CENTER for ADVANCED STUDY

Climate | Change Initiative

LECTURE SERIES

Victorian Culture and Climate Change

Both talks are in Levis Faculty Center, Room 210, and are free and open to the public.

Wednesday, September 23 | 4:00 PM

Nathan Hensley (English, Georgetown University)

No Escape, No Ending: Gesture, Improvisation, Solidarity

Professor Hensley draws on his recent book, *Action without Hope: Victorian Literature after Climate Collapse* (Chicago, 2025) to discuss various 19th-century aesthetic objects and how they construed revolution in a minor key, rescaling action away from the grandly heroic and toward minor adjustments and collaborative interventions. Focusing on such tiny disruptions demonstrates how close attention to Victorian literature can recover a prehistory for the deeply felt sense of powerlessness many of us know all too well today.

Wednesday, September 30 | 5:30 PM

Stephanie O'Rourke (Art History, University of St Andrews)

Landscapes of Dis-placement: Mining and Mapping the 19th-century British Empire

This lecture charts the emergence of new pictorial formats for representing landscape that derived from and accelerated industrial mineral extraction in Britain in the early 19th century. These formats, in turn, actively assimilated colonial environments in North America and India into a system of extractive capitalism through which Britain consolidated both economic and territorial power. In an alternative account of 19th-century landscape, Professor O'Rourke queries how pictorial formats alternately enabled or disabled this process.

Professor O'Rourke's talk is hosted by the Jerrold Ziff Lecture in Modern Art series | Art History Program.

This event is part of the Center for Advanced Study **Climate | Change** initiative, launched in 2023, which examines creative interventions in, interpretations of, and solutions to the climate crisis in which all academic work is embedded. It also pushes us to rethink how the "climate" of our institution currently facilitates and limits those interventions and solutions. The initiative envisions new possibilities and fosters new relationships, bringing scholars, researchers, artists, and knowledge-makers together at CAS for interdisciplinary conversations and actions. CAS Resident Associate **Jamie Jones** (English) is overseeing events for 2026–27, including this speaker series in collaboration with **David O'Brien** (Art History).

For more information, please consult cas.illinois.edu

To request special accommodation, please contact cas@cas.illinois.edu

Artist: Emmy Lingscheidt