Call for Papers

Australasian Victorian Studies Association Conference

University of Otago
Dunedin
New Zealand
February 3-5, 2009

The Victorian Sensorium

Keynote speaker:
Professor Sally Ledger (Birkbeck)

From the spectacle of the Great Exhibition to the 'Great Stink' of 1858, from Thomas Carlyle's well-known antipathy to noise of all kinds to Oscar Wilde 'feasting with panthers', Victorian sensory culture provides the broad theme of this conference. Social transformations in the nineteenth century (such as resulted from industrialisation and intensive urbanisation) have led some to suggest that the Victorian period was marked by a profound intensification or transformation of the senses. The rise of sensory studies and recent scholarly attention to Victorian soundscapes, scents, visual culture and even 'filth' have demonstrated the rich possibilities that this topic may present. This call for papers seeks proposals that will contribute to the interdisciplinary exploration of the Victorian sensorium.

Topics could include (but are not limited to):
- sentiment/ sensibility / sensation
- sensation fiction
- scientific or philosophical explorations of the senses & emotions
- mesmerism / spiritualism
- sexuality / passion / affections, and/or the gendering of feelings
- the body in pain, illness, hysteria
- Victorian pleasures
- the senses and space
- 'affective communities' and/or the politics of feeling
- empires of the senses
- sensing the 'other'.

Please email proposals (maximum 300 words) for papers of 20-minute duration to Dr Wendy Parkins (wendy.parkins@stonebow.otago.ac.nz) and include your institutional details (if any). The deadline for submission of proposals is October 31, 2008.