



MIDWEST VICTORIAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION



"In the Firelight," by Thomas Gray, *Belgravia Magazine*, 1868

## VICTORIAN TRUTH, INVESTIGATION, AND MYSTERY

**MVSA 2021**

**May 21-22**

**Auburn University, Virtual Host**



# MIDWEST VICTORIAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION

**Friday May 21**

**8:15-8:30**

**Conference Welcome**

Christopher Ferguson, Auburn University

**8:30-10:00**

**Plenary Panel: The Age of Secrecy and Discovery**

Chair: Maria K. Bachman, Middle Tennessee State University

Secret Sharers in Dickens

Elizabeth Corsun, Transylvania University

Me Too Rebel Jane! Am I Not a Feminist and a Sister?

Kevin Frank, Baruch College, CUNY

Alice Meynell: Secrecy and the Sacred

Fergus McGhee, Magdalen College, Oxford

Secrets of the Séance Room: Examining the Female Medium in Victorian Spiritualism and Occult Sciences

Lindsey Carman Williams, Washington State University

**10:15-11:30**

**Panel 1: Race, Ethnicity, and Empire**

Chair: Madeline Gangnes, University of Scranton

Physiognomy, Orientalism, and Identification in Dickens's *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*

Menglu Gao, Northwestern University

Lost and Found: Victorian British-Israelism and the Discovery of Racial Destiny

Eric Reisenauer, University of South Carolina at Sumter

The "Freak" Mystery of the Colonial Idol: Fact-Finding and Its Limits in Richard Marsh and H. Rider Haggard

Shuhita Bhattacharjee, Indian Institute of Technology, Hyderabad

Learning by Heart: Grace Aguilar's Ideal Jewish Education

Lindsay Katzir, Langston University



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## **11:30-12:00: Coffee Break**

**("Coffee Break" zoom room opens now and will be available at any time throughout the rest of the conference for informal chatting space.)**

## **12:00-1:30**

### **The Jane Stedman Memorial Plenary Lecture**

The Great Tichborne Trial in the Victorian Visual Imagination

Jennifer Tucker, Associate Professor of History and Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, Wesleyan University

Introduced by Christopher Ferguson, President, MVSA

## **2:00-3:15**

### **Panel 2: Reading and Writing**

Chair: Melissa Gregory, University of Toledo

Thinking Periodically: Victorian Serialized Fiction and the Accessible Digital "Edition"

Madeline Gangnes, University of Scranton

Writing the Line: Railway Fiction and the Industrialization of Nineteenth-Century Print

Maddison McGann, University of Iowa

Decadent Pragmatism: Reading for Experience in the Fin de Siècle

Phil Hoffert, Stanford University

Investigating Rights of Way: Footpath Maps and the Creation of Thomas Hardy's "Wessex"

Michael Martel, University of Alabama

"Capital Pains," Poetic Publics, and Wordsworth's *Sonnets Upon the Punishment of Death*

Ellen O'Brien, Roosevelt University

## **3:45-5:00**

### **Panel 3: Detection and Mystery**

Chair: Lindsay Katzir, Langston University

Girl Detectives Reclaim the Past, Or Attempts to De-Mystify the Nineteenth Century in

Jordan's Stratford's *The Wollstonecraft Detective Agency Series*

Michelle Beissel Heath, University of Nebraska at Kearney



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Mysterious Waters: William Russell, *Chambers's Edinburgh Journal*, and the Popularization of the Detective Story  
Troy Bassett, Purdue University Fort Wayne

Guilty by Association: Pickpocketing and Prostitution  
Heather Asbeck, University of Missouri

The Missing Woodhouse Treasures: A British Museum Mystery  
Tom Prasch, Washburn University

Trick of the Eye: Optical Illusion as Education in *Jude the Obscure*  
Jordan Bunzel, Indiana University

**Saturday May 22**

**8:30-10:30am**

**Seminar 1: Photography and the Archives of Truth, Counter-Memory, and Investigation**

**Seminar Leader:** Jennifer Tucker, Wesleyan University

Legitimizing Illegitimacy: Portraits as Evidence in the Mother's Petitions within the London Foundling Hospital Archives  
Kristen Renzi, Xavier University

"Putting the Carte before" the Cullwick of Arthur J. Munby's Archive  
Corey Risinger, New York University

"A Very Substantial Ghost": The Crystal Cube Miniature, 1862-1868  
Amanda Shubert, University of Chicago

Absent Presences: Hiding Maternity in Victorian Child Portraiture  
Andrea Kaston Tange, Macalester College

Photographic Illusion and Urban Truth: Imagining London as the New Venice, c. 1899  
Christopher Ferguson, Auburn University

History through the Camera Lens: Elizabeth Barrett Browning's *Casa Guidi Windows*  
Rieko Suzuki

The Street Children of London: Victorian Literary Culture and Horace Warner's Photographs  
Greta Perletti, Università degli Studi di Trento





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**10:00-11:15**

**Panel 4: Science and Medicine**

Chair: Michael Martel, University of Alabama

Fin-de-Siècle Catholicism, Truth, the New Science, and the New Spirituality  
Bethany Kilcrease, Aquinas College

Enchanted Materialism: Science as Religious Analogue in the Age of the Fairy Tale  
Ian Caveny, University of Chicago

Politics of Aging: Pathologizing Old Age in Victorian Medical Narratives  
Chung-jen Chen, National Taiwan University

“Nature gives them bosoms for show, not for use”: Breastfeeding and Femininity in  
Trollope and Dickens  
Sarah Roth, Northwestern University

Suicide and the Victorian Medical Quest for Objectivity  
Drew Banghart, West Liberty University

**11:45-1:00**

**Panel 5: Sound**

Chair: Mary-Catherine Harrison, University of Detroit-Mercy

VENI EMMANUEL: The Appropriation of Plainchant in *Hymns Ancient and Modern*  
Sarah Amos, Independent Scholar

Is it a Strad? Forgery, Mystery, and Consumer Desire in the Late Victorian Violin World  
Christina Bashford, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Codes and Secret C(h)ords: The Careers of Victorian Opera Singers in Fantasy and  
Reality  
Chloe Valenti, University of Cambridge

New Ontologies of Sound in Sensation Fiction: Deafness and Infrasound in Wilkie  
Collins's *Hide and Seek*  
Jennifer Janecek, University of Iowa

Music in the Museum: Discovering and Displaying “Ancient” Musical Instruments  
Maia Perez, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign



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**1:30-3:00**

**MVSA Lifetime Achievement Award Roundtable in Honor of Patrick Leary:  
Exploring Print and the Victorians - Views from 2021**

Chair: Linda K. Hughes, TCU

Panelists:

James Mussell, University of Leeds  
Leanne Langley, Royal Philharmonic Society  
Jennifer Phegley, University of Missouri Kansas City  
Paul Fyfe, North Carolina State  
Andrea Korda, University of Alberta  
Jonathan Rose, Drew University  
Patrick Leary, Independent Scholar

**3:15-4:30**

**Panel 6: Truth**

Chair: Thomas Prasch, Washburn University

The Meaningfulness Effect: Symbolic Realism in *Middlemarch*

Kayla Grant, University of Michigan

Olive Schreiner's Art of Interpretation: Truth and Parable in *The Story of an African Farm*

Denae Dyck, University of Victoria

The Vacancy Plot

Emma Adler, Harvard University

Multiple Truths: Dialogues on the Science of Landscape Painting in *Nature Magazine*

Julie Codell, Arizona State University

*Medea* in 1866

Melissa Gregory, University of Toledo

**4:45-5:30**

**Prize Award Ceremony and Final Conference Wrap-Up**

Walter L. Arnstein Prize for Dissertation Research

William and Mary Burgan Prize for Outstanding Graduate Student Paper