

"Representations of Bushfires and Wildfires in Nineteenth-Century Settler Literature"

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Lecture

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January 8, 2023

Subject Fields:

Australian and New Zealand History / Studies, British History / Studies, Colonial and Post-Colonial History / Studies, Environmental History / Studies, Literature

Anthony Trollope Down Under: Travel Writing, Bushfires, and Australian Ecology

"The three sessions will offer the chance to examine Victorian responses to the environment, with a particular emphasis on Australia. The first session will involve a presentation on my current research, which is on representations of bushfires and wildfires in nineteenth-century settler literature. The project is informed by the environmental humanities and emotions theory, and I'll talk about these approaches. As part of this session, I will introduce some of the work I've done on Anthony Trollope's travels (especially his representations of fire and environmental issues). We will also spend some time thinking about how Trollope positioned himself as a successor to Dickens, as both a novelist and travel writer.

The second and third sessions will discuss Trollope's wonderfully melodramatic Christmas story *Harry Heathcote of Gangoil* (1874). The novella is set in Australia and draws on Trollope's own experiences down under. It's a remarkable work for the depth of emotions it conveys and for capturing the uncanny and threatening qualities that settlers saw in the Australian bush. I have chosen *Harry Heathcote* because it presents an aspect of Trollope's writing that is often forgotten. It also raises several fascinating issues, including migration, race, and climate change, which will, I hope, lead to some lively discussions."

Grace Moore is an Associate Professor of English at the University of Otago, Aotearoa/New Zealand. She is the author of *Dickens and Empire* and *The Victorian Novel in Context*, and her edited works include (with Michelle Smith), *Victorian Environments*. Grace's most recent publication is a special issue of the journal *Occasion*, entitled [Fire Stories](#).

Virtual Sessions | [Registration](#)

- January 8 at 2 PM (PST): "Representations of Bushfires and Wildfires in Nineteenth-Century Settler Literature"
- February 12 at 2 PM (PST): Discussion: *Harry Heathcote of Gangoil*, Chapters I-VI
- March 12 at 2 PM (PDT): Discussion: *Harry Heathcote of Gangoil*, Chapters VII-XII

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Recommended Edition: [Project Gutenberg](#), or [Dodo Press](#) for those who prefer paper copies. It's a short work, and there isn't a standard scholarly edition so any edition will work.

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<https://dickens.ucsc.edu/programs/friends-faculty-fellows/anthony-trollope-down-under.html>