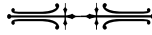


1



Introduction

Victoria Margree, Daniel Orrells and Minna Vuohelainen

Rediscovering Richard Marsh

In the early twenty-first century, late Victorian and Edwardian culture has become a profitable commodity. Scenes of a foggy, dimly lit, Jack-the-Ripper London, a crowded metropolis inhabited by prostitutes, criminals, immigrants and detectives and cluttered with strange and remarkable objects and curiosities, now populate our contemporary imaginations, thanks to novels, films, television, radio and theatre. Academic studies ask us to look to the *fin de siècle* as a mirror upon our own society, a period in which were established many of the dominant facets of the culture we confront today.

This volume focuses on one of the most popular and prolific writers of the *fin de siècle* who has, however, largely been written out of the literary history of the period. The ‘universal literary provider’ Richard Marsh (pseudonym of Richard Bernard Heldmann, 1857–1915; see figure 1.1) was one of the motors behind the thriving, commoditised fiction industry of the *fin de siècle*, and is now increasingly recognised as an influential popular writer of the period.¹ His best-known novel, *The Beetle: A Mystery* (1897), outsold Bram Stoker’s *Dracula* (also 1897) well into the twentieth century, but Marsh was more than just a one-hit wonder; his production comprises more than eighty volumes published under this pseudonym, his real name and anonymously, and spans a range of genres, including Gothic, crime, sensation, thriller, romance and humour. Until the First World War, Marsh was a high-profile popular author who was published and reviewed alongside such writers as Bram Stoker and Arthur Conan Doyle and compared to leading writers of sensation and Gothic fiction such as Wilkie Collins and Edgar Allan Poe. However, Marsh was a victim of his own success within the capitalist literary system he helped to fuel. His short stories and novels were produced to satisfy an

ever-increasing audience that thrived upon topicality and continually demanded new pleasures and satisfactions. While Marsh's work helped to create the familiar collection of leitmotifs recycled in today's neo-Victorian landscape, such middlebrow writing was not deemed valuable enough aesthetically by twentieth-century literary critics to be read and examined in the decades after his death. This apparent conflict between economic and aesthetic value is central to Marsh's career as a writer and to the literary culture of the period more broadly, and is a key theme of the present collection.

Marsh belonged to a generation of professional authors born at the mid-century who benefited from a transformation of the literary market at the end of the century. Some of his popular contemporaries – Conan Doyle, Stoker, Rudyard Kipling, Robert Louis Stevenson, H. Rider Haggard – have achieved canonical status, their most successful literary creations widely known among the general public. Others – Guy Boothby, Fergus Hume, Marie Corelli, Hall Caine – were successful at the time but have not transcended their period. By contrast, the 'serious' literature of the period tended to prioritise the realist mode favoured by Thomas Hardy and George Gissing, or anticipated modernist experimentation, as with the work of decadents and New Women such as Oscar Wilde, Vernon Lee and George Egerton. The fin-de-siècle period entrenched a rhetorical distinction between serious and popular fiction, between art and mass culture, and the judgements of subsequent literary historians have often reinforced these dichotomies. This volume seeks to contribute to rectifying the neglect of important authors that canonisation produced, arguing that Marsh confronts us as a figure who is key to understanding the literary culture of the period. Marsh appears in many ways as an exemplary figure of the New Grub Street, and therefore as one whose career can tell us much about the development of the mass market and the challenges of professional authorship in the period. At the same time, however, as Peter McDonald has demonstrated, this was a period in which 'avant-garde and "popular" culture' were being 'reciprocally defined', albeit often through 'antagonism', and McDonald cautions against being 'blind[ed] ... in advance to the possibility of a significant relationship between' them.² An argument made in several chapters in this collection is that one can find in Marsh's work elements that connect him with the 'other side' of this supposed division – with the tropes of aestheticism, for example, or with modernism's preoccupation with city space – as well as a marked degree of self-consciousness about the aesthetic debates of the period.

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Marsh's centrality to the literary production of the era has to do with his popularity, influence and longevity. It is difficult to think of a contemporary author of similar stature who possessed his versatility and sustained prolificacy. For over twenty-five years, he entranced late Victorian and Edwardian readers with popular tales of horror, humour, romance and crime. He helped to shape the genres of fiction with which we are familiar today, displaying a willingness to borrow from both literary and non-literary modes of writing and combine their elements in new ways. Study of his work thus helps illuminate the fluid and shifting boundaries of genre in this period. However, a second reason for returning to his fiction has to do not so much with centrality but with peripherality; Marsh occupied, for reasons that will become clear when we consider his life, a delicately marginal placing with respect to hegemonic culture. As Johan Höglund argues, Marsh 'speaks from a slightly unstable position with a voice that is never quite that of Anglo-Saxon, male authority'.³ A journalist as well as a novelist, Marsh engaged in his fictions with a host of fin-de-siècle debates, but in ways that were often resistant to the more solidified positions – either very conservative or very progressive – adopted in the fin-de-siècle fictions that have become canonical. His treatments of issues such as gender, race, degeneration, criminality and urban and imperial problems are often ideologically ambivalent, even counter-hegemonic. Marsh's novels, Höglund concludes, 'often interrogate and implode the pervading discourses of the time' so that 'dissonant voices' are foregrounded in the 'discursive discord' of his fiction.⁴ A study of his work thus has the potential to challenge scholarly interpretations of the period's dominant ideologies and politics.

This volume therefore seeks to question the security of our assumptions about the fin de siècle through an exploration of Marsh's fiction; to understand who Marsh was; and to examine what his success tells us about the culture of a turn-of-the-century Britain that seems at once so like and unlike our own. If we want a fuller understanding of the complexities of fin-de-siècle literary culture beyond the canon created in the twentieth century, it is high time to turn back to one of the most prolific authors of the period.

Richard Marsh's life

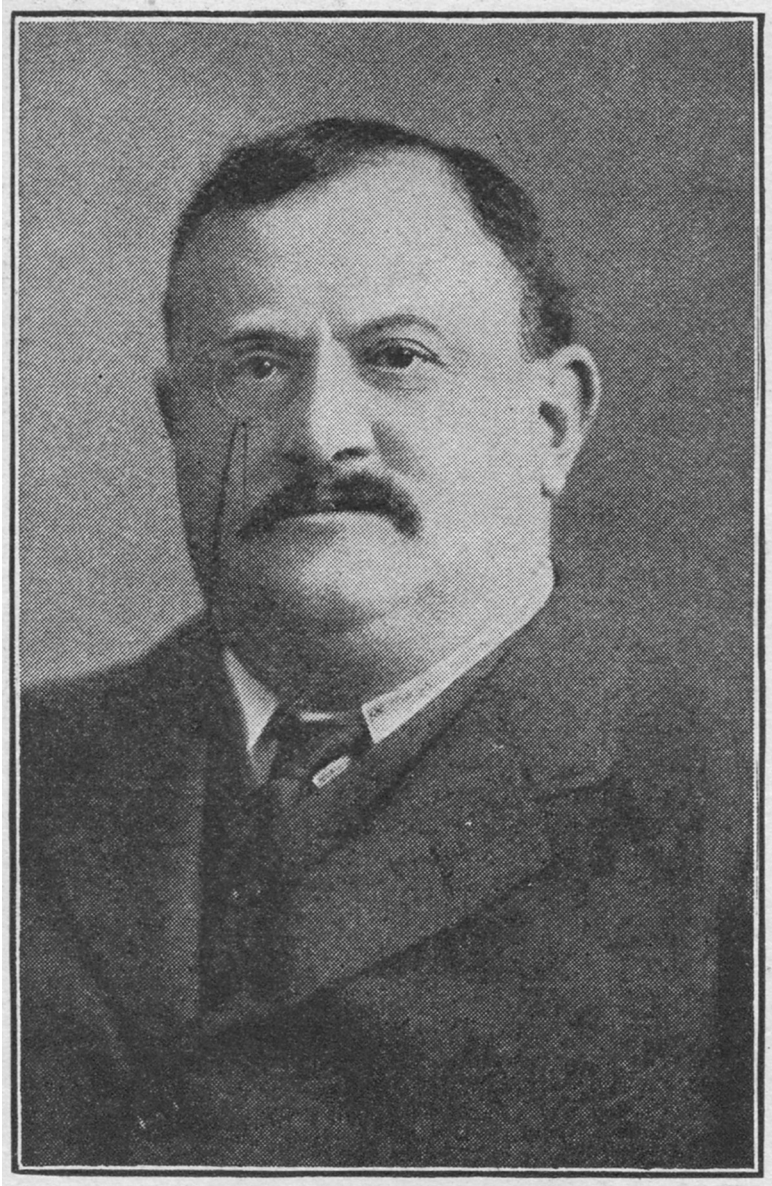
While it is tempting to approach an author's work through a consideration of his or her life, many facts of Richard Marsh's life remain shrouded in uncertainty. Marsh himself guarded his privacy jealously, issuing only

one interview in this era of celebrity culture, and that posthumously in November 1915.⁵ What we do know of his life builds a contradictory picture of a man who began his career as an author of religious juvenile fiction but ended it as a producer of often cynical adult stories; who was known for his insouciance and love of sport, entertainment and travel but who also kept up a punishing writing schedule of a quarter of a million words a year; whose politics were supposedly Tory but whose writing often sides with misfits and the destitute; who appears fascinated with gender and social transgression and is yet often unable to grant his subversive characters a happy ending; who was in all likelihood half-Jewish and yet expressed xenophobic sentiments in his writing. Marsh had a love of double identities, having tried on, in the course of his life, the roles of a swindler, an impersonator and a pseudonymous author, and his fiction often thematises the blurring of identity.

Marsh was born Richard Bernard Heldmann in St John's Wood, a wealthy but slightly dubious area just north of central London, on 12 October 1857. He was the eldest child of the German and probably originally Jewish lace merchant Joseph Heldmann (c. 1827–96) and Emma Heldmann, née Marsh (c. 1830–1911), the daughter of the Nottinghamshire lace-manufacturer Richard Marsh. In 1857 the Heldmann household was in turmoil as Joseph Heldmann came to figure in significant and xenophobic bankruptcy proceedings against his in-laws, whom he had defrauded to the tune of £16,000 in the course of managing the London branch of the family business. Joseph Heldmann subsequently reinvented himself as a private tutor, eventually running Brunswick House School in Hammersmith in West London. Although Marsh would later claim to have been educated at Eton and Oxford, it is more likely that he was a pupil at the family establishment, an experience he may have made use of in the school stories he would subsequently produce as Bernard Heldmann.

Bernard Heldmann's earliest publications appeared in the juvenile papers *Peep-Show*, *Young Folks*, *Quiver* and *Young England* in 1879–80, but his big break came in 1880, when he established a connection with G. A. Henty's boys' weekly *Union Jack* (1880–83), for which he would pen a number of school and adventure tales before being promoted to coeditor in October 1882. The apprenticeship on the staff of the *Union Jack* served Heldmann well; he learnt to produce fiction to required specifications, deadlines and audience needs, broadened his generic range and gained commercial and editorial experience.⁶ Yet even this earliest literary production showed a certain ambivalence towards what are

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1.1 A portrait of Richard Marsh, *Strand*, 50 (November 1915), 573.

generally accepted as the guiding principles of boys' fiction in this period. Heldmann's boys' stories frequently displayed emotion, regret and even homoeroticism in an imperialist climate that was supposed to promote boys' masculine and ruthless characteristics, his final serial 'A couple of scamps' (1882–83), for example, veering precariously between a didactic boys' story, a Newgate novel and a penny dreadful.⁷ Even this earliest work, therefore, suggests the limits of reading the period only through its canonical authors – Kipling, Haggard, Henty and Talbot Baines Reed.

By spring 1883 Heldmann's career was unravelling due to his precarious economic circumstances, and the author embarked on a double life as a swindler living off bad cheques under different gentlemanly guises. The press reports of Heldmann's criminal adventures reveal his ability to play on the snobbery of late nineteenth-century society, his capacity to reinvent himself and his fascination with criminality and duality. Heldmann was caught in February 1884 and sentenced to eighteen months' hard labour. After his release in October 1885, he returned to West London and started a family with a woman called Ada Kate Abbey, with whom he went on to have six children, five of whom survived. Heldmann, who had been practically disinherited by his family, returned to writing fiction, but now under a pseudonym: by summer 1888, he had become 'Richard Marsh'.⁸ The pseudonym, a combination of Heldmann's own first name and his mother's maiden name, represents Heldmann's latest attempt at reinventing himself under difficult monetary circumstances. It may also have been an attempt to distance himself from his paternal lineage; as Höglund observes in his chapter in this collection, according to the pseudo-scientific laws of heredity that informed the racial and criminal anthropology of the period, Heldmann's crimino-Jewish lineage placed him on a sure path to criminality. Indeed, Marsh's 1890s fiction manifests a disturbing strain of anti-Semitic prejudice, possibly indicative of a revulsion of feeling or even of self-loathing in the aftermath of his prison sentence for fraud, with its close semblance to his father's earlier disgrace. He continued to write prolifically as 'Richard Marsh' until his death at the age of fifty-seven on 9 August 1915, having produced seventy-six volumes and at least 250 short stories since adopting the pen name in 1888.

Richard Marsh and the literary marketplace

Just as his financial position had a profound impact on Marsh's life, so his novels and short stories reflected the specific economic context of

turn-of-the-century Britain. While Bernard Heldmann had benefited from a juvenile publishing boom in the 1880s, Richard Marsh's professional success coincided with changes within the publishing industry that created unprecedented opportunities for professional authors of adult fiction. Following the 1870 Education Act, Britain achieved near universal literacy by the end of the century. Literate and numerate urban workers benefited from increases in real income and leisure time and also had time at their disposal during the commute on public transport. The publishing industry could meet this new market due to beneficial financial changes such as the removal of the 'Taxes on Knowledge'; technological innovations that made printing, distribution and advertising faster and cheaper; and a transformation in the forms in which fiction was consumed, resulting from the publication of an increasing number of weekly and monthly fiction papers, 6s. one-volume first editions and cheap reprints. The Society of Authors, of which Marsh was a member, was established in 1884 to offer writers legal and commercial advice in recognition of the increasing professionalisation of authorship. While for the popular author these developments signified opportunity, for conservative commentators they signalled the beginning of the end of 'Culture'. Such concerns over cultural decay were most notoriously articulated by George Gissing in his novel *New Grub Street* (1891), which deplored the demise of the man of letters in the semi-literary universe of the 'quarter-educated'.⁹ Value was central to the period's debates on leisure reading as readers and reading practices became loci of anxiety: should reading be purely for matters of instruction in knowledge and morality, or could one without harm read for pleasure? This dilemma is wittily visualised in the image by Harold Piffard (who illustrated some of Marsh's fictions) that features on the front cover of this volume. 'An Omnibus Pickpocket' depicts a commuter so immersed in her reading that she is oblivious to the activity of the apparently respectable woman next to her.¹⁰ In posing questions about the dangers of reading popular fiction, monetary versus other kinds of value, gender, criminality and the performance of middle-class respectability, Piffard's illustration brings together many of the themes that are central to Marsh's fictions and highlights the importance of looking more closely at our perceptions of the *fin de siècle*.

Popular authors such as Marsh faced hostility from the cultural elite for their willingness to cater for the 'low' tastes of the mainstream readership for financial reward. Marsh responded to critical attacks against his prolificacy by pointing out that authors had little control over the publication dates of their books and by emphasising the imaginative pleasures

of storytelling.¹¹ Yet the presence in his work of numerous struggling authors, journalists and dramatists living precariously close to destitution demonstrates an ambivalence towards the profession from which he made his living. The 1900 novel *Ada Vernham, Actress*, for example, traces the failing fortunes of a struggling theatre company, commenting wryly that '[a]ll people who write seem poor' and that 'literary quality was not of great importance' in a cultural climate in which 'a fiasco is a play which doesn't pay its expenses'.¹² The short story 'For debt', published anonymously in the *Windsor Magazine* in 1902 and then reissued in *Under One Flag* in 1906, follows its protagonist, 'a poor devil of an author', into debtors' prison, repeating the refrain that 'circumstances have been too strong' for the well-intentioned writer and his fellow prisoners.¹³ Deploying the unusual combination of second-person address and the present tense, this seemingly immediate, realist and personal account forces its reader to sympathise with the literary professional living on the breadline.¹⁴ Texts such as these could be read, as Victoria Margree argues, as 'self-conscious reflections on ... professional authorship' and on 'the competing values and pressures that must be negotiated by the professional author' who would thrive in a competitive market.¹⁵

Marsh's career was played out in the pages of popular fiction papers and one-volume first editions. All his seventy-six volumes, issued by sixteen different publishers, were brought out in the shorter, lighter and cheaper one-volume format that had by the mid-1890s replaced the extortionately priced three-decker novel. During the course of his career, he also contributed to a great number of weekly and monthly magazines, which were particularly suited to the leisure and consumption patterns of newly literate urban workers, being inexpensive, light to carry on public transport, generously illustrated and with a high short-story content. From the time that the first work attributed to 'Richard Marsh' appeared in *Belgravia* in 1888, Marsh published short and serial fiction in magazines including *Household Words*, the *Cornhill*, *Home Chimes*, the *Gentleman's Magazine*, *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, *Longman's Magazine*, *All the Year Round*, *Answers*, the *Idler*, the *Harmsworth (London) Magazine*, *Pearson's Weekly*, *Pearson's Magazine*, the *Windsor*, *Cassell's Magazine*, and, most importantly, the *Strand Magazine*, which would emerge as his preferred magazine contact by the early years of the twentieth century.

Marsh's sustained success was due partly to his workmanlike attitude to his profession and partly to his ability to gauge the mood, tastes and reading needs of his audience. His career shows evidence of professional dedication, effective and established working practices and apprecia-

tion of the importance of networking.¹⁶ Marsh's writing patterns show a remarkable uniformity that testifies to his ability to write fiction to agreed lengths and tight deadlines. In the twentieth century his production rates, which in the 1890s had fluctuated significantly, settled down to a steady three volumes a year, targeted at slightly different audiences, in an effort not to flood the market. At the same time, the critical reception of his work began to grow more appreciative, as reviewers came to recognise him as a reliable producer of well-written genre fiction.¹⁷ His continued success was connected to his ability to reach out to middle-brow readers, including women, and, as discussed below, to his talent in identifying and addressing topical concerns in his fiction.

While Marsh worked effectively across genres, examination of his fiction also reveals that he was able to adapt and recombine narrative conventions in ways that illuminate the porousness of the boundary between generic forms. One excellent example is his 1901 novel *The Joss: A Reversion*, which, like many Marsh novels, commences in the realist mode but soon mutates towards Gothic and romance. The beginning of the novel's multiple first-person narrative details from her own perspective the plights of impecunious shop-girl Pollie Blyth and her friend Emily Purvis, who find themselves unfairly dismissed from work. The timely news of an unexpected inheritance swiftly moves the novel generically from realism to romance, the romantically inclined but hard-pressed Emily's comment that she had always 'been looking ... for a touch of romance to give existence a real live flavour' marking Marsh's awareness of his lower-middle-class target audience's need for escapism.¹⁸ However, upon taking possession of Pollie's deceased uncle Benjamin Batters' derelict house, the girls soon come to suspect that they may not be the only inhabitants of a building that is also besieged by mysterious and hostile 'Orientals' (p. 183). The double motif of domestic entrapment and pursuit by bloodthirsty foreigners shifts the novel towards the subgenres of the female and the imperial Gothic, while the novel's final section, narrated by seafaring adventurer Captain Max Lander, seems modelled upon the masculine quest romance genre associated with Haggard and Boothby. Lander's recollective narrative shifts the action to southern China where Lander discovers Batters, who has allowed himself to be mutilated by a Chinese tribe into a 'hideous' and 'obscene' god, the 'joss' of the novel's title (p. 211). Lander recounts assisting Batters to escape to England in return for a share of the treasure that this rather crooked deity has stolen, and the reader discovers that the mystery of the novel's 'haunted' house is that the supposedly deceased Batters is in

fact within it, hiding from the Chinese priests who are trying to recover not only their treasure but also their god (p. 46). The novel's collision of generic registers helps to produce an ideological indeterminacy about the text, its multiple narrative perspectives contributing to the overall impression of the 'discursive discord' characteristic of Marsh's fiction.¹⁹ On the one hand, its depiction of barbarous 'Orientals' is in keeping with the period's assumptions about British racial superiority. At the same time, however, the Englishman who would be king is a monstrous figure whose scheme of imperial plunder fails to deliver the hoped-for rewards. Finally, in a seeming 'reversion' at its end to its popular romance mode, the 'Author's postscript' sympathetically rewards its female characters with romantic and financial fulfilment. While *The Joss* exemplifies Marsh's willingness to recycle elements from earlier successful novels, Pollie's remark that 'writing novels ought to have been [Batters'] trade' also testifies to the imaginative acrobatics required of the popular author who depended upon established generic conventions but had to generate endless novelty (p. 63). Indeed, some of Marsh's fantasy fictions could even be interpreted as metanarratives that comment on the role of imagination in the writing process and establish a commonality between magicians and popular authors, both of whom are engaged in the task of making the audience suspend disbelief.²⁰

While Marsh's fiction continued to appeal to the reading public into the interwar years, when film and stage adaptations of *The Beetle* also appeared, his work was largely forgotten after the Second World War, perhaps because his bestselling novel lent itself less easily than *Dracula* to successful cinematic adaptation. It may also be the case, however, that the very qualities that secured Marsh's commercial success during his lifetime militated against the endurance of his works; his prolific output produced work of varying quality and sometimes formulaic nature, while the very topicality of his fiction could hinder translation to subsequent periods at a time when formalist critics were attempting to establish a canon of English Literature by focusing on the 'timeless' qualities of a 'Great Tradition'. Critical interest in Marsh's oeuvre, primarily *The Beetle*, has slowly gathered pace since the University of Luton brought *The Beetle* back into print in 1994, was accelerated by Julian Wolfreys' Broadview edition of this novel in 2004, and has particularly benefited from the effort of Valancourt Books to reprint Marsh's lesser-known works in reliable critical editions. However, most critical studies of Marsh's fiction have tended to explore gender issues, the urban experience or racial identity, almost exclusively in *The Beetle*, overlooking the

diversity of his literary production.²¹ Very recent criticism has begun to acknowledge his generic hybridity and versatility and the potential offered by a consideration of what Marsh can tell us about the culture and the literary market of the fin de siècle.²²

Rereading the fin de siècle through Richard Marsh

Scholarship describes the fin de siècle as a period ridden with anxiety. In Sally Ledger and Roger Luckhurst's influential formulation, this anxiety proceeded from the 'ambivalence of modernity'.²³ In the closing years of a century that had witnessed unprecedented economic, social and technological transformations, it seemed to many that the very fabric of Britain was in the process of being unpicked, with growing contestation of mid-Victorian gender norms and the emergence of a newly literate, urbanised lower middle class with its distinctive cultural forms and preferences. The fin de siècle was, above all, a time of transition – from the old to the new, the Victorian to the modern. Late Victorian responses varied from despair at what seemed to be the dismantling of the very structures deemed integral to civilisation, to a hopeful belief in imminent deliverance from oppressive Victorianism. Unsurprisingly, this was also a time of aesthetic innovation. As the three-decker novel gave way to other fictional forms, writers were increasingly emancipated from the strictures of Grundyism. Naturalist writers and dramatists became increasingly frank in their representations of sexual relations. Aesthetes and decadents self-consciously styled themselves in opposition to the aesthetic, moral and philosophical norms of earlier Victorian writers and artists, favouring an experimentation that sowed the seeds of modernism.²⁴

Perhaps the dynamism and instability of the fin de siècle can be best understood in relation to the enormous contestation of traditional values that was taking place. Issues of value recur repeatedly in Marsh's fiction, often in the context of economic relations and objects that do not straightforwardly fit into the capitalist economic system. Jewels solicit but frustrate attempts at professional evaluation in the diamond fictions; characters ponder their own and others' moral value in the crime fictions; and literary and aesthetic value become objects of reflection in many texts. The problem of art's value is a central theme in Marsh's 1898 collection *Curios*, for example, where the two bachelors Pugh and Tress vie for ownership of rare and beautiful collectables such as the valuable piece of furniture of 'The adventure of the cabinet'. Pugh and Tress' struggle for the possession of the cabinet reflects a growing middle-class

interest in valuable collectables and curios in the aftermath of the dispersal of British aristocratic collections of *Ancien Régime* art. The robbery of art in the tale is paralleled by the story's exploration of the art of robbery, just as the collection's title refers not only to the objects in the stories but also to Pugh and Tress and their adventures. The reader is invited to consider the relative aesthetic and monetary value of beautiful, collectable objects and quirky popular tales.

The theme of literary value is explored in this volume in the contributions by Nick Freeman and Daniel Orrells. Freeman's chapter considers Marsh's connections with the late Victorian tabloid press typified by George Purkess' *Illustrated Police News*. Arguing that the 'trickster' and 'con-man' Marsh drew on the language of popular journalism to confer plausibility to his 'outlandish' tales, Freeman reads several of Marsh's short fictions to demonstrate how they drew upon salacious subject matter such as the infamous Whitechapel murders of 1888. Freeman nonetheless proposes that Marsh's stories, which often end with narrative irresolution and uncertainty, raise many of the same questions about the nature, practice and limits of realism as do the very different approaches of more esteemed writers of the period such as Henry James. Orrells' chapter on *The Mystery of Philip Bennion's Death* (1892/1897), a novel that revolves around a deadly yet beautiful antique cabinet, argues that Marsh's self-reflexive text engages with the 'decadent culture of collecting bizarre curios and sensations', posing questions about the pleasures and the dangers of its own consumption as cultural commodity. Marsh is not simply parodying aesthetic philosophies in the manner of much populist writing of the period but making 'strategic and sensitive use of the tropes and structures of aestheticist writing', emerging as a significant disseminator of ideas associated with Thomas De Quincey, Walter Pater and Oscar Wilde. Consideration of Marsh's work, Orrells argues, thereby calls into question any easy division of 1890s British literary culture into highbrow avant-garde literature and lowbrow entertainment.

If transition and transformation were the keynotes of the fin de siècle, it is perhaps unsurprising that the possibility of a catastrophic mutation or disintegration should have been a dominant concern. The increasingly influential pseudo-science of degeneration theory announced the possibility of individuals, 'races' or nations reversing backwards along the evolutionary line, pointing as evidence to the supposed decline of the once great civilisations of Egypt, Greece and Rome; to poverty, crime and disease on the streets of 'modern' London; to Darwinian descriptions of evolutionary change; and to works of art and philosophy that, for

instance, the doctor-turned-journalist Max Nordau announced to be the morbid products of degenerating individuals.²⁵ In the period's canonical Gothic fictions, this notion of mutability and mutation is engaged through the register of horror. By the end of Stevenson's *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1886), human scientific control over the deep laws of nature has been revealed as illusory, as Jekyll transitions uncontrollably into the bestial Mr Hyde. Wells' Prendrick, in *The Island of Dr Moreau* (1896), effects his deliverance back to London only to be haunted by the perception that its human inhabitants are, like the beast men he has just escaped, on the brink of transitioning back into a state of animality. More typically in these fictions, however, it is women who appear as volatile, fluctuating, changeable. In Stoker's *Dracula*, the femininity of young, virginal women is revealed to be untrustworthy, a gratifying but deceptive screen for a troubling, potentially monstrous, reality within, while the conclusions of texts by Haggard and Arthur Machen see dangerous and fascinating women metamorphose before horrified male eyes into organisms from the evolutionary past.

In Marsh's fiction, the fin-de-siècle preoccupation with instability is evinced through the many metamorphic entities that pervade his stories. The eponymous villain of *The Beetle* is a protean being par excellence; a shape-shifter by nature, none of its apparent qualities prove fixed, frustrating attempts by its pursuers to identify its age, gender or species. In a reading that brings together Bill Brown's thing theory and British psychoanalyst Christopher Bollas' conception of 'transformational objects', Graeme Pedlingham in this volume argues for the Beetle as a 'transformational thing' – something that, in virtue of its own lack of internal structure, unlocks instability in those it comes into contact with. Pedlingham shows how the horror of the creature resides not just in its proclivity for torture and sexual depravity but also in this capacity to transform the self in the direction of an otherness that has always existed as potential, mutating the virile politician Paul Lessingham into the image of a "hysterical woman" and the New Womanish Marjorie Lindon into a helpless 'victim'. Pedlingham sees this as characteristic of Marsh's Gothic output and analyses as similar transformational things the apparently material objects of the Indian idol in *The Goddess: A Demon* (1900) and the Chinese figurine of *The Joss*. As Jessica Allsop observes in her chapter, however, Marsh's preoccupation with metamorphic entities is not limited to his Gothic fiction. In her discussion of Marsh's jewel fictions, Allsop shows how diamonds feature as unstable, metamorphosing stones; changing colour, altering in size,

succumbing to inexplicable ‘diseases’, they reveal the limits of putatively expert knowledge and frustrate attempts to render them exchange commodities on the market.

Orrells observes that Marsh ‘was writing at a particular moment in the history of the commodity’ when, as Pedlingham notes, the world was ‘seemingly occupied by an ever-increasing quantity of objects’ – knick-knacks, curios, bric-a-brac, unleashed by Victorian capitalism with its improved manufacturing and consequent consumerism. The chapters by Pedlingham and Allsop testify, however, to the ways in which Marsh’s objects refuse to remain object-like or to satisfy desire, instead becoming active agents that destabilise subject–object relations and threaten those who would possess them with a radical dispossession of self. They show how this threat to the subject can be mined by Marsh for the purposes of horror, or comedy, or both. Taken together, the chapters suggest Marsh as a writer in whom the fin-de-siècle perception of instability is realised with particular vividness and remorselessness. The usually male and middle-class protagonists of fictions by Stoker, Wells or Machen may emerge more or less intact, even regenerated, from their encounters with usually feminine mutability; Marsh’s protagonists should not expect such good fortune.

Late Victorian fears around impermanency also focused upon Empire. While the British Empire had expanded and consolidated over the course of the nineteenth century, it was also becoming increasingly subject to question, in relation both to its capacity and its right to endure. Anti-colonial rebellions in India, Egypt and Sudan had brought growing attention to the difficulty and the cost of maintaining colonial rule, while voices were emerging that questioned the justice of European domination at all, stimulated by popular revulsion at the estimated eight million deaths caused by Belgian colonial engagements in the Congo.²⁶ Although not typically a writer of imperial adventure stories in the manner of a Haggard or a Boothby, Marsh nonetheless constantly referenced Britain’s imperial engagements in fictions that probed their significance for ‘home’. As Allsop’s chapter makes clear, the diamonds that prove so troublesome for British collectors, experts and merchants possess an exoticism in virtue of their foreign origins that elicits speculative frenzy, but it is also these origins that undermine their use or exchange value as the stones of ‘The diamonds’ are diagnosed as being compromised by ‘a sort of disease to which African diamonds are peculiarly liable’. The emphasis on African pathology seems in line with racist tropes of Africa, but another reference to the diamonds as looking as

though 'a little spot of blood had got into the very centre of the stone' serves, Allsop argues, as a 'lingering reminder of violence done in the name of avarice and Empire'. It is ultimately unclear how far these stories can be read as critiques of Empire and colonial violence, and how far as self-interested warnings against exposing British markets to unreliable and impure foreign influences.

A similar ambivalence is identified in Ailise Bulfin's chapter on Marsh's contribution to the subgenre of Egyptian Gothic fiction. Bulfin discusses how British quasi-colonial competition over Egyptian territories and the Suez Canal led from the 1860s to Egypt turning Gothic in the literary imagination, spawning numerous tales featuring ancient Egyptian curses and reanimated malevolent mummies. With its vengeful supernatural entity emerging 'from an "Egyptian den" of "demons" to wreak havoc in London', Bulfin notes that *The Beetle* 'shares some of the key characteristics of these Egyptian-themed tales and was likely the best-selling of them'. Examining it alongside comparable tales by Conan Doyle, Stoker, Haggard and Boothby, Bulfin shows how *The Beetle* both conforms to many 'Gothic Egyptian genre conventions' and 'dramatically exceeds' them. Her reading reveals the political and ideological instability of the novel, showing how while it can be interpreted as a conservative text that paints a picture of a 'monstrous Egypt' in need of being 'suppressed', it also identifies British foreign policy on Egypt as a likely source of Egyptian nationalist and religious 'grievance'.

This suggestion of colonial critique in Marsh's novels also emerges in Neil Hultgren's contribution on Marsh's slightly later Gothic novel *The Goddess*. A grisly murder in the aptly named 'Imperial Mansions' in central London sets off a murder mystery involving a malevolent, seemingly supernatural entity, the eponymous 'Goddess'. The novel's denouement, however, reveals the Goddess to be an Indian automaton, a clockwork machine, whose influence on the novel's British characters reveals their imperial guilt and paranoia. As Hultgren shows, *The Goddess* looks back to a fear of exotic automata such as Tipu's tiger, a late eighteenth-century mechanical toy from India that enacts the brutal mauling of an Englishman by a tiger. In Marsh's novel, the eventual dissection of the Goddess' machinery functions as an aesthetic strategy that strips the imperial Gothic of its mysticism and, through a negotiation of the plot machinery of the fantastic, interrogates the formulaic genre conventions associated with imperial Gothic fiction. The novel therefore reveals a significant degree of authorial self-consciousness in the manipulation of Gothic genre conventions.

British fears about decline of Empire were strongly connected to anxieties about changing gender roles. The demonic idol of *The Goddess*, for instance, points to the dangers of the female in Marsh's fiction. As political speeches from the period show, it was feared that Empire would falter for a lack of strong men to defend it.²⁷ Fictions including *Dracula* and, it must be said, *The Beetle*, revolve around scenarios of what Stephen Arata terms 'reverse colonization', in which its overseas engagements rebound upon Britain in the form of the arrival at the heart of Empire of foreign monsters intent on subordinating the Imperial master.²⁸ In *Dracula*, it is women who are the weak links, proving susceptible to the foreign invader's sexual fascination, and thereby putting to the test the strength of British male virility. One of the contexts for this preoccupation is a crisis in masculinity that scholars have identified as erupting at the fin de siècle.²⁹ Earlier narratives of hegemonic masculinity became difficult to maintain in the face of a series of perceived threats that emerged from the women's rights campaign and the New Women, but also, as Andrew Smith has contended, a troubling of traditional understandings of men's nature and role that emerged from within masculine culture itself.³⁰ Scientific and medical discourses such as sexology described male nature in disturbing ways, pointing to the multiple forms in which the supposedly normal masculine sexual drive could 'go astray' and emerge as 'perversion'.³¹ This coincided with the increasing visibility of a male homosexual culture and with the emergence – related to decadence and aestheticism – of the figure of the dandy, whose emphasis on physical appearance, on artificiality and excessive refinement, contrasted with older ideas of manliness.³²

Gender has been one of the key lenses through which *The Beetle* has been examined. One of the characteristic features of the creature is its indeterminate gender, its capacity to shift between seeming maleness and femaleness, as well as its ability to bring about regendering in its victims. Scholars have tended to read this as an anti-New Woman text, yet in this volume, several contributors suggest that Marsh's most famous novel might not be best representative of his treatment of this phenomenon. Victoria Margree's chapter on crime thriller *The Datchet Diamonds* (1898) notes how this text seems ultimately to make accommodation for its New Womanish character, Charlie Wentworth, crediting her with perspicacity and allowing her to emerge a likeable figure. Minna Vuohelainen's contribution discusses one of Marsh's most vivid female characters, the lip-reading, jiu-jitsu-practising female detective Judith Lee (1911–16), who embodies many of the liminal characteristics of Marsh's earlier female monsters. Yet Lee's radical alterity, fearless inde-

pendence and troubling of easy binaries represent an engaging model of early twentieth-century professional femininity. These chapters suggest new departures for scholarship on Marsh's representations of women, and, perhaps, on fin-de-siècle fictions more generally, pointing to the presence even in the works of male popular fiction writers of representations more sympathetic to the New Woman than the fearful, misogynistic responses of Stoker, Haggard or Machen.

Several chapters in this volume take up the issue of Marsh's representations of masculinity. An exhortation that recurs across Marsh's fiction – almost compulsively in *The Beetle* – is to 'play the man', seemingly testifying to a sense of masculinity as something that is performed and as an ideal that is only perilously achieved.³³ Two chapters address themselves particularly to the theme of imperilled masculinity, and they do so by linking this to questions of economics. Margree's contribution on *The Datchet Diamonds* identifies how the financial impecuniousness of the novel's protagonist is linked to the undermining of his masculine status, leading him to reject the clerking life in favour of financial speculation and then a dalliance with crime. While Margree's chapter also addresses the questions of crime and criminality that are the focus of the first section of this volume, her emphasis on masculinity makes for a useful comparison with Mackenzie Bartlett's chapter on Marsh's comic stories about the lower-middle-class clerk Sam Briggs, which were published in the *Strand Magazine* between 1904 and 1915. Sam is, in the early tales, an unabashed figure of degeneracy, small of stature and physically timid, though with a tendency towards rather transparent bravado, taken from the suburban sprawl of London. When war breaks out in 1914, however, Marsh sends Sam to the Front, describing in monthly instalments how army discipline and consciousness of nationalistic purpose finally make of Sam a man. Bartlett reads the stories in relation to the 'New Humour' of the late Victorian and Edwardian periods, associated with the writings of Jerome K. Jerome, Barry Pain and Israel Zangwill, thereby offering a new perspective both on the comic literature of the period and its transitions, and on Marsh's own oeuvre, scholarly readings of which have tended to overlook the very significant place given to humour. Bartlett demonstrates how Sam's transition from an 'object of laughter' to a 'potent symbol of the instinctual heroism of every British soldier' bears witness to changing configurations in the social and class fabric of Edwardian Britain. While dealing with different genres, Bartlett's and Margree's chapters both testify to Marsh's persistent interest in revitalising masculine identities through exposure to risk and danger.

As Bartlett notes, Marsh's fiction evinces 'a keen awareness of the harsh economic position of the lower middle classes', and precarity is frequently the backdrop and the motivating force of Marsh's fictions. In *The Beetle*, out-of-work clerk Robert Holt is driven by hunger and homelessness burglariously to enter the suburban home of the monster into whose clutches he will fall. The Sam Briggs stories frequently revolve around pecuniary concerns – attempts by Sam and his fellow clerks to improve their financial positions or to avoid prospective financial disaster. As Bartlett notes, economic and social inequality can be the occasion in Marsh's texts for horror or for humour. While Freeman sees Marsh as a writer unconcerned with issues of social justice, Bartlett and Margree suggest that his persistent foregrounding of fin-de-siècle society as one riven by inequalities opens up Marsh's texts to the possibility of being read for covert political critique. Margree's chapter argues that this is a foregrounding that prepares us to sympathise with the anti-hero protagonist, when, facing destitution, he is tempted to profit from the stolen diamonds that have accidentally fallen into his possession. While the text explicitly denounces both financial speculation and financial crime, at a deeper level it endorses the risk-taking behaviour and desire for self-betterment at the heart of each, even suggesting that crime may be a rational response to circumstances.

Indeed, Marsh's fascination with criminality forms the focus of several chapters, which together call for recognition of Marsh as a significant contributor to crime fiction. The fin de siècle is, of course, famous as the era of the detective, being most closely associated with Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes. Recognising the potential of this market, Marsh created several detective characters of his own: the aristocratic private detective Augustus Champnell, who appears in *The Beetle* and in several other tales; the amateur sleuth Judith Lee, discussed here by Vuohelainen; and the elderly bachelor who investigates his friend's death in *The Mystery of Philip Bennion's Death*, discussed in this volume by Orrells. Vuohelainen's chapter traces the ways in which Lee's investigations make use of the latest medical, scientific and technological advances of the period in detecting, solving and preventing crime. Lee's professional skill as a lip-reader and her ease in using modern telecommunications and transport render her in many ways an exemplary scientific detective. However, while Lee's joint roles as a crime-fighter and a teacher of the deaf by the oral system may be designed to eradicate deviant elements in early twentieth-century society, seemingly in keeping with the aims of the eugenics movement, her troubled gender, sexual and ethnic identity

and frequent association with ‘psychic’ communications such as telepathy simultaneously disturb a reading of her as a representative of the period’s hegemonic culture. It is therefore difficult at times to differentiate between Marsh’s unconventional female detective and the very criminals she is engaged in apprehending.

Indeed, as Margree and Höglund both argue in this volume, Marsh’s main interest seems often to lie not with those who investigate crime but with those who commit it or are punished for it. His fictions frequently feature protagonists who are tempted into crime through economic hardship, who fund lifestyles beyond their means through amoral or criminal activity, or who are burdened with the notoriety of a criminal parent – parallels with the author’s own life are, of course, suggestive. Höglund’s chapter explores particularly the last of these themes through its reading of Marsh’s 1895 novel *Mrs Musgrave – and her Husband*, in which the daughter of a murderer herself becomes a killer after she is blackmailed by a doctor who threatens to reveal the secret of her tainted biological inheritance. Höglund’s analysis teases out the manner in which this text both foregrounds Lombrosian and eugenicist accounts of criminality and destabilises them by pointing to the possibility that it is in fact the very medico-scientific announcement of preordained criminality that is the source of the evil. The theme of transgressive femininity is returned to in this chapter, Höglund noting that *Mrs Musgrave* can be illuminatingly read alongside Mary Elizabeth Braddon’s sensation novel *Lady Audley’s Secret* (1861–62). With *Mrs Musgrave*, however, to see the supposedly criminally insane woman’s actions as a rational response to a patriarchal society is not to produce an against-the-grain reading, since this possibility is in fact foregrounded by Marsh’s text and given equal weighting to the criminological paradigm. The novel oscillates between biological and social explanations of crime, therefore providing another instance of the ‘dissonant voices’ characteristic of so much of Marsh’s fiction. More generally, the crime-focused chapters of the volume suggest that scholarship may have given disproportionate attention to fictions of detection, as opposed to crime, leading to the dominant critical view of crime fiction as an ideologically conservative form. Marsh’s crime fiction, including his prison fiction, often solicits readerly sympathy for the transgressor, suggesting therefore that different motivations and pleasures may be provided by the genre: the pleasure, for instance, of seeing ‘social hierarchies questioned, rules contested and “improper” behaviours rewarded’, as Margree argues in her chapter.

Canons and values

As the chapters in this volume suggest, Richard Marsh's fiction contributes to, and frequently complicates, the established trajectories of reading the literature and culture of the *fin de siècle*. Marsh's genre fiction fits uneasily into the conventional division of *fin-de-siècle* culture into either 'low' or 'high'. While drawing on popular, sensationalist and journalistic modes and themes, Marsh frequently addressed more 'serious' or high-brow economic, moral, scientific and aesthetic concerns in his writing. His versatility suggests a greater range of cultural nuances than is allowed for by a rigid distinction between the popular and the elite. Marsh's sustained popularity during his lifetime points to his ability to reach out to a broad, middlebrow audience, and his fiction thus provides us with access to what is perhaps the era's most representative readerly mindset. Indeed, the period of Heldmann/Marsh's literary activity (1879–1915) even has the power to destabilise our conventional definitions of literary or cultural periodicity: the author's body of work spans the heyday of the New Imperialism; the excitement and anxiety of the 1890s; the Edwardian calm before the storm; and the descent to the catastrophic maelstrom of the First World War. Should we, then, regard his work as Victorian, Edwardian or modernist?

The chapters collected here spotlight some of the ways in which reading Marsh forces us to reconsider our interpretation of the dominant discourses of the *fin de siècle*. The usual suspects of *fin-de-siècle* degeneration theory – objectionable New Women, 'inferior' colonial subjects, ingenious detectives, effeminate decadents, born criminals and the urban poor – do feature in Marsh's oeuvre, but their predominance as the period's sole representatives is complicated by the presence in his work of the lower-middle-class clerk, the successful professional woman, the admirable character of mixed ethnicity, the disabled person and the criminal who is constructed by society rather than cursed by heredity. To the themes of criminality, gender transgression, urban squalor and imperial adventure he adds discussions of value and profit, an acknowledgement of the instability of the material world, sympathy towards the criminal, a recognition of the woeful inadequacy of conventional gender roles and articulations of imperial guilt. The presence of these characters and themes in Marsh's work and his significant popularity with a mainstream audience suggest that the discourses circulating at the time may have been more complex than the current literary canon would allow for.

Introduction

A recurring theme in this collection is the multivocal nature of Marsh's fiction. Its competing, discordant voices do not easily fit into established categories of the normative, the subversive or the hegemonic because of the texts' frequent refusal to prioritise or decide between them. The undecidability and shifting focalisation of Marsh's fictions make the reader work hard, and while Marsh remains a popular middlebrow author, the multiple perspectives of his fiction also point forward to the modernist aesthetic. We can also trace Marsh's journalistic background in this discursive discord; if the newspaper consists of a patchwork of articles addressing topical issues, authored by multiple, often anonymous writers but always coexisting intertextually, Marsh's fictions could be read as similarly multivocal, intertextual cultural products that allow diverse and conflicting ideas to exist side by side. Beyond our knowledge of Marsh's fascination with multiple identities – inspired by his own assumption of different personas – we cannot trace Marsh's own response to the themes he addressed in his fictions because of the lack of reliable information on his person and politics. This very biographical ambiguity helps his fictions to stand out independently of their author for the interpretation of readers, revealing in particularly vivid ways the contours of topical discourses and also the fault lines between them – the places where ideological frameworks come up against each other and come into conflict, thereby revealing their internal fractures, weaknesses and omissions. The scholarly understanding of the fin-de-siècle period must, therefore, remain incomplete unless we engage with Marsh's fiction.

Notes

- 1 R. Aickman, *The Attempted Rescue* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1966), p. 11.
- 2 P. D. McDonald, *British Literary Culture and Publishing Practice, 1880–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 173.
- 3 J. Höglund, 'Black Englishness and concurrent voices in Richard Marsh's *The Surprising Husband*', *English Literature in Transition*, 56:3 (2013), 275–91 (p. 277).
- 4 Höglund, 'Black Englishness and concurrent voices', p. 277.
- 5 R. Marsh, 'How I "broke into print", III: Richard Marsh', *Strand Magazine*, 50 (November 1915), pp. 573–4.
- 6 M. Vuohelainen, 'Bernard Heldmann and the *Union Jack*, 1880–83: the making of a professional author', *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 47:1 (2014), 105–42 (pp. 117–18).
- 7 Vuohelainen, 'Bernard Heldmann and the *Union Jack*', pp. 118–19, 121–32.

- 8 See also C. James, 'Callum James's literary detective agency, case #1: why was Richard Marsh?', *Front Free Endpaper*, 30 November 2009, <http://callumjames.blogspot.com/2009/11/callum-james-literary-detective-agency.html>; R. Kirkpatrick, *The Three Lives of Bernard Heldmann* (London: Children's Books History Society, 2010); M. Vuohelainen, 'Richard Marsh', *Victorian Fiction Research Guide*, 35 (Canterbury: Canterbury Christchurch University, 2009, <http://victorianfictionresearchguides.org/richard-marsh/>); M. Vuohelainen, 'Introduction', in R. Marsh, *The Goddess: A Demon*, ed. M. Vuohelainen (Kansas City, MO: Valancourt, 2010), pp. vii–xxxiii (pp. xi–xvii).
- 9 G. Gissing, *New Grub Street*, ed. J. Goode (1891; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 460.
- 10 H. Piffard, 'An omnibus pickpocket', in G. R. Sims (ed.), *Living London*, 3 vols (1901; London: Cassell, 1906), iii, p. 18.
- 11 See, for example, 'Mr Marsh explains', *Academy*, 52 (30 October 1897), 35; Marsh, 'How I "broke into print"'.
12 R. Marsh, *Ada Vernham, Actress* (London: John Long, 1900), pp. 52, 107, 203.
- 13 [R. Marsh], 'For debt', *Windsor Magazine*, 15 (January 1902), 231–9 (pp. 231–2, 239).
- 14 On 'For debt', see M. Vuohelainen, 'Distorting the genre, defining the audience, detecting the author: Richard Marsh's "For debt" (1902)', *Clues: A Journal of Detection*, 25:4 (Summer 2007), 17–26.
- 15 V. Margree, 'Metanarratives of authorship in fin de siècle popular fiction: "Is that all you do, write stories?"', *English Literature in Transition*, 59:3 (2016), 362–89 (pp. 363, 377).
- 16 M. Vuohelainen, "'Contributing to most things": Richard Marsh, literary production, and the fin de siècle periodicals market', *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 46:3 (2013), 401–22 (pp. 405–9, 413–16).
- 17 M. Vuohelainen, 'From "vulgar" and "impossible" to "pre-eminently readable": Richard Marsh's critical fortunes, 1893–1915', *English Studies*, 95:3 (2014), 278–301 (pp. 287–98).
- 18 R. Marsh, *The Joss: A Reversion* (Kansas City, MO: Valancourt, 2007), p. 65. All subsequent references are to this edition and are given in the text.
- 19 Höglund, 'Black Englishness and concurrent voices', p. 277.
- 20 M. Vuohelainen, *Richard Marsh* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2015), pp. 90, 107, 110, 113.
- 21 See, for example, R. Garnett, 'Dracula and *The Beetle*: imperial and sexual guilt and fear in late Victorian fantasy', in R. Garnett and R. J. Ellis (eds), *Science Fiction Roots and Branches: Contemporary Critical Approaches* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1990), pp. 30–54; J. Halberstam, 'Gothic nation: *The Beetle* by Richard Marsh', in A. Smith, D. Mason and W. Hughes (eds), *Fictions of Unease: The Gothic from Otranto to The X-Files* (Bath: Sulis

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- 22 Höglund, ‘Black Englishness and concurrent voices’; R. Luckhurst, ‘Trance-Gothic, 1882–1897’, in R. Robbins and J. Wolfreys (eds), *Victorian Gothic: Literary and Cultural Manifestations in the Nineteenth Century* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2000), pp. 148–67; Margree, ‘Metanarratives of authorship’; Vuohelainen, *Richard Marsh*; Vuohelainen, ‘From “vulgar” and “impossible”’; Vuohelainen, “‘Contributing to most things’”; T. Youngs, *Beastly Journeys: Travel and Transformation at the Fin de Siècle* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2013).
- 23 S. Ledger and R. Luckhurst, ‘Introduction: reading the “fin de siècle”’, in S. Ledger and R. Luckhurst (eds), *The Fin de Siècle: A Reader in Cultural History, c. 1880–1900* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. xiii–xxiii (p. xiii).
- 24 See, for example, A. Symons, ‘The decadent movement in literature’ (1893), in Ledger and Luckhurst (eds), *The Fin de Siècle*, pp. 104–11.
- 25 M. Nordau, *Degeneration* (1892; Eastford, CT: Martino Fine Books, 2014).

- 26 Ledger and Luckhurst, 'The New Imperialism', in Ledger and Luckhurst (eds), *The Fin de Siècle*, pp. 133–5.
- 27 C. Prior, *Edwardian England and the Idea of Racial Decline: An Empire's Future* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), p. 12.
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- 30 A. Smith, *Victorian Demons: Medicine, Masculinity, and the Gothic at the Fin-de-Siècle* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004).
- 31 See R. von Krafft-Ebing, *Psychopathia Sexualis* (1886; New York: Arcade, 2011); H. Ellis and J. A. Symonds, *Studies in the Psychology of Sex, Volume 2: Sexual Inversion* (1897; New York: Random House, 1984) [Kindle Edition]. On the fin-de-siècle 'modernity' of sexology, see H. Oosterhuis, *Stepchildren of Nature: Krafft-Ebing, Psychiatry and the Making of Sexual Identity* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2000); L. Appignanesi and J. Forrester, *Freud's Women* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1992); and D. Orrells, *Sex: Antiquity and its Legacy* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2015).
- 32 See R. Dellamora, *Masculine Desire: The Sexual Politics of Victorian Aestheticism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990); Adams, *Dandies and Desert Saints*.
- 33 R. Marsh, *The Beetle: A Mystery*, ed. M. Vuohelainen (Kansas City, MO: Valancourt, 2008), pp. 15, 151, 266, 268.