

Special Issue of *Victorians Institute Journal*: Reimagining the Victorians

The success of the recent movie, *The Personal History of David Copperfield* (2020), featuring a racially diverse cast, has renewed the discussion of how we, in the twenty-first century, have re-imagined the nineteenth century and its culture through our adaptation and remediation of Edwardian and Victorian texts and figures. Across media, for example, Sherlock Holmes may be found stalking the streets of London in both period costume and modern dress (sometimes with a newly invented younger sister), while the multi-talented Elizabeth Bennett can be re-discovered (a) demurely preparing for a ball, (b) quaffing wine and chain-smoking as Bridget Jones, (c) dancing wildly in a Bollywood production number, and even (d) fiercely battling zombies. Carson the butler silently patrols the halls of Downton Abbey exuding decorum, while Andrew Lloyd Webber brings all the sensationalism of *The Woman in White* to a melodically thrilling, faux-operatic musical, and the versatile Johnny Depp warbles as the Demon of Fleet Street in the horror-musical *Sweeney Todd* and cavorts as the Mad Hatter in the live-action/animated version of *Alice in Wonderland*. Royal biography becomes soap opera in *Victoria*, royally entertaining and addictive, if not always historically accurate, while in the latest adaptation of Frances Hodgson Burnett's *The Secret Garden*, we are not only transported into the boundlessness of a child's imagination but also into a grim post-WWII era. Ellen Ternan, Euphemia Gray, and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood have had their lives transformed into biopics (*The Silent Woman*, *Effie Gray*, *The Desperate Romantics*), while Jonathan Whicher, who was fictionalized by both Dickens and Wilkie Collins, was returned to reality and grounded in a popular biography, a biography that subsequently was adapted into a film that launched Whicher back into a series of fictional adventures, transforming him once again into the figure of super detective. The genre-bending list of sequels, prequels, and spinoffs is almost endless—*Mr. Rochester*, *Mr. Dick*, *Mr. Timothy*, *Death and Mr. Pickwick*, *Olivia Twist*, *Dodger*, *Drood*, *The Last Dickens*, *Penny Dreadful*, *Ripper Street*, *Becoming Jane Eyre*, *Alice I Have Been*, and so on. To make sense of these diverse adaptations, *Victorians Institute Journal* invites submissions for a special issue featuring essays examining our twenty-first century perspective of the long nineteenth century. Essays might focus on twenty-first century novels (original fiction as well as sequels, prequels, and adaptations of canonical works), films, musicals and stage productions, TV series, graphic novels, fan fiction, video games, and biographical fiction. Papers should be 5000-8000 words in length and follow the *Chicago Manual of Style*. Submissions (in Microsoft Word) and inquiries should be emailed to the editors (Maria K. Bachman and Don Richard Cox) at vij@mtsu.edu. Submissions must be received by March 1, 2021.