

Public Lecture
The University of Otago Centre for the Book

**Two Copies, Two Prices, Two Readers:
Victorian Books and Variable Pricing**



**An illustrated talk by Janine Barchas,
Louann and Larry Temple Centennial Professor in English Literature,
University of Texas, Austin**

Texas-based professor and writer, Janine Barchas returns to New Zealand to share a talk she recently gave at the Grolier Club of New York. In her last book, *The Lost Books of Jane Austen*, she argued that ignored lowbrow reprints—ordinary copies thumbed through by ordinary people—have made authors canonical. Using scruffy survivors of neglected and unrecorded reprint series, rather than precious firsts or handsome editions, Barchas dispelled Janeite myths and told an unorthodox story about how Austen has been read across gender and social class. In this new talk, she extends that inquiry using two seemingly humdrum middle-class copies of *Mansfield Park* and their ownership signatures to further flesh out that oft-invoked apparition, “the 19th-century reader.” Book history, bibliography, and cultural history benefit from looking closely at the prices of once-commonplace volumes.

5:30 pm, Wednesday 4 August, Archway 3