

Dear Mad Reading folks,

Welcome back for 2023!

Apologies for the short notice, but for those who can join us we'll be meeting next week to talk about the topic **Madness and Literature**.

**Time and Date:** Tuesday, 17th Jan 2023 at 7pm AEDT (8am GMT/UK time, 1.30pm IST)

**Facilitators:** Unmana and Zara

**Zoom link:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88909483715?pwd=N2lIMkp6K0xoU1JlNllvUndKSsk9ldz09>

Meeting ID: 889 0948 3715

Passcode: **037701**

**Readings:**

1. Madness and Difference: Politicizing Insanity in Classical Literary Works, by Gregory Shafer for the Language Arts Journal of Michigan (attached here)
2. [The Introduction to this book](#), 'The most dreadful visitation: Male madness in Victorian fiction' by Valerie Pedlar

People might also be interested to check out the [Madness and Literature Network](#) based at the University of Nottingham.

**Suggested discussion questions from our facilitator:**

- What was your first introduction to Madness (that you can remember) in media or fiction? How did it affect you?
- The trope of the 'madwoman in the attic' (Jane Eyre) - does some feminist analysis (to simplify; the strident/outspoken woman is shut up and declared Mad) overlook the sanism involved?
- Crime fiction gives us 'homicidal maniacs' - how much did crime fiction feed on/add to popular conceptions of Mad people as violent?
- Which books have you found with nuanced/realistic depictions of Madness/mental health issues and/or neurodivergence?
- What would you ideally like to see in fiction? What kind of protagonists are we still missing? What are the tropes that need to die?

**A thankyou:**

I also want to personally say a huge thanks to Unmana and Pan for joining our little 'organising committee'. It's great to have their support in these trying times. Just advising that the roles we've taken on have shifted a little bit to:

*Antonia* - Admin (mail outs/website/twitter)

*Zara* - Meeting facilitation

*Pan and Unmana* - Topic coordination/sourcing readings and liaising with co-facilitators

*Jo* - Zoom link creator extraordinaire

**A reminder:**

Do give us a shout if there's anything you think you might be able to help with! If you get an email from Pan or Unmana because you put your hand up for a topic, please do reply directly to them :) If you have a topic in mind and would like to facilitate, please email me here and I can put you in touch with them to help sort out readings and discussion questions.

Cheers,  
Antonia