be useful for students on the second year core module: Victorian Literature and Culture, the third year Modernism module, dissertation research and also the M.A. English: Literature, Culture and Modernity where it is introduced as a part of the Research Skills module. This would probably amount to up to 200 students per year using the site.

Although the task was quite labour intensive in terms of screening and researching web based materials, we were funded with one module teaching remission to complete it and managed to get it done by June 2008 in time for this academic year. We have yet to fully appreciate the impact this will have on student work as the site has only been running for the last six weeks, but we intend to make concerted efforts to introduce the site at the beginning of the modules listed above so that students are aware of its existence and how it functions.

In the future we hope that other Humanities subjects might wish to contribute areas to the site which would further its use in interdisciplinary work. History and Art History students might wish to draw on some of the existing materials which could also be enhanced by contributions from the academic staff from those subject areas. We are pleased with the ways in which the website has come to fruition and will now spend some time introducing it to students as a valuable in-house resource.