

MIDWEST VICTORIAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION

Call for Papers: "Evolving Forms"

The MVSA 2024 theme "Evolving Forms" is meant to highlight the many ways Victorians created and responded to change. "Evolution" invokes Darwin, of course, but we encourage a capacious use of this term. How might the concept of evolution be usefully applied to history, time, political parties, or empire? How did ideas, genres, theories, lifestyles, or the arts evolve throughout the period? How did Victorians think about their own relationships to evolving forms, and how does recent scholarship offer insights into those nineteenth-century representations? MVSA invites proposals for papers relevant to views of transformation, evolution, or devolution in scientific, artistic, social, political, religious, or cultural spheres during the period.

Papers might take up issues including, but not limited to:

- * Resistance to or problems with notions of "progress"
- * Religious controversies, change, and dissent
- * The effects of changing technologies on print and/or periodical culture
- * Political formations, evolving ideas of citizenship and coloniality
- * Revolution as movement: political, geographic, choreographic
- * Developing professions
- * Environments, ecologies, evolution in the non-human world
- * Evolving art forms: visual, theatrical, dance, journalistic, music
- * Medical or social-scientific theories of evolution, degeneration, or determinism
- * Theories of gender, race, class, and sexuality
- * Devolution, dystopias, and utopias
- * Disability studies approaches to 19th-century views of ability
- * Childhood studies or changes in education practice
- * Evolving conceptions of paranormal or spiritual experience
- * Imperial expansion, degeneration, colonial resistance
- * Systems of collection and evolving classification: zoologic, botanic, geologic
- * Explorations of literary form: fiction, journalism, poetry, drama, autobiography, and nonfiction prose



Detail from "The Prince of Wales in the Highlands." Prince of Wales in the Highlands (Supplement). *Illustrated London News*, 16 Oct. 1880.

Conference Highlights

Plenary address by historian Elizabeth Yale: "Human Evolution in the Popular Press: Victorian Women on Mother Love, Mutual Devotion, and Moral Murder" * Guided tour of MacBride Natural History Museum * Dinner in the main hall of historic Old Brick Church * Community Victorian dance under the chandeliers in the Old Capitol Building.

To apply, please submit an abstract (~350 words) and brief CV. To propose a panel or roundtable, submit a brief overview, plus individual paper abstracts and brief CVs for all participants.

Please apply by December 1, 2023 through [this Google form](https://bit.ly/MVSA2024) (<https://bit.ly/MVSA2024>). The Program Committee aims to send acceptances by the end of the calendar year.