

# Victorians Institute

## Refractions/Reflections

*The 2021 conference of the Victorians Institute*

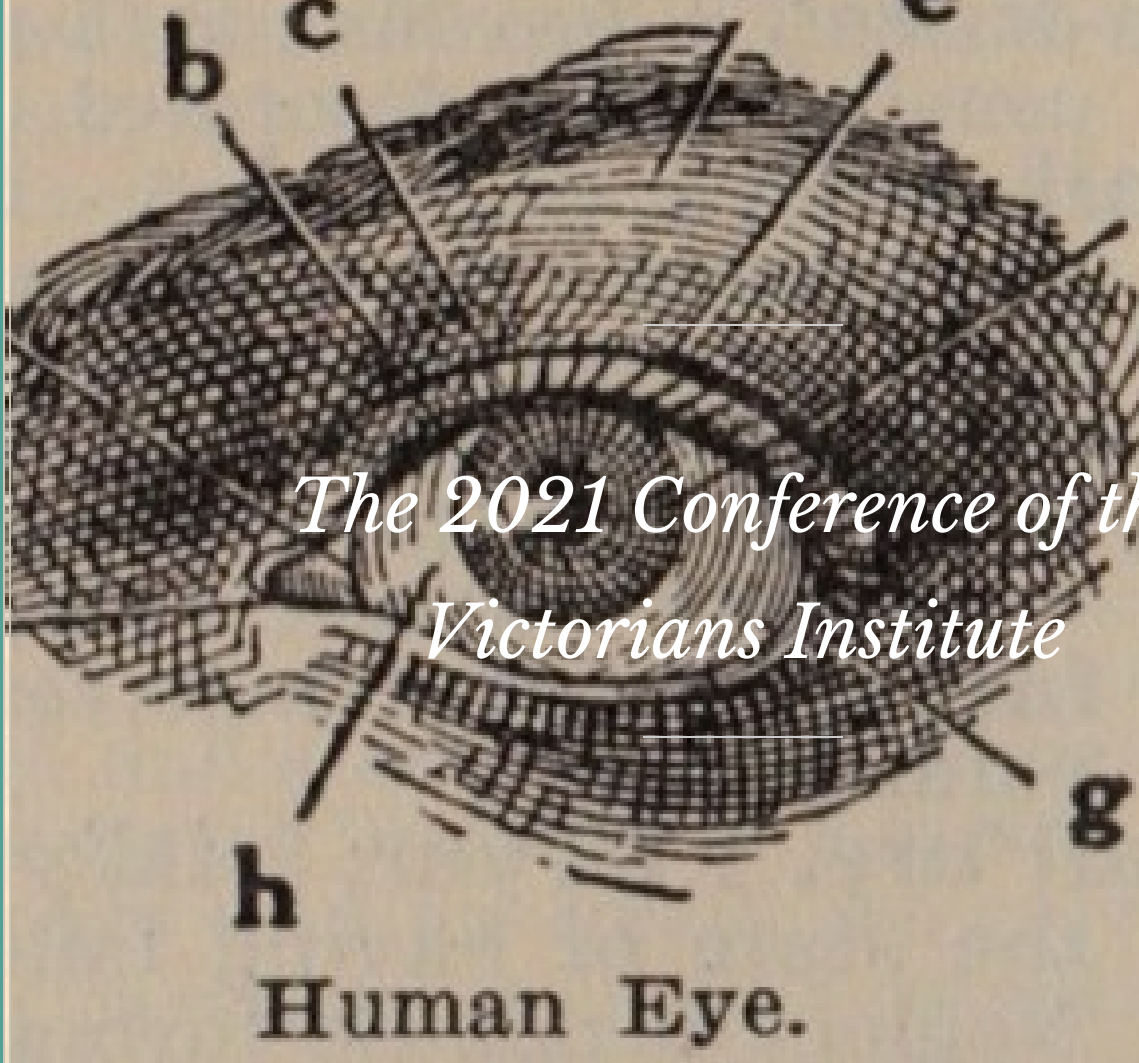
≡ MENU

# Refractions/Reflections: Victorian(ist) Ways of Seeing

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*The 2021 Conference of the  
Victorians Institute*

Hindsight *was* 20/20...but now it's 20/21!

Victorians Institute Conference

Charlotte, NC

October 22-23, 2021

In *The Stones of Venice* (1851-1853), John Ruskin writes, “The greatest thing a human soul ever does in this world is to see something and tell what it saw in a

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all in one.” Ruskin pushed his contemporaries to see the world for themselves plainly. George Eliot echoes this idea in *Adam Bede* (1859), writing “all truth and beauty are to be attained by a humble and faithful study of [human] nature, and not by substituting vague forms, bred by imagination on the mists of feeling, in place of definite, substantial reality.” In contrast, other writers of the period reveled in creating imaginative, sensational, or fantastical worlds that moved beyond the boundaries of the seen and known. This conference seeks essays that explore how Victorians saw their world, how they depicted what they saw, and the ways that modern scholars, in turn, see the Victorians. Papers or panels on poetry, prose, nonfiction, biography, digital humanities, or visual art are welcome, as are presentations on the pedagogy & ethics of teaching Victorian literature during or not during a global pandemic.

Topics may include, but are not limited to:

- Emotional, Intellectual, Aesthetic Insight
- Visual Print Culture, Advertising, Ephemera
- Visual Technology: Magic Lanterns, the Diorama, Binoculars, the Stereoscope
- Optical Illusions/Literary Allusions
- Observation & the (Scientific) Eye: Telescopes, Microscopes, Mirrors, Glasses
- Victorian Photography/Illustration
- The Imagination/The Mind’s Eye
- Seeing Ghosts & Gothic Ways of Seeing
- Seeing Disease/Illness/(Dis)ability
- The Spectacle/Spectacular
- The Great Exhibition
- Shadows/Secrets/Surveillance
- Mesmerists & Spiritualists

- The Visible/Invisible
- Detectives/Detection, Criminals/Crime
- Memoir/Memory/Retrospection
- Fantasy & Reality
- Travel & Travelogues
- Pornography/Iconography
- Food & its Presentation: the Home & the Restaurant
- Self-Perception/Self-Construction
- Victorian Landscapes & the Natural World
- Art/Art Criticism/The Art Gallery
- Medieval Revival & Revisions
- Erasure & Censorship
- Literal/Figurative Blindness
- Objects/Objectification/the Other
- Neo-Victorian/Modern Perceptions
- Pedagogy: Victorians in the Age of #metoo
- Pedagogy: Victorians in the Age of Covid

**Confirmed Keynote Speaker:** Dr. Amy M. King, St. John's University

VI offers limited travel subventions for graduate students whose institutions provide limited or no support. If you would like to be considered, please send a brief letter to [thevictoriansinstitute@gmail.com](mailto:thevictoriansinstitute@gmail.com) explaining your request and what travel support you currently receive. **The deadline for travel applications is October 1st.**

Find general info about the Victorians Institute and the *Victorians Institute Journal* at <http://victoriansinstitute.org/>

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