

Announcements:
**CFPs, conference notices, & current & forthcoming projects and
publications of interest to neo-Victorian scholars**

(compiled by the NVS Editorial Team)

General Editor's Note:

With the transition of *Neo-Victorian Studies* to a new digital platform, the 14:1 (2021/2022) general issue, published belatedly in 2023, will be the last issue to feature an Announcements Page. Henceforth, CFPs, conference and exhibition notices of interest to neo-Victorian scholars will be posted on the new journal site's Announcements section. Recent critical and creative publications in the field of neo-Victorian studies will be highlighted via an annual overview of 'Publications of Neo-Victorian Interest' in one general issue per year.

CFPs: Journals, Special Issues & Collections
(Entries are listed in order of submission deadlines.)

Edited Collection – *Disability and the Vampire*

Deadline for Abstract Submission: 31 May 2023

Full CFP: <https://call-for-papers.sas.upenn.edu/cfp/2023/02/27/edited-collection-disability-and-the-vampire>

This edited collection will explore the connections between vampires and disability, from history to modern cultural and popular representations. From its inception, the vampire has long been associated with disability and illness. Before it was named as 'vampire' by western officials (e.g. the Arnold Paole case, c. 1726), the revenant was a figure well established in eastern folkloric traditions as a way to make sense of wasting diseases and chronic illnesses as well as the rampant and devastating effects of plague. And in naming and claiming this figure for its own literary and cultural tradition, Western officials and authors (from Germany to Britain) reproduced – if not outright invented and amplified – this narrative of the vampire as an outsider figure, an 'Other' upon and through whom ableist fears and discriminatory narratives would propagate throughout the eighteenth century and after. Drawing from

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recent work in Critical Disability Studies as well as the postmodern turn in Monster Theory, we are especially interested in essays that centre disability and illness in order to challenge this cultural history. We also invite chapters that encourage our rethinking of the disabled vampire in the time of Covid, or how the pandemic has given us yet another chance to engage with this Gothic figure and their legacy. Possible topics include, but are not limited to the following:

- disability and vampirism in medical literature
- disability and the vampire scares of the 18th and 19th centuries
- disability and vampirism in modern film
- the vampire in contemporary politics, especially in light of the COVID pandemic
- vampirism and blood illnesses
- vampires and transhuman abilities/ableism

Submissions: Proposals of 400-500 words should be submitted along with a 60-word author biography and one-page cv to brooke.cameron@queensu.ca. Following acceptance, final papers should be approximately 5,000-6,000 words in length and will be due by 1 December 2023. Routledge has expressed interest in this collection.

Edited Collection – *Wars We Never Fought: Armed Conflict in Speculative Fiction*

Deadline for Abstract Submission: 1 June 2023

Full CFP: <https://call-for-papers.sas.upenn.edu/cfp/2023/02/23/edited-collection-wars-we-never-fought-armed-conflict-in-speculative-fiction>

This collection will examine the use and function of war as a central thematic or formal element in science / speculative fiction and fantasy texts in a variety of popular culture media, from narrative fiction to film and television to video games and new media. *Wars We Never Fought* will seek to offer accessible and wide-ranging critical insight into how and why creators in the fields of science fiction, fantasy, and related genres use ‘war’ as a device within the diegetic worlds of their stories; what the depictions of war and warriors within these texts suggest regarding notions such as race, class, gender, sexuality, difference, sociopolitical power, and other cultural values; and how the textual dramatization of entirely fictitious wars might reflect, interrogate, and even structure understanding of warfare in the ‘real world’. Chapters may discuss narrative fiction, drama, film, animation, video games, and tabletop

gaming/role playing games, among other media. Possible topics include, but are not limited to:

- War as setting / dramatic backdrop in SFF texts
- Studies of SFF protagonist(s) as warrior / warfighter (adaptation of epic/mythic / messianic hero tropes; war as trial and catalyst for character development)
- Wars against ‘the other’, such as alien species or other non-humans; the construction of the non-human ‘enemy’
- Racial identities (real and imagined) and war
- trauma and war; the psychological cost of war / warfighting (as in *The Hunger Games* series);
- Refugee characters in SFF;
- War and / in dystopian worlds, including post-apocalyptic ones
- Messianic warfighters and transformational conflicts
- Alternate histories of warfare
- War and religion / mysticism / prophecy
- Gender and /or sexualities SFF wars / warfighters

Submissions: 300-400-word proposals and a CV should be submitted to the editors Matthew B. Hill and Leigh H. McReynolds at wars.we.never@gmail.com. Essays should be between 7,000 and 10,000 words, using the *Chicago Manual of Style* (17th edition; footnotes and bibliography citation style), and should be written in prose accessible to an educated lay or undergraduate audience. Essay drafts will be due 1 March 2024.

Special Issue of *Coils of the Serpent: Journal for the Study of Contemporary Power – The Necropolitics of Environmental Decline*
Deadline for Abstract Submission: 30 June 2023

Full CFP: <https://call-for-papers.sas.upenn.edu/cfp/2023/04/12/the-necropolitics-of-environmental-decline>

This special issue connects the view of the living earth as a limitless bounty from which infinite capitalist accumulation can be extracted with necropolitics (which explores the “subjugation of life to the power of death”) to unravel the political ecology of death and its attendant violences as related to environmental decline (Mbembe, 2019). Given the weddedness of the extractive economy to varied forms of violence, necropolitical considerations that decode how death is directed, monetized, politicized, and normalized by

actant powers is part and parcel of conducting environmental criticism in the era of anthropogenic climate change. Necropolitical interventions have evolved considerably in the two decades since Mbembe suggested we revise Foucault's discussion of biopower by placing death at the centerfold of our political analyses to better negotiate the imperialist past and still-colonial present. Critical discourses by Jasbir Puar, Rosi Braidotti, and Alexander G. Weheliye, among others, explore the surplus of necropolitical practices at the heart of political and economic machinations, which ensure certain bodies are strategically cultivated for life while others are marked for death, relegated to the role of expendable biological excess. However, what is deemed to be biological excess for the purpose of economic and political gain is not and never has been limited to human populations, since the death of non-human animals and ecosystems has always been a centrepiece of human world-making. The logic of extermination –which does away with anything that interferes with the geo-political stability of states, the unmitigated growth of human industry, and the economic pursuit of profit – has never merely been levelled at the human. This special issue is concerned with the centrality of the politics of death to the histories, geologies, and aesthetics of imminent ecological decline. Potential topics can include but are not limited to:

- Ecomarxist and eco-feminist approaches to necropolitics
- Apocalypticism read through human-centered or natural histories
- How the Necrocene interacts with the Capitalocene
- Black critical studies approaches to violence, the body, life, nature, and exclusion
- Sci-fi, cli-fi, speculative fiction, and afro/Indigenous/queer/cyber/ecological futurisms that negotiate or neutralize repressive necropolitical regimes
- Necroecologies in literature, poetry, visual art, and film
- Animal/plant/object studies approaches to necropolitics
- Indigenous environmentalisms and knowledge practices (restoration/erasure)

Submissions: Please send an abstract of approximately 500 words and a short bio to Nicole Grimaldi (nicole.grimaldi@nyu.edu) Experimental and collaborative pieces are welcome. Full articles will be due on 15 December 2023, following the journal's submission guidelines: <https://coilsoftheserpent.org/submissions/>.

General Issue of *I19: The Incredible Nineteenth Century: Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Fairy Tale*

Deadline for Submission: 1 October 2023

Full CFP: <https://call-for-papers.sas.upenn.edu/cfp/2022/07/16/the-incredible-nineteenth-century-science-fiction-fantasy-and-fairy-tale>

This new journal seeks to publish the best scholarship on the century that was, in many ways, the time period in which the modern genres of science fiction and fantasy began, and in which the academic study of fairy tale and folklore has its roots. *I19* interprets ‘the nineteenth century’ broadly, using the dates of ‘The Long Nineteenth Century’ – roughly, from the beginning of the French Revolution to the end of World War I. Scholarship on works from the eighteenth century that anticipated or influenced writers in the nineteenth century or ways in which nineteenth-century literature influenced later authors both fall within the interests of this journal. *I19* also publishes scholarship on neo-Victorianism, Steam Punk, or any other contemporary genres that react to the time periods contained within The Long Nineteenth Century. Additionally, *I19* is dedicated to maintaining a scope that is both multicultural and global, and encourages submissions on works from marginalized communities and from around the world.

Submissions: submissions should be emailed to i19@mtsu.edu and are accepted on a rolling basis. Submissions should be between 5,000-10,000 words (not including Works Cited), or, in the case of pedagogical reflective pieces, between 2,000-5,000 words, documented according to MLA guidelines.

CFPs: Upcoming Symposia & Conferences

22-23 November 2023

Occultism and Popular Culture in Europe

University of Copenhagen, Copenhagen, Denmark & online

Deadline for Abstracts: 31 August 2023

Full CFP: <https://victorianist.wordpress.com/2023/02/24/call-for-papers-occultism-and-popular-culture-in-europe/>

There has been a long cultural fascination with the macabre, horrific, and downright creepy across European society. From the early popular novels of

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writers such as Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818), and the incredible visual spectacles of fairground phantasmagoria, to the growth of professional mediumship from the mid 1800s onward, and the telepathic radio experiments of the early twentieth century, Europeans have been entranced by all things spooky and ghoulish. The nineteenth century in particular was a tumultuous age of transformation, where conceptions of reality unravelled before people's eyes. Stories about exposure and fraud were rife within this context. These issues continue to remain important in our modern age when media sensationalism is so endemic. To a certain extent, a study of popular occulture in Europe and the ways in which practitioners and challengers manipulated new media technologies to present carefully crafted stories to broad publics, links to our own contemporary discussions in the twenty-first century about media deception and fake news. A study of the rise of popular occulture in Europe, therefore, provides important historical lessons for understanding the continued surgency of media misperception that is rampant today. The conference aims to explore the many ways that horror, gothic and occultic topics have been communicated, presented, and packaged for broad audiences from the late eighteenth century to today. We are especially interested in the ways different kinds of media technology, ranging from print and woodcut illustrations to photography and film have shaped conceptions of horror, gothic and the occult. Suggested topics may include:

- Print culture, publishing, and gothic, horror and the occult
- Science, perception, and extraordinary belief
- Magic, illusion and deception
- Technologies/objects used in practice, investigation, or in literary/artistic representations of the gothic, horror and the occult
- Digital studies of gothic, horror, and occultic topics
- Gothic, horror and the occult in the media

Submissions: Please send a 200-word abstract and short biographical statement as a single document to Efram Sera-Shriar (ess@hum.ku.dk). We will also accept panel proposals for up to four speakers and are interested in receiving submissions for roundtable discussions, ten-minute flash talks based around an image, film or object, or interview-style conversations between scholars.

23 to 24 February 2024

Historical Fictions Research Network Conference 2024

University of Malmö, Sweden

Proposals due: 1 September 2023

Full CFP: <https://call-for-papers.sas.upenn.edu/cfp/2023/04/11/historical-fictions-research-network-conference-2024>

For the 2024 conference, the Historical Fictions Research Network (see <https://historicalfictionsresearch.org/>) seeks to engage in scholarly discussions on the topic of adaptation in historical fictions. What happens when well-known historical narratives are adapted for present-day audiences, or are transformed into another genre or medium? Historical fictions induce questions about mediated heritage and collective memories and problematize processes of canonization and appropriations in local as well and global contexts (Cartmell, Hunter and Whelehan 2000). The term ‘classics’ brings up discussions on claims about originals and copies, challenged by the idea of every mediation as one of a kind (Hutcheon 2012). A central issue is how the afterlives and appropriations of historical canon and established narratives in history-writing are transformed into new generations of historical fictions. The combination of adaptation and historical fictions sheds light on epistemological and cultural aspects on form and content, aesthetics and embodiment, values and ethics, authenticity and credibility, traditions and re-thinking and a variety of uses of the past in fiction. The perspectives of adaptation furthermore explore historical fiction as transformative contents in transmedial storytelling, and invitations to users to interact in transcultural encounters such as fan culture in gaming and social media. Papers are invited on topics related, but not limited, to:

- Heritage, adaptation and historical fiction
- Historical fiction and cultural legacy
- Intermedial storyworlds and historical fiction
- Adapting non-fiction to fiction
- Renewals and traditions in historical fiction
- Popular and ‘classic’ adaptations
- Adaptations between genres
- Franchises, adaptation and historical fictions

Submissions: Please use the website form to register a 250-word proposals: <https://historicalfictionsresearch.org/hfrn-conference-2024/>.

NOTE: Although the deadlines for abstracts for the following symposia and/or conferences/conference sessions have already passed, they may be of interest to scholars working on the neo-Victorian in relation to the specified topics.

24-25 May 2023

Victorian Transformations

Leeds Trinity, Leeds, UK & online

Website:

<https://www.leedstrinity.ac.uk/research/research-centres/lcvs/victorian-transformations/>

The Victorian age was characterised by social, technological, scientific, religious, and cultural transformation. As we have lived with the Victorians, our view of them has in turn transformed, with the concept of ‘transformation’ itself proving mutable. Taking a thoroughly interdisciplinary approach, the conference seeks to explore both the changes taking place in society and personal consciousness during the long nineteenth century, and the changing constructions and interpretations of the Victorian age. Organized as a collaboration between the Leeds Centre for Victorian Studies (LCVS) and the Charlotte M. Yonge Fellowship (CMYF), the conference coincides with the bicentenary of the novelist Charlotte M. Yonge (1823–1901). It is intended that she will feature prominently in the discussions, as a writer whose exceptionally long literary career captured the many changes of the period, and whose reception history has been so suggestively varied. This two-day conference will explore how and why readings of her work have changed, and how a revisionary approach might transform our view of ‘the Victorian’.

22-24 June 2023

**Colonising and Decolonising the Irish Nineteenth Century
Radboud University, Nijmegen, The Netherlands**

Website:

<https://www.ru.nl/en/about-us/events/colonising-and-decolonising-the-irish-nineteenth-century-ssnci-conference-2023>

In recent years, the legacies of (Western) colonialism have received increased – and necessary – scrutiny in both the academic and public spheres. This has led to initiatives such as Rhodes Must Fall, which quickly became a global phenomenon, and efforts to decolonise academic curricula and scholarship. It also sparked renewed attention to issues concerning problematic heritage, such as the statue of John Mitchel in Newry, and the presence of colonial art and artefacts in Western museum collections. While the question of whether or not Ireland was a colony has occupied scholars for several decades, in recent years Irish Studies has also started to become more self-reflective with regard to the complicated question of Irish complicity in colonial and racist systems and the ongoing ramifications of this in education and research. This conference seeks to consider Ireland's and the Irish diaspora's position in relation to colonisation and imperialism during the long nineteenth century, as well as the reverberations and reconsiderations of this past in recent and ongoing scholarship and education.

7-8 July 2023

**Cultures of Skin: Skin in Literature and Culture, Past, Present, Future
University of Surrey, Guildford, UK & Online**

Website: <https://culturalskinstudies.com/257-2/>

This conference brings together scholars working on literary and cultural representations of skin, across historical periods and transnational contexts, to create new dialogues on the cultural meanings of skin from the past through to the present day, and consider the current and future state of the field(s) of skin studies. In recent years there has been renewed interest in examining the cultural representations of skin within a variety of cultural texts and media. Scholars have worked across historical and contemporary time periods, engaging with key concepts around identity and embodiment, agency and performativity, temporality and spatiality, and in relation to discourses of race, class, gender, and sexuality, health and illness. Literary and cultural scholarship has been instrumental in advancing theoretical and

methodological approaches to the skin as historically variable and culturally constituted, building up a rich picture of ‘cultures of skin’ from the past to the present day. This represents an exciting moment to consider the state of skin studies now, and to anticipate future directions for the field.

12-14 July 2023**Hidden Histories / Recovered Stories****Victorian Popular Fiction Association (VPFA) Annual Conference****Bishop Grosseteste University, Lincoln, UK****Website:** <http://victorianpopularfiction.org/vpfa-annual-conference/>

This conference celebrates the ways in which Victorian popular culture, fictions and artistic productions addressed topics and subjects, and experimented with stories and genres, that went unacknowledged, were repressed or censored by the mainstream. The conference seeks to re-centre the popular, from gruesome murder stories to sensational tales of sexual violence and adultery, discussions of pseudo-sciences like spiritualism, to addressing miscegenation, and Victorian historical fiction that reimagines the lives of marginalised figures. It will also highlight the ways in which current scholarship is rediscovering hidden aspects, characters and narratives of the Victorian period and will explore the relevance of forbidden or unspeakable themes in neo-Victorianism. Silenced by Victorian mainstream culture but obliquely voiced in such popular genres as the sensation novel, the penny dreadful and the bodice-ripper, these themes have taken centre stage in today’s fictionalisation of a past that tends to be reimagined in all its deviant, arousing and disquieting aspects. (Note: Membership of the VPFA is necessary to attend the conference.)

30 July - 3 August 2023**17th International Connotations Symposium: “And this gives life to thee” - Textual Reasons for Canonicity****Kurhaus Trifels, Annweiler, Germany****Website:** <https://www.connotations.de/conference/textual-reasons-for-canonicity/>

Recent debates on canonicity have focused on how canons are a product of social and historical conditions as well as of reception. Texts become canonical when they are felt to embody the spirit of an age or to voice concerns considered universal at a particular moment. But what about the

texts themselves? Can any text become canonical in any way? Or are there any specific textual reasons for such an elevated status? This latter question is what our symposium wishes to address. Papers will address the textual strategies of self-authorization promoting canonicity; the choice or recycled as opposed to innovative subject matter; the formal, rhetorical, and aesthetic features of a work that make it meaningful beyond its own time and place; and wider theoretical perspectives on canonicity, including questions of methodology.

21-22 September 2023**From Queen Anne to Queen Victorian 8: Body|Mind|Spirituality****Warsaw, Poland****Website:**<https://qaqv.ia.uw.edu.pl/wp-content/uploads/sites/176/2022/11/QAQV8-CfP.pdf>

The conference focuses on the perceptions of and relationships between body, mind and spirituality in 18th- and 19th-century British literature and culture and their contemporary rewritings. Papers will consider diverse forms of cultural expression, including literature, poetry, theatre, the arts, film, fashion, and performativity, as well as a range of social, geographical and historical contexts. Topics covered will include heart vs. reason, or sense and sensibility; brilliant and/or critical minds; remembering and commemorating senses and sensual/sensory experience; visibility and visionary experience; medicine and psychology; diseased and disabled bodies death and dead bodies; and body aesthetics.

21-22 September 2023**Afterlives of Empire in the Public Imagination****Sapienza University of Rome, Rome, Italy****Website:** <https://www.afterlivesofempire.com>

The resurgence of nationalist ideologies in Europe and the US has reignited interest in the histories and legacies of modern Empires. This conference will center on the memory of new imperialism (1870-1914) and its immediate aftermath, focusing on key moments from the postwar years to the present moment. It will start from the premise that ‘Empire’ was a cultural, institutional, and political entity that wove together colonialism, propaganda, predatory capitalism, militarism, missionary nationalism, biological racism,

martial masculinity, and a heavily ideologized production of knowledge. On this assumption, the conference will investigate uses and reinventions of imperialist figures, myths, and ideas, focusing on fiction, memoirs, poetry, graphic narratives, popular history, TV series, films, and video games, as well as on the cross-fertilization of post-imperial discourses.

18-20 October 2023

**Women Staging and Restaging the Nineteenth Century II
University of Valencia, Valencia, Spain**

Full CFP: <https://esdeveniments.uv.es/95242/detail/women-staging-and-re-staging-the-nineteenth-century-ii.html?private=7b4431cf049f70df50e7>

This conference will consider how women's theatrical activity is reflected throughout the nineteenth century in various traditions and cultures and, in terms of its projection towards the present day, reflect on the incorporation of transnational and/or transatlantic perspectives. In addition, the conference will explore how the plastic arts and other cultural industries, such as cinema, influence nineteenth-century female theatrical practice and neo-Victorian stagings respectively. Another major axis of the discussion will be focused on classical receptions of female cultural production related to the performing arts throughout the nineteenth century, as well as the forms of such reception today through, for example, the recovery of productions or texts. Topics will include classical receptions and women actresses, playwrights and managers in the nineteenth century and its afterlives, neo-Victorian re-stagings of the nineteenth century by women, contemporary women playwrights and artistic directors looking at the nineteenth century, and fictional recreations of (neo-)Victorian actresses, playwrights, managers, and producers in novels, in film and on the stage, and rewritings of nineteenth-century spectacle in (neo-)Victorian and contemporary fiction and drama by women writers and playwrights.

9-11 November 2023

**NAVSA: Revision, Return, Reform
Bloomington, Indiana, USA**

Website: <https://navsa.org>

The field of Victorian Studies has been under revision in recent years, with calls to attend to the present, to adopt new methods of reading, to undiscipline the Victorians, and to reform our classrooms, our research, and our

institutional practices in the interests of greater diversity, equity, and justice. This conference will reflect on these recent developments and consider aspects of revision, return, and reform within the Victorian period. Topics will include, among others: cultures of reform; forming and reforming disciplines during the Victorian period; reforming the canon; return as repetition, regression, or progress; returning colonial and settler possessions; returns to ‘Victorianism’ and ‘Victorian morality’ in contemporary politics; C20/C21 revisions of Victorian texts; and neo-Victorianism.

16-17 November 2023

The Invention of Traditions in the United Kingdom and the British Empire, 1840-1940

University of Haute-Alsace, France (Mulhouse campus)

Full CFP: <https://call-for-papers.sas.upenn.edu/cfp/2023/02/01/the-invention-of-traditions-in-the-united-kingdom-and-the-british-empire-1840-1940>

The year 2023 marks the fortieth anniversary of the publication of *The Invention of Tradition*, edited by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger. Since this publication, the invention of tradition has become a key concept in cultural studies. For Hobsbawm, tradition, even if invented, includes and exceeds custom: “‘Invented tradition’ is taken to mean a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual of symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity of the past”. Moreover, invented tradition differs from true tradition in that the continuity with the past is artificial, creating a form of ritualization by imposing repetitive forms and practices, supposedly inherited from the past. Organized jointly by the Centre de Recherches et d’Etudes en Civilisation Britannique (CRECIB) and the Société Française d’Etudes Victoriennes et Edouardiennes (SFEVE), this conference, invites us to explore invented traditions from the 1840s to the 1940s and analyze the reactivation of certain traditions at key moments in history.

15-18 February 2024

Victorian Darknesses

University of Vechta, Vechta, Germany

Full CFP: <https://victorianist.wordpress.com/2023/01/23/cfp-victorian-darknesses/>

“There are darknesses in life, and there are lights” declares Van Helsing in Bram Stoker’s *Dracula* (1890). This quote suggests a plurality of darknesses that goes beyond the literal interpretation of darkness as the mere absence of physical light and includes its metaphorical usages, for instance, in a psychological, ontological, religious, social and economic sense. Being in the dark as an idiom refers to a lack of knowledge and hints at well-kept secrets that eventually come to light. Concealment and obscurity often drive the plot of sensation novels or Gothic fiction, where the story usually plays out at night time or liminal times in haunted houses, decaying castles or other dark places, featuring monstrous and supernatural characters. The belief in ghosts and otherworldly communication are at the centre of Victorian Spiritualism and Occultism, giving darkness a (pseudo-)religious dimension also. Referring to religious, moral, and socio-economic darkness, William Booth described the Victorian slum in *In Darkest England and the Way Out* (1890) as a “dark and dismal jungle of pauperism, vice and despair”, where prostitutes and other dubious characters plied their dreadful trade in narrow alleys that all too frequently became the scene for darker deeds, and later places of interest in dark tourism. This conference aims to explore the theme of darkness in Victorian literature and culture in its various guise through topics including, among others, physical darkness; ontological darkness; dark emotions; representations of melancholy, madness and insanity; lack of knowledge (secrets, concealment, obscurity); Victorian Spiritualism and Occultism; dark deeds; and urbanisation (slums and poverty).

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**Recent, Current & Forthcoming Projects, Events & Exhibitions
of Possible Interest to Neo-Victorianists**

Curious Creatures: Victorian Attitudes to Animals

(Past) Dates: 22 January 2022 – 31 December 2022

Abbey House Museum, Leeds, UK

Website: <https://museumsandgalleries.leeds.gov.uk/events/abbey-house-museum/curious-creatures-victorian-attitudes-to-animals>

Aubrey Beardsley, 150 Years Young: from the Mark Samuels Lasner Collection

(Past) Dates: 8 September – 12 November 2022

Grolier Club, New York, USA

Exhibition Publication: *Aubrey Beardsley, 150 Years Young* by Margaret Stetz (Grolier Club, 2023)

Violent Victorian Medievalism

(Past) Dates: 21 November 2022 – 2 December 2022

Taylor Institution Library, The Bodleian, Oxford, UK

Website: <https://violentmedievalism.web.ox.ac.uk>

The Colour of Anxiety: Race, Sexuality and Disorder in Victorian Sculpture

(Past) Dates: 25 November 2022 – 26 February 2023

Henry Moore Institute, Leeds, UK

Website: <https://henry-moore.org/whats-on/the-colour-of-anxiety-race-sexuality-and-disorder-in-victorian-sculpture/>

Femme Fatale: Gaze – Power – Gender

(Past) Dates: 9 December 2022 – 10 April 2023

Kunsthalle, Hamburg, Germany

Website: <https://www.hamburger-kunsthalle.de/en/exhibitions/femme-fatale>

Klimt. Inspired by Van Gogh, Rodin, Matisse...

Dates: 3 February – 29 May 2023

Belvedere, Vienna, Austria

Website: <https://www.belvedere.at/en/klimt-inspired-van-gogh-rodin-matisse>**Evelyn de Morgan: The Gold Drawings**

Dates: 11 March – 27 August 2023

Tavalozza Drawings Gallery, Leighton House Gallery, London, UK

Website: <https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/museums/2023-exhibition-programme>**Berthe Morisot: Shaping Impressionism**

Dates: 31 March – 10 September 2023

Dulwich Picture Gallery, London, UK

Website: <https://www.dulwichpicturegallery.org.uk/whats-on/exhibitions/2023/april/berthe-morisot/>**The Rossettis**

Dates: 6 April – 24 September 2023

Tate Britain, London, UK

Website: <https://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-britain/the-rossettis>**Sarah Bernhardt: And the woman created the star**

Dates: 14 April – 27 August 2023

Petit Palais, Paris, France

Website: <https://www.petitpalais.paris.fr/en/expositions/sarah-bernhardt>**National Trust Australian Heritage Festival in Victoria**

Dates: 18 April – 18 May 2023

Victoria, Australia

Full Programme: <https://www.flipsnack.com/nationaltrust/2023-heritage-festival-program-victoria/full-view.html>

Van Gogh and the Avant-Garde: The Modern Landscape

Dates: 14 May – 4 September

Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois, USA

Website: <https://www.artic.edu/exhibitions/9639/van-gogh-and-the-avant-garde-the-modern-landscape>**The Surrey Steampunk Convivial – Spring**

Dates: 27-28 May 2023

Epsom, Surrey, UK

Website: <https://bumpandthumper.wixsite.com/steampunkconvivals>**International Steampunk Symposium**

Dates: 16-18 June 2023

Cincinnati, Ohio, USA

Website: <https://steampunksymposium.com>**Diva**

Dates: 24 June 2023 – 7 April 2024

V&A, South Kensington, London, UK

Website: <https://www.vam.ac.uk/exhibitions/diva>**The Whitby Steampunk Weekend XIV**

Dates: 21-23 July 2023

Whitby, North Yorkshire, UK

Website: <https://www.whitbypavilion.co.uk/whitby-steampunk-weekend-xiv>**Beatrix Potter and ‘Aesop in the Shadows’ (Display)**

Dates: closes 13 August 2023

V&A South Kensington, London, UK

Website: <https://www.vam.ac.uk/event/P6aV9j7B7k/beatrix-potter-and-aesop-in-the-shadows-2022-23>**Asylum Steampunk Festival**

Dates: 25-26 August 2023

Lincoln, UK

Website: <https://www.ministryofsteampunk.com/weekend-at-the-asylum-lincoln>

The Artistic Home: British art pottery from the Ian and Rita Smythe Collection (Display)

Dates: closes 25 September 2023

V&A South Kensington, London, UK

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**Recent and Forthcoming Critical Publications
on Neo-Victorianism or of Neo-Victorian Interest**

Danielle Dove, *Victorian Dress in Contemporary Historical Fiction: Materiality, Agency and Narrative* (Bloomsbury, forthcoming October 2023): This monograph explores the symbolic deployment of nineteenth-century female dress in neo-Victorian fiction from 1990 to 2014, juxtaposed with discourses about Victorian fashion in nineteenth-century magazines and illustrative materials. Highlighting the creative power and self-transformations enabled through dress as a means of female agency and intervention into sartorial and wider culture, Dove demonstrates the crucial role of nineteenth-century fashion (e.g. in terms of textiles, gloves, veils and jewellery) in ‘re-materialising’ the past for present consumption.

Felipe Espinoza Garrido, Marlene Tronicke, and Julian Wacker (eds.), *Black Neo-Victoriana* (Brill|Rodopi, 2021): This collection of essays (reviewed in this issue) focuses on scholarship involving the encounter between Blackness and neo-Victorian fiction, film, and culture. Themes covered range from dandyism to steamfunk, with contributors questioning neo-Victorianism’s dominant discourses to advance an argument that the field of neo-Victorian studies needs to be extended by thinking through Black epistemologies.

Laura Kasson Fiss, *The Idler’s Club: Humour and Mass Readership from Jerome K. Jerome to P.G. Wodehouse* (Edinburgh University Press, 2023): This monograph analyses the fin-de-siecle trend of joking about Victorian social clubs in popular magazines as a means of asserting social mobility and critiquing class-based exclusion. Focusing on popular iconic writers like Wodehouse and Arthur Conan Doyle, but

also authors who have not yet received extended critical attention, such as G. K. Chesterton and Israel Zangwill, Fiss's study reads the use of late-Victorian and early twentieth-century humour directed at Clubland as a means of engaging with wider sociocultural issues of belonging, citizenship, and equal participation in a rapidly changing public realm.

Sara Lyons, *Assessing Intelligence: The Bildungsroman and the Politics of Human Potential in England, 1860-1910* (Edinburgh University Press, 2022): This monograph investigates the emergence and development of nineteenth-century ideas about human intelligence through the works of George Eliot, Thomas Hardy, Henry James, H.G. Wells and Virginia Woolf. Specifically, Lyons explores how the Bildungsroman genre drew on psychology as well as evolutionary science, covering concepts ranging from Eliot's 'moral intelligence' to Woolf's 'hereditary genius' to highlight tensions between the writers' class and race-based biopolitics and a growing meritocratic endorsement of the ideal of an equality of minds.

Sarah E. Maier, Brenda Ayres, and Danielle Mariann Dove (eds.), *Neo-Victorian Things: Reimagining Nineteenth-Century Material Cultures in Literature and Film* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2022): This edited collection explores the replication, reconstruction and re-presentation of Victorian things. Covering film, television and literature, *Neo-Victorian Things* examines various iterations of material culture in the reimagined nineteenth century. Interrogating opium paraphernalia, clothing items, slave ships and biographical objects, among others, this volume asks how such objects aid in reconstructing the past and how they shape our present understanding of things.

Aina Martí-Balcells, *Domestic Architecture, Literature and the Sexual Imaginary in Europe, 1850-1930* (Edinburgh University Press, 2022): This monograph explores how nineteenth-century architectural innovations and their representations in literature reflected and impacted on changes in European sexual culture, in particular in France, England, Germany and Austria. Drawing on hitherto unpublished architectural archives in several languages, Martí-Balcells interlinks the history of sexuality, fiction, and Architectural Humanities to better understand domestic spaces' enabling and constraints of emergent sexual practices, covering topics such as glass and

new forms of transparency, new forms of accessibility and circulation, and exhibitionist trends.

Juan-Jose Martin-Gonzalez, *Transoceanic Perspectives in Amitav Ghosh's Ibis Trilogy* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2021): Focusing on Ghosh's postcolonial neo-Victorian trilogy, Martin-Gonzalez demonstrates that the transoceanic dimension of the Victorian age is an apt way to view proto-globalisation. According to the author, migrating characters engaging in oceanic crossings represent dispossessed collectives who make sense of their identities via Victorian 'waterworlds'. Sea crossings and fluid boundaries are the devices through which the book suggests postcolonial critique can best explore capitalist globalisation – a glaring legacy of nineteenth-century imperialism.

Aleksandra Tryniecka, *Women's Literary Portraits in the Victorian and Neo-Victorian Novel: An Intertextual Study* (Lexington Books/Rowman & Littlefield, 2023): Juxtaposing Victorian and neo-Victorian novels, this study analyses literary portrayals of femininity to explore how fiction helps shape and sometimes revolutionise past and present gender constructions. In doing so, Tryniecka also highlights recurrent ambivalences, stemming from nostalgia, intertextuality or fetishisations of Victorian fashion, e.g., apparent in present-day recyclings and reimaginings of Victorian women's identities and voices.

Muren Zhang, *Neo-Victorianism, Empathy and Reading* (Bloomsbury, 2022): This monograph explores the diverse empathic reading experiences afforded by neo-Victorian fiction and the often disruptive and unsettling affects such texts deliberately aim to produce. Drawing on recent studies of time, affect and ethics in narrative, Zhang discusses a range of novels by Margaret Atwood, Julian Barnes, Jane Harris, and Sarah Waters, among others, to interrogate various kinds of empathetic reader investments in neo-Victorian fiction and the latter's political and ideological implications. The study covers a range of themes, ranging from shame and disgust to voyeurism spatial politics, and reparation, in relation to empathic neo-Victorian reading.

Recent and Forthcoming Neo-Victorian Fiction, Poetry, Drama, etc.

Leila Aboulela, *River Spirit* (Grove Atlantic, 2023): Set in nineteenth-century Sudan during the run-up to the country's British colonial conquest and the Mahdist War, the novel traces Akuany's coming of age and her people's struggle for freedom from both Ottoman and Western imperial rule.

Tessa Arlen, *The Dress of Violet Taffeta* (Berkley, 2022): biofiction of Lucy Christiana, later Lady Duff-Gordon who, finding herself nearly destitute after the end of her first marriage, turns to creating clothes, allying herself with a Northumberland orphan Celia Franklin to set up and help run her new business, eventually becoming one of Britain's leading belle époque fashion designers.

Kelley Armstrong, *A Rip Through Time* (Minotaur Books, 2022): In 2019 in an Edinburgh alleyway, Police Detective Mallory Atkinson experiences brief visions of a female wearing period attire and pleading for assistance just before she herself is attacked and left for dead, before awakening in the body of Catriona Mitchell, an Edinburgh maidservant in 1859.

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, *The Last Queen: A Novel of Courage and Resistance* (William Morrow Paperbacks, 2022): Set amidst the first Anglo-Sikh war, *The Last Queen* is a novel of a chance encounter flowering into a regal romance. The novel about challenge, resistance and choices guided by love begins in 1826 and traces the protagonist Jindan's journey from peasant to queen, her rebellion against the British, and onto a life in exile.

Lisa Boyle, *Dear Inmate* (Lisa Boyle, 2022): The second book in The Paddy Series, set in Lowell, Massachusetts, Boyle's novel focuses on the lives and treatment of Irish immigrants in 1854, as well as dealing with the aftereffects of the Irish famine, British occupation and anti-Catholic laws.

Miguel Bonnefoy, *Heritage*, trans. by Emily Boyce (Other Press, 2022): This French novel chronicles the fictional lives of four generations of interconnected families, whose patriarchs immigrate to Chile from Europe,

opening with Monsieur Lonsonier's arrival in the country in 1873 with just one grapevine and little funds in 1873.

Alice Brière-Haquet (trans. Emma Ramadan), *Phalaina* (Levine Querido, 2022): In 1880s London, death haunts the footsteps of the orphaned speechless Manon, a new form of humanity with healing and telepathic powers. Soon she is hunted by a nefarious scientist intent of making his fame and fortune from her, as she tries to untangle the mysteries of her own and humanity's evolution. Chapters are interspersed with scientific letters of a professor's (fictional) correspondence with Darwin.

David Cairns, *The Case of the Emigrant Niece* (Finavon, 2022): After having fought in the Indian Mutiny, the Scotsman Findo Gask journeys to Australia at the time of the goldrush, where he encounters a pretty heiress whose inheritance has been stolen. Investigating the theft with the help of the idiosyncratic Erroll Rait, Gask's detecting endeavours uncover a string of murders as the men travel to London, Edinburgh, the Scottish Highlands and back to Melbourne once more.

Thomas D. Clagett, *Blood West* (Five Star Publishing, 2022): This gothic remix, set in small-town Las Vegas in 1885, mashes up vampires and the Old West. The action takes place in the Montezuma Hotel, accommodation to the rich and members of the Lunger Club. After several locals meet violent deaths, the Pinkerton agent Hattie Lawton and Deputy Sherriff Antonio Valdes struggle to get to the bottom of the murders.

Johanne Craven, *Playing the Ghost* (Artyficial Dreams, 2022): In the 1850s in the Australian town of Castlemaine, people from all over the world try their luck in the Goldfields, but death is never far away and ghosts stalk the countryside, including both ancient souls and more modern ones. Tom and Lucy Earnshaw, a struggling English couple, have to deal with personal tragedy while struggling for survival.

Jane Davis, *Small Eden* (Rosedale Print Productions, 2022): A decade after losing two young sons to scarlet fever, Robert Cook plans to create a pleasure garden in their memory. When he finds himself drawn to a disabled female artist, who wins the design contest, his project further threatens to

undermine his marriage and relationship with his daughters, while his widowed mother Hattie pursues her own dreams on a walking tour of the Scottish Highlands.

Lianne Dilsworth, *Theater of Marvels* (Harper Hutchinson Heinemann, 2022): Zillah is not African nor is she dark-skinned, but she dons black makeup in order to portray Amazonia on the nineteenth-century stage – a character intended to represent savagery. After discovering an enslaved woman, Zillah promises to save her from further exploitation, leading her on a journey of self-discovery and self-reflection.

Kali Fajardo-Anstine, *Woman of Light* (Little, Brown, 2022): in 1930s Denver, Luz ‘Little Light’ Lopez, laundress and tea leaf reader, begins to have visions of her Indigenous ancestors from the Lost Territory, recovering the multigenerational saga of family’s and people’s struggle and survival against colonial settlement and modern-day racism.

Michael Freed-Thall, *Horodno Burning* (Rootstock Publishing, 2021): Set in Horodno (present-day Grodno in Belarus), this biofiction spans the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, following the lives of Estes and Bernard, the author’s grandparents, who confront life in the Pale of Settlement and Russian persecution against the Jewish people.

Kaitlyn Greenidge, *Libertie* (Algonquin Books & Serpent’s Tail, 2021): This novel follows the eponymous protagonist’s struggle to follow in her mother’s footsteps, a trailblazing African American doctor modelled on the real-life Dr. Susan Smith McKinney-Steward. Encountering racism and colorism, even at a Black college where she studies ‘male’ science subjects, Libertie eventually forges her own path by marrying a Haitian and moving back to the island with him.

Elizabeth Hutchinson Bernard, *Sisters of Castle Leod* (Black Rose Writing, 2023): In the 1890s, the dutiful Sibell Lilian Mackenzie, while still in her teens, inherits Castle Leod, becoming Countess of Cromartie and occasioning envy from her younger, flamboyant sister Constance. This biofiction explores the resulting family conflicts, as Sibell, who believes she possesses a Phoenician spirit-guide and later becomes President of the

Spiritualist Society of Great Britain, struggles with the responsibilities and expectations imposed upon her by stepping into her father's shoes.

Robert Jones Jr., *The Prophets* (G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2021): On an antebellum Mississippi plantation, the enslaved Samuel and Isaiah's relationship functions as a refuge from the inhumanities of slavery – until a fellow slave begins preaching the white enslaver's gospel and turns the community against the protagonists' redefined 'sinful' love. Jones's novel injects a still unusual queer perspective into the neo-slavery narrative genre.

Barbara Kingsolver, *Demon Copperhead* (Faber & Faber, 2022): This powerful adaptation of *David Copperfield* (1849-50) transposes Dickens's classic to modern-day Appalachia, where the red-haired Damon Fields, nicknamed 'Demon', ekes out an existence in a trailer park with a drug-addicted single mother. Like Dickens, Kingsolver addresses issues of choice, economic inequality, and social justice.

R. F. Kuang, *Babel: Or the Necessity of Violence: An Arcane History of the Oxford Translators' Revolution* (HarperVoyager, 2022): This alternative history of the British Empire (reviewed in this issue), by the author of the acclaimed Poppy War trilogy, mixes dark academia with the fantasy of magical 'silver-working' by the Tower of Babel at Oxford University, housing the world-leading Royal Institute of Translation that aggressively promotes Britain's global hegemony. The story is conveyed primarily through the eyes of Robin Swift, a Cantonese orphan of mixed ethnic heritage, brought to England to be trained as a translator.

Lisa M. Lane, *Murder at Old St. Thomas's* (Grousable Books, 2022): In 1860s Southwark, London, the criminal investigators, DI Cuthbert Slaughter and his American Sergeant, Mark Honeycutt, seek to uncover a perpetrator responsible for grim goings-on at Old St. Thomas's Hospital.

Norman Lock, *Voices in the Dead House* (Bellevue Literary Press, 2022): The ninth instalment in 'The American Novels' series, sees the paths of two literary behemoths, Walt Whitman and Louisa May Alcott, collide as they tend the Civil War wounded in Washington City. This lyrical, imaginative novel addresses big American themes like Manifest Destiny and

exceptionalism and features a range of other literary characters, including Edgar Allan Poe and Emily Dickinson.

Bonnie MacBird, *What Child is This?: A Sherlock Holmes Christmas Adventure* (Collins Crime Club, 2022): The fifth of MacBird's Sherlock Holmes Adventure Series finds the famous detective and Dr Watson, assisted by the female irregular Heffie O'Malley, investigating a vicious kidnap attempt on a wealthy couple's infant and the disappearance of the scion to an aristocratic estate.

Eve McDonnell (illus. Ewa Beniak-Haremska), *The Chestnut Roaster* (Everything with Words, 2022): This children's book, set in 1888 Paris in the run-up to the Exposition Universelle, features the twelve-year-old Piaf, the titular chestnut seller, who has perfect recall of everything from the date of her birth. When a vicious child snatcher, Dr Le Chandelier, begins kidnapping Paris's gifted children, while an epidemic of forgetfulness makes the public believe that it is only 1887, Piaf teams up with her friend Luc to save the children and restore the city's memory.

George Mann, *The Albion Initiative: A Newbury & Hobbes Investigation* (Titan Books, 2022): In the tenth instalment of this steampunk alternative history series, the investigative team becomes embroiled in 'The Albion Initiative', a plot to replace the venomous Queen Victoria, whose life is being artificially extended, with her son Prince Edward, imprisoned in Bedlam.

Malia Márquez, *This Fierce Blood* (Acre Books, 2021): This multi-period debut novel covers three generations of women sharing the Norwegian Sylte family name, beginning with a late-nineteenth-century settler in New England. Mixing magic realism with Hispanic and Indigenous traditions, the narrative follows the women's aspirations, challenges, and tragedies, as well as their mysterious affinities with animals and nature, shifting between Vermont and Colorado.

Edward Marston, *The Railway Detective's Christmas Case* (Allison & Busby, 2022): In December 1864, Inspector Colbeck and Sergeant Leeming investigate a shooting of the organiser of a train excursion to the spa town of

Great Malvern, under pressure to solve the case in time for all involved to return home for Christmas.

Marguerite Poland, *A Sin of Omission* (Envelope Books, 2022): A mission educated Black South African, Stephen (Malusi) Mzamane, is sent to England in 1869 for further training at the Missionary College in Canterbury before being ordained as an Anglican priest. Returning to his homeland, he is forced to confront the ingrained prejudices of a colonial society upheld by the Church he serves and his own divided self.

Deanna Raybourn, *A Sinister Revenge* (Berkley, 2023): In this further Veronica Speedwell mystery, set in 1889, the lepidopterist investigator and the natural historian Stoker Templeton-Vane seek to discover who is sending Tiberius, Stoker's elder brother, death threats, apparently related to the latter's youthful exploits as a member of the Seven Sinners club at Cambridge and the discovery and loss of a dinosaur skeleton on the Jurassic coast.

Nat Reeve, *Nettleback* (Cipher Press, 2022): Told through fin-de-siècle letters and journal entries, this queer neo-Victorian romp explores the difficulties and joys of the non-binary 'Henry' escaping an arranged marriage to find their place in the world.

Alyson Richman, *The Thread Collectors* (Graydon House, 2022): The gifted Black musician, William, leaves his sweetheart behind to escape New Orleans and slavery on a perilous route to join the Union army during the Civil War.

Nina Shope, *Asylum* (Dzanc Books, 2022): This biofiction, set in the Salpêtrière hospital in Paris, chronicles the complex relationship between the neurologist Jean-Martin Charcot and his hysteric patient Augustine, between 1875 and 1893. Told via vignettes from Augustine's point of view as she, in turn, observes Charcot, this disturbing novel focuses on male attempts to control female bodies as well as Augustine's refusal to let the doctors and her 'condition' define her.

Nell Stevens, *Briefly, A Delicious Life* (Picador Scribner, 2022): This novel's main narrative is told by Blanca, a ghost who has haunted a Mallorcan

monastery for centuries. 1838 sees the monastery become the home to George Sand, the male pen name of writer Amantine Dupin, and composer Frederic Chopin, with Blanca struggling to make sense of the new arrivals and share their memories in the midst of Sand's struggles with identity and Chopin's failing health.

Louisa Treger, *Madwoman: Nellie Bly* (Bloomsbury, 2022): biofiction of Elizabeth Cochran Seaman aka the investigative journalist Nellie Bly, covering Nellie's formative years, wracked with loss and disruption, and covering her undercover exploits as a 'madwoman' as she attempts to expose the cruel treatment in 1880s New York asylums.

Rose Tremain, *Lily: A Tale of Revenge* (Chatto & Windus, 2021): Saved as an abandoned new-born from a wolf attack by a passing policeman, Lily Mortimer grows up with a Suffolk foster family and at the Coram's Foundling Hospital in London. Years later, she reencounters the officer while working as a London seamstress and soon struggles with a compulsion to confess a dark disturbing secret.

Recent, Current and Forthcoming
Neo-Victorian Films, TV Series, Games, etc.

1883, written by Taylor Sheridan, Ben Richardson & Christina Alexandra Voros & dir. by Taylor Sheridan (Paramount+, 2021): This Western miniseries, part of the Yellowstone franchise, stars among others, the country music star Tim McGraw and Faith Hill. The post- Civil War narrative follows the Dutton family's move from Tennessee to Texas from where they join a wagon train of German settlers to Oregon, before themselves settling in Montana to establish their Yellowstone Ranch.

1899, created by Jantje Friese and Baran bo Odar & dir. by Baran bo Odar (Netflix, 2022): From the creators of *Dark* (2017-2020), *1899* is a horror-mystery set aboard the steamship *Cerebus*, travelling from Europe to New York at the fin-de-siècle. This enigmatic drama centres on the

passengers and crew encountering a second, deserted sailing vessel, hitherto reported lost with all on board. Further investigation leads to a series of horrible deaths and growing terror among the living.

***The Amazing Mr Blunden*, written & dir. by Mike Gatiss (Sky & Now TV, 2021):** This adaptation of Antonia Barber's children's novel *Ghosts* (1969) and re-make of Lionel Jeffries' 1972 prior film adaptation, adopts a Black casting for the London teenage protagonists, who move with their mother to the country, when she takes on the role of caretaker of a ruined mansion. Via an encounter with children's ghosts from the nineteenth century, Lucy and Jamie become drawn into a time-slip mystery, called on to right past wrongs.

***Around the World in 80 Days*, written by Ashley Pharoah et al. & dir. by Steve Barron et al. (France Télévisions, ZDF & RAJ, 2022):** The latest adaptation of Jules Verne's iconic 1873 novel in a tv series format stars David Tennant as Phileas Fogg, accompanied on his travels by his manservant and a female journalist.

***The Confessions of Frannie Langton*, written by Sara Collins & dir. by Andrea Harkin (ITV, 2022):** The adaptation of the 2019 novel by Collins, features Karla-Simone Spence (*Blue Story* and *Wannabe*). Set between a plantation in Jamaica and early-nineteenth-century England the narrative follows the eponymous protagonist to London, after witnessing scientific experiments conducted on enslaved people, and her implication in murder. The series features queer romance and Frannie's struggle to piece together and convey her traumatic history.

***Dickinson*, Seasons 2 & 3 created by Alena Smith, written by Alena Smith et al. & dir. by Christopher Storer & Silas Howard et al. (Apple TV+, 2021):** The continuation of the biopic of Emily Dickinson (Hailee Steinfeld), depicts the protagonist's life and struggles against societal and gender constraints with idiosyncratic present-day sensibility.

***Eiffel*, written by Caroline Bongrand & dir. by Martin Bourboulon (Pathé Distribution, 2021):** This French-language biopic focuses on Gustave Eiffel (Romain Duris) and his plans to build the iconic Eiffel Tower for the

1889 World Fair in Paris. Depictions of the progress of his project are intertwined with Eiffel's (fictional) romance with his onetime childhood sweetheart, Adrienne Bourgès (Emma Mackey), now married to another man, with their prior relationship recounted through flashbacks.

***The Electrical Life of Louis Wain*, screenplay by Simon Stephenson & Will Sharpe & dir. by Will Sharpe (Studio Canal & Amazon Prime Video, 2021):** This comic biopic of the eccentric illustrator Louis Wain (Benedict Cumberbatch) follows his struggles to provide for his mother and five sisters following his father's death and his burgeoning relationship with Emily Richardson (Claire Foy), the governess, ten years older than himself, employed to educate his siblings. Not long after their marriage, Emily begins to suffer from breast cancer and Louis seeks comfort by adopting a cat, which becomes the inspiration for his greatest artistic success as a painter of anthropomorphised cats before family tragedy leads him into a downward spiral into mental illness.

***Emily*, written & dir. by Frances O'Connor (Warner Bros. Pictures, 2022):** This biopic of Emily Brontë focuses on her (fictional) relationship with a young curate, her training to be a teacher, her gradually failing health and the inspirations behind her writing of *Wuthering Heights* (1847) after her brother Branwell's death.

***The English*, written & dir. by Hugo Blick (BBC Two & Amazon Prime Video, 2022):** In this revisionist Western, set in 1890, the English Lady Cornelia Locke (Emily Blunt), newly arrived in the American West, teams up with the Pawnee ex-cavalry scout Eli Whipp (Chaske Spencer) to seek vengeance on the man Cornelia deems responsible for her son's death.

***The Essex Serpent*, written by Anna Symon et al. & dir. by Clio Barnard (Apple TV+, 2022):** Tom Hiddleston and Clare Danes – who need no introduction – star in this adaptation of Sarah Perry's 2016 novel of the same name. Science and religious beliefs clash and intertwine in this story of the hunt for a mythical serpentine creature in a coastal community.

***Gentleman Jack, Series Two*, written by Sally Wainwright & dir. by Edward Hall et al. (BBC One & HBO, 2022):** The second season of this

subversive, raucous and hilarious queer biodrama, set in Halifax, West Yorkshire, follows the story of Miss Anne Lister (Suranne Jones) and their attempts to make the most of the inheritance of their uncle's estate. Based on Lister's diary coded entries, viewers can expect fourth wall-breaking sincerity and an exploration of Lister's relationship with love interest Anne Walker (Sophie Rundle).

***The Gilded Age*, written by Julian Fellowes & dir. by Michael Engler & Sallu Richardson Whitfield** (HBO, 2022): Set in 1880s New York, this glossy period drama focuses on Marian Brook as she becomes involved in a societal spat with a family famed for railroad innovation. This is a Stateside story of old money vs. *nouveau riche* at the fin-de-siècle, featuring portrayals of economic disparity and racial discrimination.

***Great Expectations*, written by Steven Knight & dir. by Brady Hood & Samira Raddi** (BBC One & FX on Hulu, 2023): Olivia Colman, Fionn Whitehead and Ashley Thomas star in this latest TV series adaptation of Dickens's iconic novel.

***The Harder They Fall*, screenplay by Jeymes Samuel & Boaz Yakin & dir. by Jeymes Samuel** (Netflix, 2021): This Western, unusual on account of featuring mainly Black protagonists, follows the exploits of the various rival outlaw gangs, plotting vengeance against each other. The narrative draws loosely on real-life outlaws and lawmen from the American West.

***Miss Scarlet and the Duke*, Season 2 & 3, created by Rachael New, written by rachael New et al. & dir. by Steve Hughes et al.** (PBS & Alibi, 2022 & 2023): The intrepid titular female detective Eliza Scarlett (Kate Phillips) returns to investigate more London crimes, at times assisted, at other times obstructed by her old friend and sometime love interest Detective Inspector Willaim 'Duke' Wellington (Stuart Martin).

***Mr Malcolm's List*, screenplay by Suzanne Allain & dir. by Emma Holly Jones** (Universal Pictures, 2022): This adaptation of Allain's novel of the same name concerns the romantic revenge plotted by Julia Thistlewaite (Zawe Ashton) on the potential suitor Jeremy Malcolm (Sope Dirisu), after being rejected by him for failing to meet the elaborate criteria he requires in

his bride. Julia's machinations take an unexpected turn when the friend she enlists to help her exact vengeance develops an attraction to the intended victim.

***The North Water*, written and dir. by Andrew Haigh (BBC Two, July 2021):** A chilly and chilling adaptation of the visceral, brooding novel by Ian Maguire. The story follows a doctor (Jack O'Connell) with a shady past who takes a position on a nineteenth-century whaling ship. The taxing voyage begins to fray the crew's psyches, as well as their relationships with each other. This sees them forced to reckon with their pasts and confront the reality of the trip's doomed status. Colin Farrell also stars as the morally ambiguous and equally shady Henry Drax, as does Stephen Graham as Captain Arthur Brownlee. Expect arctic settings and a gripping survival narrative.

***The Pale Blue Eye*, screenplay & dir. by Scott Cooper, (Netflix, 2022):** This adaptation of Louis Baynard's 2003 novel of the same name focuses on the retired detective and widower Augustus Landor (Christian Bale), who has turned to alcohol to drown his sorrow at his daughter Mattie's disappearance two years before. In 1830, he reluctantly agrees to investigate a cadet's suspicious hanging at the West Point Military Academy, New York. As further gruesome killings follow, Landor is assisted by another cadet, Edgar Allan Poe (Harry Melling), in his investigations.

***Paris Police 1900*, created by Fabien Nury (Canal+, 2021):** Opening in 1899 Paris, this gritty French-language police drama has the junior police detective Antoine Jouin investigating the torso of a woman discovered in a suitcase in the Seine, while struggling with corruption in the police force and justice system. Covering a range of themes including feminism, antisemitism, state secrets, drug addiction and séances, the series repeatedly introduces real-life figures into the proceedings.

***Persuasion*, screenplay by Ronald Bass & Alice Victoria Winslow & dir. by Carrie Cracknell (Netflix, 2022):** This latest film adaptation of Jane Austen's classic text about rejected love and second chances takes a somewhat anachronistic approach to the source text, starring Dakota Johnson as Anne Elliot and Cosmo Jarvis as Captain Frederick Wentworth.

***Renfield*, story by Robert Kirkman, screenplay by Ryan Ridley & dir. by Chris McKay (Universal Pictures, 2023):** This comedy horror film sequel to Stoker's classic, set in the 1990s, finds the long-suffering English lawyer R.M. Renfield (Nicholas Hoult) growing tired of procuring victims for his abusive master, Count Dracula (Nicholas Cage) – in spite of the benefits of immortality and superhuman strength gained Renfield consumes insects. When the pair move to New Orleans, Renfield joins a self-help group for people in co-dependent relationships, while drawn into a drug war between rival crime gangs and a relationship with a female traffic cop.

***The Underground Railway*, created & dir. by Barry Jenkins (Amazon Prime Video, 2021):** This prize-winning tv miniseries, based on Colson Whitehead's 2016 magic realist novel of the same name, tells of those seeking to escape enslavement in the American South via the titular 'underground railway', an abolitionist network the novel and film transform into an actual subterranean railroad to freedom.

***The Vineyard*, screenplay by Susanna López Rubio & Javier Holgado, dir. by Guillem Morales, Alberto Ruiz Rojo and Patricia Font (Amazon Prime, 2021):** This romantic Spanish-language period series, an adaptation of María Dueñas's 2018 novel of the same name, follows the burgeoning relationship between the married Soledad Montalvo (Leonor Watling), scion of a prominent wine-making family in Jerez, with Mauro Larrea (Rafael Novoa), a gambler who wins a Spanish vineyard that once belonged to Soledad's family. The novel moves across a range of 1860s settings also taking in Cádiz, London, Cuba, and Mexico.

***The Wonder*, screenplay by Emma Donoghue, Sebastián Lelio & Alice Birch & dir. by Sebastián Lelio (Netflix, 2022):** This adaptation of Donoghue's 2016 novel of the same name, set in the aftermath of the Great Irish Famine, Elizabeth 'Lib' Wright (Florence Pugh), an English nurse accepts an assignment to observe a young Irish fasting girl in a rural community and, together with a nun, investigate the apparent miracle of her survival without food. During her attendance on the girl, Lib becomes involved with a journalist covering what he believes to be an elaborate hoax.