



**Sleeping Beauties in Victorian Britain: Cultural,  
Literary and Artistic Explorations of a Myth  
(Cultural Interactions: Studies in the Relationship  
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Artists, scientists and the wider public of the Victorian era all seem to have shared a common interest in the myth of the Briar Rose and its contemporary implications, from the Pre-Raphaelites and late Victorian aesthetes to the fascinated crowds who visited Ellen Sadler, the real-life 'Sleeping Maid' who is reported to have slept from 1871 to 1880.

The figure of the beautiful reclining female sleeper is a recurring theme in the Victorian imagination, invoking visual, literary and erotic connotations that contribute to a complex range of readings involving aesthetics, gender definitions and contemporary medical opinion. This book compiles and examines a corpus of Sleeping Beauties drawn from Victorian medical reports, literature and the arts and explores the significance of the enduring revival of the myth.

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