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For further information
please visit:
www.reimaginingtheinsect.wordpress.com

Email the organisers at:
insectconference2015@gmail.com

#insectconf

(Re)Imagining the Insect: Natures and Cultures of Invertebrates, 1700-1900.

A One Day Interdisciplinary Conference at the
University of Warwick.

*With Keynote Addresses from
Dr. Charlotte Sleight and Dr. Kate Tunstall*

Saturday 7th March 2015



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WARWICK

There are around 800,000 species of insect. From the honey on our breakfast cereal, lice infesting our hair to cockroaches invading our homes: insects are, and always have been, implicated in our everyday lives. Insects were fashioned into jewellery, imprisoned in amber, eaten, dissected, collected, revered, reviled and fictionalised. From the sacred scarabs of Ancient Egypt, or the Renaissance dung-beetles used to symbolise Jesus Christ, to our modern systems of pest control, insect-human relations have been subject, and contributed, to the forces of human history. Our conference proposes to examine the pre-eminence of invertebrate life in the period 1700-1900, including literary, historical, linguistic and scientific perspectives. This subject offers a large scope for theoretical engagement, challenging conventional ways of thinking about human history and culture. In line with developments in the burgeoning field of animal studies and more generally in the environmental humanities, invertebrates have a lot to teach about some of the most burning questions facing scholarship today: what can these seemingly insignificant creatures tell us about man's place in 'nature'? What does it mean that the only species more successful than humans in colonising the planet are also those considered the most disgusting? This conference seeks to showcase the exciting research being carried out by scholars from diverse fields on the vast topic of insects and other invertebrate animals. It will be of relevance to, not just those working directly with invertebrates, but also to those carrying out projects that intersect, however briefly, with these concerns. Topics might include, but are not limited to:

- Invertebrates in literatures (insects as metaphors; as teaching tools)
- Insect 'economy' / insects and economy (e.g. in advertising)
- Natural History (taxonomic problems, collecting/collections, microscopy)
- Origins and spontaneous generation
- Disease (vectorism, book-worms, tooth-worms, death, medicine)
- Alternative foodsources, sustainability and eco-criticism
- Flea circuses, insects and performance
- Insect spaces (Uexkuell's concept of Umwelt)
- The social lives of insects
- Insects as political criticisms

The organisers invite abstracts of 250 words for **20 minute papers**. Abstracts, along with a short biography, should be sent to insectconference2015@gmail.com by **19th December 2014**.