



# Introducing the 2017 WRoCAH Networks

This PhD network centres on the varied forms of Holocaust memorialization and remembrance that have emerged in the 21<sup>st</sup> century: the era in which living memory of the wartime genocide is turning into one of historical record.

Such new approaches explored by the network include access to untapped cultural memories and historical archives in East and Central Europe; French Holocaust recall in the wake of decolonisation; and the kinds of new technology that have placed social media centre-stage in relation to Holocaust memory, as well as enabling the development of such up-to-date forms of preserving survivor witness as interactive video testimony.

The network's interdisciplinary nature arises from the input of six colleagues from the White Rose universities. These include the historians Daniel Lee at Sheffield, who works on the wartime history of France and its empire, and Hugo Service from York, who specialises in German and Polish twentieth-century history; Max Silverman, a Francophone expert in the School of Languages, Cultures and Societies at Leeds, whose work focuses on French and postcolonial literature and film; Lisa Peschel from York's Department of Theatre, Film and Television, who is renowned for her research on previously unperformed theatrical and musical material from the wartime Terezín Ghetto; Matthew Boswell, in the School of English at Leeds, whose interests lie in transnational Holocaust memory and its digital representations; and Sue Vice, from Sheffield's School of English, whose work centres on Holocaust fiction and documentary film.

We are delighted to be joined by the PhD students Diane Ootosaka at Leeds, Emily-Rose Baker at Sheffield and Michael Holden at York, and are looking forward to working with them on this project over the coming years.

## The Future of Holocaust Memory

*Network Lead:*  
*Professor Sue Vice,*  
*School of English*  
*University of Sheffield*



WRoCAH White Rose Networks offer a unique opportunity for collaborative and interdisciplinary research across the White Rose universities with three doctoral researchers, one at each of Leeds, Sheffield and York, working on separate projects on a common theme. Each student has a main supervisor at the home institution and a co-supervisor at one of the other institutions making a network of 3 students and 6 academics.

## Imagining and Representing Species Extinction

*Network Lead:*  
*Dr Stefan Skrimshire,*  
*School of Philosophy, Religion*  
*and History of Science*  
*University of Leeds*

This new doctoral network will be exploring the different ways that species extinction – both currently witnessed and projected into the future – has become a powerful social and cultural discourse. This is now a topic of wide public concern, particularly in light of the evidence that humans have triggered a global “sixth mass extinction event”. Whilst historically the term extinction has evoked the disappearance of iconic species of animals and plants, today it is discussed in the context of global ecological crisis and the interdependence of human and nonhuman life in an era of anthropogenic climate change. From suggestions that we are living in the 'Anthropocene epoch', to a recurrent 'eco-apocalypse' and 'animal apocalypse' theme in cinematic and literary narratives, the studies of human and non-human life (and death) have become radically intertwined, a demand new attention from the arts and humanities, in conversation with social and environmental sciences. In what sense is extinction a harm, and to what or whom? Why do people lament the loss of some species and not others? How do they communicate the significance of that loss at an individual and / or collective level? How do people connect the loss of nonhuman species with fears of human extinction?

The network supervisors represent a broad diversity of disciplines: environmental conservation, English literature, interactive media, management, philosophy and religious studies. Our students - all exceptional candidates - also bring diverse disciplinary strengths and have proposed an exciting set of projects: an ethnographic study of cultural responses to bee extinction; a study of whale strandings and whale-watching (in both literary and scientific sources) as revealing social imagination of extinction; and an exploration of theories of loss and grief in cultural representations of domestic animals.

The network will be tapping into and building upon some great research synergies that already exist across White Rose universities in Environmental humanities, animal studies, and conservation.



# Researcher Employability Projects(REP) - a view from both sides

Sarah Little (2014 Cohort, Leeds) and John Donegan, Leeds Museums and Galleries

John writes...

Making the case for researching Leeds Museums' collections



At Leeds Museums and Galleries, we are always trying to encourage more research on our collections. We hold an estimated 1.3 million individual objects, which include our historic buildings, cover a vast range of disciplines, and derive from locations across the world, across cultures and time. We manage nine sites across Leeds, comprising: Abbey House Museum,

Kirkstall Abbey, Leeds Art Gallery, Leeds City Museum, Leeds Industrial Museum at Armley Mills and Thwaite Mills, Leeds Discovery Centre, Lotherton Hall and Temple Newsam House. As well as one and a half million annual visitors to our sites, we have an active and exciting programme of outreach to schools and community groups.

We hold enough material to occupy generations of researchers, but we need support in the vital process of matchmaking collections, curators, researchers and funding. In previous years, this has sometimes proved a challenge. That is where WRoCAH comes in.

In May, Caryn from WRoCAH visited us to explore the ways we might work together. Caryn was great and explained how they had streamlined their procedures to make it easier for partners to work with them. She encouraged us to identify areas of work which would make interesting 30-day projects for their Researcher Employability Programme – we have plenty - and then helped us advertise them to PhD candidates.

The first, Sarah Little has already started with us, working on the Leeds Rifles Archive. These projects are good for us and good for the PhD candidates, and we are looking forward to more in 2018.

[www.leeds.gov.uk/museumsandgalleries](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/museumsandgalleries)

@LeedsMuseums



Sarah writes...

Discovering, interpreting and working in a contemporary museum

My Researcher Employability Project was with Leeds Museums and Galleries at the Discovery Centre on a project liaising with museum experts and academic historians to create a research and resource pack for Undergraduates and Masters Students who are considering their dissertation topics.



The resource pack provides resources and inspiration for potential research projects relating to the Leeds Rifles WW1 collection held at the Discovery Centre and also includes things like quick start guides for accessing museum collections and useful key reading lists.

Developing this project has given me an in-depth insight into the workings of a museum. The Leeds Rifles collection comprises nearly 400 objects, from photographs of the men who served in the Rifles (and the nurses who looked after them when they were wounded) to badges, medals, postcards, military uniforms and newspaper cuttings showing pictures of the Leeds Rifles' trenches and outposts in Ypres in the First World War, which they named after different streets back home in Leeds.

I have also had the opportunity to learn about how items are acquired and handled, how collections are focussed and what needs to be done to protect items in museum collections. There are all sorts of weird and wonderful objects held here from stuffed zebras to retro toys, a 4500 year old meteor fragment and even a mummy!

I have been given the chance to gain an insight into the different teams at the museum, what they do and how they work, including taking part in some community engagement work. I have learned about the sort of collaborations that the museum develops with external partners as well as the roles of conservators, curators and outreach teams here on site.

I have very much enjoyed undertaking my Researcher Employability Project with Leeds Museums and Galleries and have valued gaining useful experience working directly with museums staff, academics, local historians and being completely immersed in a contemporary museum environment.



This year, I was extremely fortunate in having the opportunity to undertake a five-month International Placement Scheme Fellowship at the Huntington Library, Pasadena, Los Angeles. My thesis examines female-authored representations of science amongst members of the Bluestocking circle – an eighteenth-century intellectual group who shared ideas and conversation at salon-style gatherings in London. The Huntington Library houses the letters of one of the salon hostesses: Elizabeth Montagu. The collection comprises almost 7,000 letters written to and from Montagu to leading thinkers, writers and natural philosophers of her day, and to family members and friends. The experience of working with such a rich resource was both challenging and thrilling. It informed my research in terms of content, by taking me down roads I didn't know existed (Montagu's knowledge of geography and the commercial shipping strategies she employed for her coal-mining business, for example), and it also offered new perspectives which led me to shift the direction of my thesis as a whole.

The IPS programme was valuable not only in terms of the resources of the Huntington Library, but it was a wonderful way to meet

other scholars and share ideas and connections with researchers from all over the world. The Huntington Library runs a full programme of seminars and events, which offered a great way to meet people, and I was able to attend local and international conferences, where I was able to expand my network internationally. One particular highlight was having the opportunity to organise a collaborative event between the Huntington and the University of York: my trip coincided with research trips undertaken by three other WRoCAH students and, with WRoCAH's support, we ran a symposium day with other visiting graduate researchers.

Overall, the IPS placement was an opportunity that I was incredibly grateful for: I was able to study archive material that changed the direction of my research, to broaden my professional network, and it was a chance to study somewhere different, make new friends, and explore an incredible city. The IPS is open to all AHRC-funded students, and places are available at six different institutions worldwide. Applications are currently open for 2017-2018—The IPS is open to all AHRC-funded students, and places are available at six different institutions worldwide. Applications are currently open for 2017-2018.

<http://bit.ly/ahrcips>

**Millie Schurch**

Department of  
English and  
Related Literature  
University of York  
AHRC Competition  
2015 cohort



Arts & Humanities  
Research Council

## WRoCAH-funded Training Events—2017/18

19 October	WRoCAH Student Led Conference
23 November	WRoCAH Putting your Training Plan to Work
14 December	WRoCAH Colloquium 2: Who With?
12 January*	Public Policy Training with Midlands 3 Cities DTP
6 February*	Dealing with the Media
7 February*	Podcasting
23 February	WRoCAH Colloquium 1: What Now?
13/14 March*	Maximising Media Resources in your Research
5 April	Myers-Briggs Type Indicator©
9 May	Six Thinking Hats©
13/14 June	WRoCAH Colloquium 3: What Next?

\* Open to non-WRoCAH-funded students dependent on availability