



Tell Me Your Secret, Doctor James: Victorian and Contemporary Representations of Historical Gender Crossing

Tuesday, 1 November 2016, 10am-12pm

Presented by

Professor
Ann Heilmann
Cardiff University

Location

Milgate Room #165
Top Floor
A.D. Hope Building #14

Participant RSVP

kate.mitchell@anu.edu.au



This masterclass takes as its focus a spectacular case of historical transgender to examine the resonance of notions of sex/gender instability in Victorian, twentieth century and contemporary depictions of James Miranda Barry (1789?-1865). James Barry graduated in medicine from Edinburgh in 1812, entered the medical branch of the British military in 1813, and from 1816-1859 served as a medical officer, humanitarian and sanitary reformer in the British colonies (Cape Colony, Mauritius, Jamaica, Windward and Leeward Islands, St Helena, Malta, Corfu, and Canada). As Inspector General he attained the highest rank in the medical branch of the British military. After his death in 1865 sensational claims were made about his body having been that of a woman. It was not until the 1980s that evidence of Barry's female birth identity was found.

How did Victorian contemporaries respond to these disclosures? Are there any similarities between Victorian and contemporary constructions of the figure of the gender crosser? How is transgender represented in textual format? Do biographers use different textual strategies from novelists and playwrights? These are some of the questions this two-hour session seeks to explore.

Presented by

School of Literature,
Languages and Linguistics
ANU College of
Arts & Social Sciences

Please contact Dr Kate Mitchell if you'd like to take part in this masterclass, in order to receive reading materials.