

FRIDAY 4 SEPTEMBER 2026

Belonging to the Victorians?

Community, Collections, and Care

Wilton's Music Hall, 1 Graces Alley, London E1 8JB

A one-day conference bringing together researchers working on Victorian community, collections and care: four themed panels of short papers, followed by a keynote address from Professor Jane Hamlett (Royal Holloway, University of London).

Speakers, please keep your paper to 15 minutes and bring your slides on a USB drive; we will load them panel by panel.

09:45 Registration & coffee

10:15 Welcome & housekeeping
Daniel Grey & William Bainbridge

10:30 Panel 1 · Care, Craft and Control

Dr Catherine Phipps (University of Bristol)
Coercive Care for Penitent Women: The Reform Home for Sex Workers in Wellclose Square, 1830–1875

Professor Alana Harris (King's College London)
Lacemaking and the Therapeutic: Weaving Everyday Histories of the Victorian Asylum

Amy Stone (Royal Holloway, University of London)
In their own hands: reconstructing difference through the lives of nineteenth-century craftspeople
followed by discussion

11:30 Coffee break

11:45 Panel 2 · Empire, Race and Collecting

Professor Caroline Bressey (University College London)
Hostile environments: Victorian prison archives

Dr Lewis Ryder (University of Lincoln)
The Ashanti Spoils (1896): Crown agents, museums and Scotland Yard

Shriya Dasgupta (Purdue University)
The Burden of Empire: The Impact of Colonial Masculinity on Armed anti-Colonial Resistance in India
followed by discussion

12:45 Lunch

13:45

Panel 3 · Institutions and Belonging

Steven Spencer (Salvation Army International Heritage Centre)

Heritage, museums and memorialisation in the Salvation Army

Amber Flood (University of Exeter)

Belonging to elite knowledge networks: how subscription libraries shaped and maintained power structures in the English provinces

Dr Lucinda Matthews-Jones (Liverpool John Moores University), Dr Jane Skelding, and Professor Georgina Brewis (UCL, in absence)

‘A trusted, second home’: belonging in settlement history and belonging in the settlement community

followed by discussion

14:45

Panel 4 · Voice, Memory and the Popular

Dr Deborah Jeffries

To drink or not to drink? How legislation affected entertainment seekers in the wake of the 1843 Theatres Act

Tilly Guthrie (University of Sheffield)

Touching community: tactile literacy and blind identity in nineteenth-century Britain

Dr Fern Riddell

‘No-one loves you more’: Recovering Queen Victoria’s secret marriage to John Brown, through The John Brown Family Archive

followed by discussion

15:45

Tea break

16:00

Keynote · Professor Jane Hamlett

Royal Holloway, University of London – chaired, with Q&A

16:45

Conference ends

Optional pub visit

All welcome to continue the conversation nearby.

There is no conference fee, and places are strictly limited.

Organised by Daniel Grey & William Bainbridge, University of Hertfordshire

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