‘The Brontës, Authorship and Print Culture’, Professor Joanne Shattock

This lecture will explore the Brontë sisters’ entry into print and the models of authorship, both Romantic and Victorian, that influenced them. The challenges of being a woman writer, the importance of networks and the role of publishers and mentors will be discussed, as well as the responses to their writing in the reviews and magazines of the mid-nineteenth century, a textual world in which Charlotte, Emily and Anne Brontë became central figures. We will also look at the impact of contemporary biographers and reviewers on the Brontës’ legacy.

Joanne Shattock is Emeritus Professor of Victorian Literature at the University of Leicester. She has published widely on nineteenth-century women’s writing and on the periodical press. Her books include Politics and Reviewers (1989), the Oxford Guide to British Women Writers (1993) and as editor, Women and Literature in Britain 1800-1900 (2001). She is general editor of The Works of Elizabeth Gaskell (2005-6) and Selected Works of Margaret Oliphant (2011-6).

Reading List:


