

**Call for Papers**  
**William Godwin: Forms, Fears, Futures**  
**24 June 2017**  
**Newcastle University**

**Confirmed plenary speakers: Professor Mark Philp (Warwick) and Dr David O'Shaughnessy (Trinity College Dublin)**

**Registration fee: £20 (waived for Newcastle staff and students)**

**Postgraduate bursaries available**

Abstracts are invited for a one-day conference and debate on the work of William Godwin, to be hosted by Newcastle University on 24 June 2017.

We aim to foster a spirit of lively discussion and structured debate and to explore the full range of Godwin's thought, writing, and influence. Abstracts are sought for twenty-minute papers which respond to one of the three panels: Forms, Fears, and Futures.

William Godwin is perhaps today best-known for his 1793 political treatise *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice and its Influence on Morals and Happiness*, and for the novel which explored the ideas developed in *Political Justice, Things as They Are; or, The Adventures of Caleb Williams* (1794). As a Romantic-period author and figure, however, he is often subsumed within his family circle and the drama of their overlapped personal lives and works.

This event aims instead to place Godwin and his works squarely centre-stage. While we acknowledge the value of reading Godwin as part of a kin- and friendship coterie that included Mary Wollstonecraft, Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, Percy Bysshe Shelley, Lord Byron and Thomas Peacock among others, we are interested in what happens when we consider Godwin first and foremost as an author and thinker in his own right. What new perspectives and readings are afforded us? What texts and approaches have been overlooked – or overstudied? What is Godwin's legacy, and where next for Godwin studies?

The day will be structured as three themed panels, followed by a roundtable led by Professor Matthew Grenby (Newcastle) on the topic 'the future of Godwin studies'. Each panel will be opened by a plenary address on the panel topic, followed by up to three papers.

We ask that abstracts respond to one of the three panels. Topics might include, but are by no means limited to:

*Forms*

- Formal experimentation in Godwin's works
- Godwin and genre

- Godwin's other forms: biography, history, the essay, children's literature, or drama
- Familial, social, or national forms

#### *Fears*

- Godwin and the Revolutionary decade
- Godwin's political thought
- Domestic, economic, social, or national fears

#### *Futures*

- Godwin's speculative thought
- Godwin 'after' Romanticism
- Godwin's reception history
- Godwin and the idea of the future; Godwin's utopias/dystopias
- Godwin and time

Abstracts for twenty-minute papers should be no more than 250 words, should include your name and institutional affiliation and position (if relevant), and should clearly state which panel you wish to be considered for. Please send abstracts to [williamgodwinfearsformsfutures@gmail.com](mailto:williamgodwinfearsformsfutures@gmail.com) by **15 March 2015**.

We have a limited number of postgraduate travel bursaries of £50 available. Bursaries will be offered on the basis of financial requirements; should you wish to be considered for one, please include alongside your abstract a statement of no more than 100 words explaining why you would benefit.

The conference is intended to act as a springboard for an edited collection of essays, to which speakers will be invited to contribute following the event. We are currently in discussion with Palgrave Macmillan.

#### **Conference organisers**

Eliza O'Brien (Newcastle), Helen Stark (Queen Mary), and Beatrice Turner (Roehampton)