

# Literature and ‘The Woman Question’



**A Mark Rutherford Society Symposium hosted by RIMAP  
at the University of Bedfordshire  
Saturday 23 June 2018**

## CALL FOR PAPERS

‘The Woman Question’ – encompassing not only debates over women’s suffrage, but gender equality more widely, including professional, economic, domestic, and sexual issues affecting women – was one of the most disruptive and fiercely contested issues of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The role and position of women in society, and relations between women and men, were widely discussed by writers of the period. These included the Bedford-born novelist William Hale White (1831–1913), better known by his literary pseudonym, ‘Mark Rutherford’. In his final three novels – *Miriam’s Schooling* (1890), *Catharine Furze* (1893), and *Clara Hopgood* (1896) – White created and presented with great insight and sympathy a series of female characters who defy the social, sexual and political constraints placed upon them. The aim of this Symposium is to open up discussion of the wider context within which the particular qualities of this aspect of White’s work may be better understood. Papers are therefore invited on any writer or literary text dealing with the ‘Woman Question’. Please send a title and 200-word summary of a 20-minute paper to Professor Bob Owens ([bob.owens@beds.ac.uk](mailto:bob.owens@beds.ac.uk)), **no later than 1 May 2018**.

## PLENARY SPEAKERS

**Elisabeth Jay, Professor Emerita of English, Oxford Brookes University**  
‘*Fin de siècle* Women in Mid-Century Clothing: William Hale White’s Novels of the 1890s’

**Jean-Michel Yvard, Associate Professor of English, Université Angers**  
‘Woman as a Privileged Mediator of Ethical Values: Feminism and Secularization in the Writings of William Hale White (“Mark Rutherford”)’

## REGISTRATION

The Symposium will be held at the Bedford Campus of the University of Bedfordshire, Polhill Avenue, Bedford MK41 9TD. Attendance is **free of charge**, but registration **by 1 June 2018** is essential as numbers are limited. The Symposium will open at 10.30am and close at 5.00pm. Morning and afternoon refreshments and a light lunch will be provided, costing £20 payable on the day. To register, please email [bob.owens@beds.ac.uk](mailto:bob.owens@beds.ac.uk), giving details of name; title; affiliation; postal and email addresses; and any dietary requirements. The Mark Rutherford Society may be able to offer modest financial assistance with travel costs of postgraduate students whose papers are accepted. If you wish to be considered for this, in addition to sending the outline of your paper, please explain briefly why you would need help with travel costs.