

The Victorian Popular Fiction Association's

8th Annual Conference:

Victorian Popular Genres

14-15th July, 2016

Institute of English Studies, Senate House, London

Keynote Speaker - Dr Joanne Knowles (Liverpool John Moores University)

Keynote Speaker - Dr Andrew Maunder (University of Hertfordshire)

Exhibition - 'Popular Victorian & Edwardian Fiction: From Cheaper, to Cheap, and then to Cheapest', Curated by John Spiers

Call for Papers

The Victorian Popular Fiction Association conference is recognised as an important event on the annual conference circuit and offers a friendly and invigorating opportunity for established academics and postgraduate students to share their current research. We remain committed to the revival of interest in understudied popular writers, literary genres and other cultural forms, which is pivotal to the reputation this conference has established.

The organisers invite a broad, imaginative and interdisciplinary interpretation of the topic and its relation to any aspect of Victorian popular literature and culture which might address literal or metaphorical representations of the theme.

We welcome proposals for 20 minute papers, or for panels of three papers, on topics which can include, but are not limited to:

Victorian Popular Genres in relation to:

- Popularity and unpopularity of different genres: genres that stand the test of time, fad genres, one-hit wonders (novels/authors), best-sellers, niche genres, cyclical process of 'popularity'
- The 'popular' as a genre: how it is defined, what it is defined against (e.g. 'popular' versus 'canonical'/'highbrow' literature), highbrow literature as popular?
- Teaching the 'popular' as a genre
- Genres of literature: short stories, poetry, plays, drama, novels, novellas, magazines, periodicals
- Literary thematic genres: Tragedy, Comedy, Realism, Romanticism, Modernism, Melodrama, Gothic, Sensation, Detective, Historical, Children's Literature, Penny Dreadfuls
- Literary non-fiction genres: auto/biography, travel, true crime, cookery, craft books, self-help books

- Interactions with non-literary genres: art, illustrations, painting, photography, music, theatre, circus, freak shows
- Hybridity, blurring genre boundaries, affinities between different genres
- The role of Victorian critics in defining and promoting genre boundaries (e.g. Robert Buchanan, Margaret Oliphant, H.L. Mansel)
- Approaching the popular through theories and theorists of genre (ancient, Victorian and modern - e.g. Aristotle, Todorov, Arnold, Wilde, Stephen, Barthes, Derrida)
- Updating Victorian popular genres, and making Victorian genres popular: Neo-Victorianism, adaptation, film
- Print culture and the literary marketplace: high/low culture, taste, fashion, cheap editions, railway novels, fine editions, mass production, contracts, royalties, ethics of production, craftsmanship
- Readership and Authorship: expectations, intertextuality, target markets, age boundaries
- How popular genres reflected or impacted Victorian culture, politics, history, geography, science, etc.
- Victorian popular genres in relation to: sex, gender, class, race, disability, nationality, empire, etc.

Special topic panels: Following our successful formula, we are continuing the special panels which will be hosted by guest experts; therefore we especially welcome papers about the following genres:

Topic 1: Short Stories, hosted by Vicky Margree

Topic 2: Drama hosted by Kate Newey

Topic 3: Poetry hosted by Anna Barton

Papers in previous years have also discussed authors such as:

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| Grant Allen | Dinah Craik | Margaret Oliphant |
| J. M. Barrie | Catherine Crowe | Charles Reade |
| Mrs Beeton | Charles Dickens | Olive Schreiner |
| Mary Elizabeth Braddon | George Eliot | Ouida |
| Anne Brontë | Elizabeth Gaskell | Robert Louis Stevenson |
| Charlotte Brontë | William Gilbert | Bram Stoker |
| Emily Brontë | George Gissing | William Makepeace Thackeray |
| Rhoda Broughton | Thomas Hardy | Anthony Trollope |
| Lewis Carroll | Jerome K. Jerome | Mary Augusta Ward |
| Mary Cholmondeley | Rudyard Kipling | H.G. Wells |
| Wilkie Collins | Eliza Lynn Linton | Oscar Wilde |
| Arthur Conan Doyle | Florence Marryat | Ellen Wood |
| Marie Corelli | Edith Nesbit | Charlotte Yonge |

Please send proposals of no more than 300 words and a 50 word biography in Word format to Drs Janine Hatter, Helena Ifill and Jane Jordan at: vpfamembership@gmail.com

Deadline for proposals: **Friday 1st April 2016**

WEBSITE: <http://victorianpopularfiction.org>