

# What can 19th century literature tell us about energy?



## Kent Linthicum

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Energy is the foremost question of the 21st century: *is there enough of it? How should we use it?* These questions are not unique to us. This talk will focus on how the modern conception of energy started in the 19th century and explore how writers in industrial Britain began to wrestle with questions of energy use, its consequences, and the advancement of sciences like thermodynamics. Texts like *Frankenstein*, *Dracula*, and *The Time Machine* help show how conversations about energy exploitation and use were expressed in literature, and to demonstrate how humanities research can help us with modern questions.



Kent Linthicum received his bachelor's from the University of the Pacific in California. His research focuses on the history and intersections of literature and science in the 19th century, specifically how they conceived of the environment with the goal of comprehending how humanity interacts with its environment. His dissertation focuses on literary representations of volcanoes in the 19th century, to find out how people in the 19th century understood massive environmental phenomena that operated on geologic time.

**Friday, April 3, 2015**

**12:00 – 1:15 p.m.**

**Wrigley Hall, Room 481 (ASU Tempe Campus)**

Light lunch will be served.

Seating is limited. Please RSVP to guarantee your seat.

**RSVP: [sustainability.asu.edu](http://sustainability.asu.edu)**

Questions:

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