

Critics, Coteries, and Pre-Raphaelite Celebrity by Wendy Graham. New York: Columbia UP, 2017. xxiii, 327 pp. + 17 colour, 30 b/w illus. ISBN 9780231180207. \$59.99.

Wendy Graham's purpose in *Critics, Coteries, and Pre-Raphaelite Celebrity* is to rehabilitate the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood as a formative movement of the avant-garde, refuting the assumption that the phenomenon of "counter-culture" as a push-back against artistic institutions and the commodification of the art-object only emerged in the twentieth century. She offers a fascinating account of how the Pre-Raphaelites' reactionary stance was embraced by a variety of intersecting communities and "hangers-on" who embraced alternative lifestyles until the movement became incorporated into mass culture, becoming synonymous with "interior design, dress reform and tasteful knickknacks." Graham's exposé of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood as a segment of the avant-garde allows the reader to observe a cyclical pattern of how "avant-gardes burst upon the scene, dispense with their posture of antagonism and get incorporated." Her insight into the shifting epochs of the Pre-Raphaelites' consciously crafted public-images allows us to understand why the contemporary response to Pre-Raphaelite art is so strongly disengaged from the jarring sensation it stimulated on its inception when it distorted the viewer's visual field through a hyper-realistic execution of minutiae.

As the ultra-sharp focus of Pre-Raphaelite painting gradually became incorporated into the public consciousness, the movement also detached itself from its association with aestheticism as an oppositional counterforce to heterosexual mores – thereby obscuring the other revolutionary facet of its own cultural legacy. According to Graham, every age interprets a work of art by its own values, and the scandal and infamy that was induced by the Wilde trials provoked a conscious rejection of the Pre-Raphaelites' highly publicized sexual iconoclasm. The PRB's sexual nonconformity is reassessed in *Critics, Coteries, and Pre-Raphaelite Celebrity*, exposing the homosexual subtexts that pervaded the outwardly fraternal dynamics of the movement. Graham references Eve Sedgwick's theory of a continuum between the homosocial and homoerotic relations of men, which is frequently expressed in their sexual rivalries over women, as can be observed in the triangulated relationship between Rossetti and the Morrises. When applied to "the mutual admiration society" that grew out of the dynamics of Pre-Raphaelite cliquishness and self-promotion, Sedgwick's theory suggests that a consciously homosexual undercurrent has been deliberately expunged from Pre-Raphaelite history, as witnessed in the legacy of Simeon Solomon. Initially at the forefront of the movement, Solomon resided with Rossetti in his Cheyne Walk residence, but was brutally cut from the fraternity following his 1872 arrest for proposition-