

CALL FOR PAPERS

2014 Victorians Institute Conference

The Mysteries at Our Own Doors

October 24-25, 2014 – Charlotte, North Carolina

Sponsored by Winthrop University

Please send 300-500 word proposals for papers and a one-page c.v. to Casey Cothran via email at viconf@winthrop.edu by May 15, 2014.

Henry James once said of Wilkie Collins: "To Mr. Collins belongs the credit of having introduced into fiction those most mysterious of mysteries, the mysteries which are at our own doors." Indeed, through the fiction of Collins (and others) the Victorian Era saw the rise of the detective novel as an art form. Moreover, it also produced a wealth of poems, novels, and prose works that concerned themselves with mysteries, secrets, enigmas, and the unknown. Sensing that they stood on a threshold, that the shadowy borders of new knowledge and understanding lay almost within reach--at their "own doors," as James said--Victorian authors struggled with a variety of mysteries arising from their interests in science, religion, the occult, mesmerism, identity, sexuality, race, class, and the Empire. We invite papers on any of these topics. Papers or panels on poetry, prose, nonfiction, or visual art are welcome, as are presentations on the pedagogy of teaching Victorian literature.



Possible topics might address, but are not limited to:

Detective fiction
Poetic mysteries
Spiritualists and mesmerists
Mysteries of gender and sexuality
The mysterious Other
Death
Crime
Ghosts, vampires, or monsters
Religion
Victorian science and medicine
Industry and technology
Archeology and paleontology
Illustrations and media adaptations

Language and hybridity
History and discovery
New worlds and cultures
Travel and empire
Pseudonyms
Biography
Photography
Music
Journalism
The mysteries of unveiling Victorian literature and culture to undergraduates
How Victorian mysteries can be discovered and solved in online classrooms



The keynote speaker is **Marlene Tromp**, Professor of English and Women's Studies and Dean of Arizona State University's New College of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences. Tromp's many publications include *Altered States: Sex, Nation, Drugs, and Self-Transformation in Victorian Spiritualism* (SUNY, 2006), and she has edited such works as *Victorian Freaks: The Social Context of Freakery in the Nineteenth Century* (Ohio State UP, 2007).
<https://newcollege.asu.edu/directory/marlene-tromp>

Selected papers from the conference will be refereed for the *Victorians Institute Journal* annex at NINES.

Limited travel subventions will be available from the Victorians Institute for graduate students whose institutions provide limited or no support. More information about the travel awards and the application process will be posted to www.vcu.edu/vij. Please visit www.vcu.edu/vij for information about the conference, the Victorians Institute, and the *Victorians Institute Journal*.