Call for Papers
Historical Fictions Research Network Online Conference
(17 to 19 February 2023, Zoom)

The Historical Fictions Research Network (see https://historicalfictionsresearch.org/) aims to create a place for the discussion of all aspects of the construction of the historical narrative. The focus of the conference is the way we construct history, the narratives and fictions people assemble and how. We welcome both academic and practitioner presentations.

The Network addresses a wide variety of disciplines, including Archaeology, Architecture, Literature, Art History, Cartography, Geography, History, Memory Studies, Musicology, Reception Studies, Linguistics, Cultural Studies, Museum Studies, Media Studies, Politics, Re-enactment, Larping, Gaming, Transformative Works, Gender, Race, Queer studies.

For the 2023 conference, HFRN seeks to engage in scholarly discussions on the significance and function of **Values** in historical fictions:

The 'noble dream of objectivity' had been pursued by professional historians since the nineteenth century, when Leopold von Ranke proposed writing history 'as it really was'. This ideal was also crucial to their profession standing (see Lambert 2003: 42), and though objectivity is now widely assumed to be unattainable, open partisanship is still a problematic stance for professional historians to adopt (see Jordanova 2006: ch 4; Beck 2012).

By contrast, popular and public historiographies in their various forms – historical novels, popular histories, historical film, historical pageants, monuments and museums – are often characterised by a particularly obvious moralising (see Jordanova 2006: ch 6), using the past to explain and justify the present. For instance, as readers will quickly notice, Victorian historical novels usually present men and women that embody the perfect Victorian gentlemen or lady, rather than being true to the gender ideals of the time they are set in. The Netflix-series *Bridgerton,* which breaks with the mostly all-white casts historical films and television series, attempts to create a utopian past in an attempt to attract viewers with the promise of diversity and equality. Recent historical romance novels have increasingly shown more assertive and independent heroines and caring, nurturing males.

Values of past and present times thus present an important feature in historical fictions, they are used to familiarise the past, to assert or question our own culture and society, they help later generations to explain and shape the future.

Topics covered in the HFRC 2023 may include but are not limited to:

- the function of values and morals in historical fictions
- historical fictions and gender roles past and present
- diversity and inclusivity in historical fictions
- historical fictions, outdated morality and a present-day audience
- objectivity and partisanship in popular historical forms
- the ideal of objectivity in professional historiography

- public historiography and ideals of the nation
- historical fictions and the ideal future
- the ideal of democracy and historical fictions
- ideological uses of the past in historical fictions

Our Keynote Speakers

Jennifer Thorp is the author of *Learwife* (Canongate 2021), which was a Waterstones Best Book of 2021 and was longlisted for the Walter Scott Prize for Historical Fiction and the Author's Club First Novel Prize. She was one of the Observer's Best Debut Novelists of 2021 and received a Markievicz Award to write her second novel. She is also a lyricist, with work commissioned by the Arts Council, the Wellcome Trust, St Paul's Cathedral, and others. She is an Australian living in Cork, Ireland.

Dr. Jenny Butler from the College of Arts, Celtic Studies and Social Sciences, University of Cork. Jenny Butler is an internationally established researcher in the area of new religious movements and the study of folk religion. Her recent monograph *21st Century Irish Paganism: Worldview, Ritual, Identity*, is forthcoming from Routledge.

Dr. Alison Keith, Professor at the Department of Classics, University of Toronto. Alison Keith completed her MA and PhD in Classical Studies at the University of Michigan. She has written extensively about the intersection of gender and genre in Latin literature, and is the author of books on Ovid (1992), Propertius (2008), Latin epic (2000, 2012), and most recently Virgil, in the Understanding Classics series of Bloomsbury Academic (2020). Current projects include monographs on Latin literature and Roman Epicureanism; Vergil the Philosopher; Sulpicia; and a commentary on the fourth book of Ovid's Metamorphoses for Cambridge University Press.

Registration details

Please fill in the form on our website to register a proposal:
https://historicalfictionsresearch.org/historical-fictions-research-conference-2023/

Paper proposals are due 7th September 2022 (extended deadline). They should consist of a title, and up to 250 words abstract. The decisions on acceptance will be communicated by 1st November 2022 at the latest.

All papers will be delivered live and we will schedule across time-zones. Each presentation will be of 20 minutes followed by an interaction session.

Conference fees will be £35 concessions (students, PhDs, low-waged, etc.) and £55 full price.

Contact

Visit our website (https://historicalfictionsresearch.org/) for more details and regular updates. You can also write to us on historicalfictionsresearch@gmail.com

Speakers are encouraged to submit their papers to our *Journal of Historical Fictions* (http://historicalfictionsjournal.org/about.html).