

Victorian freaks: the social context of freakery in Britain



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Even as you and I : freak shows and lay discourse on spectacular deformity / Heather McHold -- Freaklore : the dissemination, fragmentation, and reinvention of the legend of Daniel Lambert, king of fat men / Joyce L. Huff -- White wings and six-legged muttoms : the freakish animal / Timothy Neil -- "Poor Hoo Loo" : sentiment, stoicism, and the grotesque in British imperial medicine / Meegan Kennedy -- Elephant talk : language and enfranchisement in the Merrick case / Christine C. Ferguson -- The Missing Link and the Hairy Belle : Krao and the Victorian discourses of evolution, imperialism, and primitive sexuality / Nadja Durbach -- Empire and the Indian freak : the "Miniature Man" from Cawnpore and the "Marvellous Indian Boy" on tour in England / Marlene Tromp -- The Victorian mummy-fetish : H. Rider Haggard, Frank Aubrey, and the white mummy / Kelly Hurley -- Our bear women, ourselves : affiliating with Julia Pastrana / Rebecca Stern -- Queering the marriage plot : Wilkie Collins's *The Law and the Lady* / Martha Stoddard Holmes -- Freaks that matter : the dolls' dressmaker, the doctor's assistant, and the limits of difference / Melissa Free -- A collaborative aesthetic : Levinas's idea of responsibility and the photographs of Charles Eisenmann and the late nineteenth-century freak-performer / Christopher R. Smit

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freaks in their Victorian cultural context. In this way, we hope to flesh out the impact of freakery on mainstream culture, as well as some of the cultural investments that produced freakery. While this book only begins this project, the scholarship presented here helps us better understand not only freakery but also the period. Locating the Freak: Social Context Mary Russo has argued in her study of the "freak and the uncanny" that the "grotesque body is . . . irregular secreting, multiple, and changing," yet it is also "identified with . . . social transformation." Performance Notes 'Victorian Freaks - The Social Context of Freakery in Britain', examines the struggle over definitions of "freakery" and the unstable and sometimes conflicting ways in which freakery was understood and deployed. Presented in an enjoyable yet authoritative style, the essays presented discusses figures as varied as Joseph Merrick, "The Elephant Man"; Daniel Lambert, "King of the Fat Men"; Julia Pastrana, "The Bear Woman"; and Laloo, "The Marvellous Indian Boy" and his embedded, parasitic twin. Victorian culture is exam Indeed, the Victorian freak show was rooted in the palaces of Europe. Charles I and his queen, Henrietta Maria, kept a collection of human curiosities, the most famous being Jeffrey Hudson. The advent of social Darwinism turned freak performers into a national threat and the rise of eugenics signalled a corresponding fear that the unfit would hold back the evolutionary advance. In the aftermath of World War I - after which disabilities were a lot more prevalent - it no longer seemed appealing to gawp at those with deformities. Responses to the freak show were always rooted in the context of contemporary thought, yet Julia's story also highlights the question of exploitation. She was clearly

mistreated, as were many others, but there were also examples of empowerment. Social Conditions -- History -- Great Britain. Keywords: Victorian studies literary criticism -- European -- English disability studies. Even as you and I : freak shows and lay discourse on spectacular deformity / Heather McHold -- Freaklore : the dissemination, fragmentation, and reinvention of the legend of Daniel Lambert, king of fat men / Joyce L. Huff -- White wings and six-legged mutttons : the freakish animal / Timothy Neil -- "Poor Hoo Loo" : sentiment, stoicism, and the grotesque in British imperial medicine /. Victorian Freaks: The Social Context of Freakery in Britain, edited by Marlene Tromp, turns to that rich nexus, examining the struggle over definitions of "freakery" and the unstable and sometimes conflicting ways in which freakery was understood and deployed. As the first study centralizing British culture, this collection discusses figures as varied as Joseph Merrick, "The Elephant Man"; Daniel Lambert, "King of the Fat Men"; Julia Pastrana, "The Bear Woman"; and Laloo, "The Marvellous Indian Boy" and his embedded, parasitic twin. Victorian F...