Abstract:
Using the data collected in At the Circulating Library: A Database of Victorian Fiction, 1837–1901 (www.victorianresearch.org/atcl), this presentation discusses some of the preliminary findings about the authorship and publishing of the nineteenth-century British novel. In particular, the data point to demographic trends in authorship especially the increase of women novelists; the centralization of British fiction publishing among a score of publishing houses; and the increase of serialization over the century. The observations can be used to describe the typical Victorian novel, especially who wrote it, who published it, and how it appeared to readers. Ultimately, the information about the typical Victorian will be used to reflect on the teaching and research of Victorian fiction today through an examination of several major reprint series of British fiction.

Biography:
Troy J. Bassett is an Associate Professor of English at Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne. He has published several articles on Victorian book history which have appeared in Book History, English Literature in Transition, The Library, PBSA, and Victorian Studies. In addition, he is the author of At the Circulating Library: A Database of Victorian Fiction, 1837–1901 (www.victorianresearch.org/atcl), the largest bibliography of nineteenth-century fiction. He is currently completing a book on the Victorian three-volume novel.