

Victorians Institute

Victorian Studies: Who Cares?

The 2025 conference of the Victorians Institute

≡ MENU





Victorian Studies: Who Cares?

Call for Papers: Victorians Institute Conference 2025

September 13-14, 2025, Furman University, Greenville, SC

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Sharon Marcus, Orlando Harriman Professor of English and Comparative Literature, Columbia University

As we confront the intersecting and immediate threats of climate crisis, economic precarity, structural inequality, and political extremism, the academic humanities may at first appear removed from the concrete and pressing problems facing modern citizens. We ask why, and how, we continue to care about a historically-focused discipline such as Victorian Studies. We invite both those papers that explore cultures of care (or withholding of empathy) within the Victorian era, and those that articulate how our discipline can contribute ethical responses to the practical challenges that face our campus communities. We seek to provoke

constructive dialogues on a range of scholarly, pedagogy, and disciplinary topics, which may include:

- Victorian regimes of public care and control (philanthropy, public health, missionary work, etc)
- Orphanages, workhouses, and the illusion of care
- Imperial projects and the discourse of uplift in assimilation
- Housekeeping, food preparation, and domestic practices of care
- Modes of extending or withholding empathy in Victorian culture (animal welfare discourse and animal use, environmentalism and conservation, care for impacts of industrialism on future generations, middle-class extension or withholding of compassion for the working class and poor, etc)
- Literary representations of empathy, compassion, and practical care work
- Narrative and poetic strategies that engender or preclude empathy
- Why we should care about out-of-print and non-canonical authors
- Care and the present-day work of pedagogy and university administration (emotional labor in academia, teaching difficult topics with care, confronting economic precarity of students and colleagues, faculty solidarity as a form of mutual care, university obligations of care toward employees)
- Pedagogical strategies to ethically develop student investment in Victorian Studies as a field
- Obligations of Victorian Studies, and the academic humanities more broadly, to engage ethical and practical problems within our discipline and beyond our campuses (activism, public-facing research, promoting critical thinking, citizenship, and awareness of history)

Deadline extended! Please send abstract of no more than 300 words and brief CV to thevictoriansinstitute@gmail.com by **May 31st, 2025**. Presentations should be 15-

20 minutes in length. Undergraduates are invited to submit to separate undergraduate panel (using same e-mail address); please send abstract of 300 words or less accompanied by brief bio instead of standard academic CV.

Questions may be addressed to the conference e-mail address (above) or directly to Dr. Gretchen Braun at gretchen.braun@furman.edu

Advertisement



Top Doctor: If You Eat Eggs Every Day, This Is What Happens

WellnessGuide

 Edit

