Interdisciplinarity in Nineteenth-Century Studies

CNCS Workshop
Tuesday 16 February 2016
St Chad’s College, Durham University
Welcome

Welcome to this one-day workshop on ‘Interdisciplinarity in Nineteenth-Century Studies’ in the splendid setting of St Chad’s College, Durham University. According to Joe Moran “‘interdisciplinarity’ provides a democratic, dynamic and co-operative alternative to the old-fashioned, inward-looking and cliquish nature of disciplines. And yet this straightforward interpretation begs a number of questions: how exactly does interdisciplinary research aspire to be warm, mutually developing, consultative? Can disciplinary divisions be so easily broken down or transcended? Is it not inevitable that there should be some means of ordering and structuring knowledge?’ (Interdisciplinarity, 2011)

This one-day workshop for academic staff and postgraduate students aims to answer these questions through a series of lectures, workshops and panel discussions focussing on the theory and practice of interdisciplinarity in nineteenth-century studies today. Drawing upon the expertise of key interdisciplinary practitioners, historian William Weber (California State University, Long Beach) and anthropologist Joe Moran (Liverpool John Moores University) it looks at the implications of interdisciplinarity on research methodologies, teaching, publishing and project funding.

Information about the workshop

The workshop has been designed around two keynotes followed by breakout sessions and then a panel session to bring the event to a close. For the breakout sessions, delegates have been divided into three groups based on common research interests. Each group will receive 30 minutes with each facilitator— Joe Moran, William Weber and Bennett Zon. Towards the end of the workshop, we are delighted to welcome Veronica Strang, Executive Director of the Durham University Institute of Advanced Study who will lead the panel discussion.
Schedule

10.00 – 10.20 | Registration, Tea and Coffee
St Chad’s College Chapel

10.20 – 10.30 | Welcome

10.30 – 11.30 | Keynote Address | Joe Moran
College Chapel

11.30 – 12.00 | Tea and Coffee Break

12.00 – 13.00 | Keynote Address | William Weber
College Chapel

13.00 – 14.00 | Lunch | Williams Library

14.00 – 15.30 | Breakout Group Sessions
Joe Moran | Bettenson Room
William Weber | Senior Common Room
Bennett Zon | College Chapel

15.30 – 15.50 | Tea and Coffee Break

15.50 – 16.50 | Panel Session | Led by Veronica Strang
College Chapel

16.50 – 17.00 | Concluding Remarks and Close

17.00 – 18.00 | Wine Reception | Williams Library
Keynote Address

10.30 — 11.30

Professor Joe Moran | Liverpool John Moores University

'Interdisciplinarity: Problems and Possibilities'

This paper explores the problems and possibilities of ‘interdisciplinarity’. I want to critique the idea of interdisciplinarity as some universal solvent that can offer a more democratic, dynamic and co-operative alternative to the supposedly old-fashioned, inward-looking and cliquish nature of disciplines. This model of interdisciplinarity has found favour with university managers and funding councils, I argue, because it echoes the neo-liberal idea that unregulated markets are fundamentally egalitarian and democratic, helping to sweep away outmoded hierarchies and inefficient bureaucracy. I want to argue instead that interdisciplinarity has produced some of the most interesting intellectual developments in the humanities over the last few decades precisely because of its problems and shortcomings. Interdisciplinarity should not be a way of dispensing with the disciplines but of living with them more critically and self-consciously and reinvigorating them with new ways of thinking.

Joe Moran is Professor of English and Cultural History at Liverpool John Moores University. He is also a prolific author and journalist who has written numerous articles in publications such as The Financial Times, The Guardian and New Statesman. His most recent books are Queuing for Beginners (2007), a cultural history of daily habits since the war, inspired in part by the Mass-Observation surveys of the 1930s and 1940s: On Roads: A Hidden History (2009); and Armchair Nation: An Intimate History of Britain in Front of the TV (2013). Moran is a literary and cultural historian focusing on the very recent past, with a particular interest in the everyday. His latest book, to be published in 2016, is Shrinking Violets: A Field Guide to Shyness.
Keynote Address

12.00 — 13.00

Professor William Weber | California State University, Long Beach

‘Whose politics? Rossini’s, perhaps? Theatrical versus Governmental Issues surrounding the Paris Opéra in the 1820s’

Historians used to talk mostly about politics but changed to social history, cultural topics primarily. By contrast, musicologists used to talk just about The Music but now talk increasingly about intellectual history, particularly aesthetics. I try to cut across the two changing fields, in this case asking how the politics surrounding the fad for Gioachino Rossini was involved with French national politics, indeed the struggle between the Left and the Right in the deeply conflicted Bourbon monarchy of the 1820s. Thus a leftist faction from the middle class defended the French tradition of canonic works by Gluck and Sacchini dating from the 1770s, which the supporters of Rossini threatened to remove from the repertory at the Opéra. But a compromise was forged: a hybridization of French and Italian techniques came about in Guillaume Tell and Daniel Auber’s Muette de Portici, parallel to what Gluck had done fifty years before.

... 

William Weber was educated at Harvard College and the University of Chicago and is Professor of History Emeritus at California State University, Long Beach. He has published *Music and the Middle Class: Concert Life in London, Paris & Vienna, 1830-1848* (1975), *The Rise of Musical Classics in Eighteenth-Century England* (1992), and *Great Transformation of Musical Taste: Concert Programming from Haydn to Brahms* (2008). He also edited collections of articles on Wagnerism and musical entrepreneurs. He taught as well at the Cambridgeshire College of Arts & Technology, the University of York and the Royal College of Music, London, and has been active in the William Andrews Clark Memorial Library at the University of California, Los Angeles.
Panel Session

15.50 — 16.50

Veronica Strang | Joe Moran | William Weber | Bennett Zon

The panel session will take forward and elaborate on the discussions from the breakout sessions. Veronica Strang will begin the panel session by introducing key issues in interdisciplinary research and project funding. There will then be responses from the panel speakers followed by a Q&A.

▪▪▪

Professor Veronica Strang

Veronica Strang is the Executive Director of Durham University’s interdisciplinary Institute of Advanced Study. An environmental anthropologist, she has conducted research in Australia, the UK and New Zealand. Her work focuses on human-environmental relations, cultural landscapes and, in particular, societies’ engagements with water. Since completing a DPhil at the University of Oxford in 1995, she has held teaching and research positions at the University of Oxford, the University of Wales, Goldsmiths University and the University of Auckland. In 2000 she was awarded a Royal Anthropological Institute Urgent Anthropology Fellowship, and in 2007 was named as one of UNESCO’s Les Lumières de L’Eau [Water’s Leading Lights]. Key publications include The Meaning of Water (2004); Gardening the World: agency, identity and the ownership of water (2009) and Ownership and Appropriation (2010). In 2013 she was elected as Chair of the Association of Social Anthropologists of the UK and the Commonwealth.

▪▪▪

Professor Bennett Zon

Bennett Zon is Professor of Music at Durham University. Zon researches in areas of long nineteenth-century musical culture, with particular interest in British science, theology and intellectual history. He has published The English Plainchant Revival (Oxford University Press, 1999), Music and Metaphor in Nineteenth-Century British Musicology (Ashgate, 2000) and Representing Non-Western Music in Nineteenth-Century Britain (University of Rochester Press, 2007). Zon is currently writing Evolution and Victorian Musical Culture (Cambridge University Press, 2016), and he and Bernard Lightman have co-edited Evolution and Victorian Culture (Cambridge University Press, 2014). Zon is General Editor of Nineteenth-Century Music Review (Cambridge University Press) and the book series Music in Nineteenth-Century Britain (Ashgate). With Carol Harrison he co-directs the International Network for Music Theology, and is Director of the Centre for Nineteenth-Century Studies at Durham University.
Acknowledgements
The Centre for Nineteenth-Century Studies wishes to thank the following organisations for supporting this event:
St Chad’s College, Durham University
St John’s College, Durham University
Department of Music, Durham University
Institute of Advanced Study, Durham University

Contact Us
The Centre for Nineteenth-Century Studies, Durham University, UK

Become a member and join our mailing list on our webpage
www.durham.ac.uk/cnccs

Keep up to date with our events on Twitter
@Durhamcnccs

Follow us on Facebook
www.facebook.com/durhamcnccs

Contact us by email or telephone
cnccs@durham.ac.uk
+44 (0)191 334 4381

All CNCS news and events are published on our webpage and through our mailing list