

## The Book as Cure: Bibliotherapy and Literary Caregiving from the First World War to the Present

Institute of English Studies,  
Senate House, University of  
London, 14 September 2018

### Call for Papers



Image caption: 'a wounded soldier reading aloud to blind comrades', from *Happy - Though Wounded* (1918), bound copies of the magazine of the 3<sup>rd</sup> London Red Cross Hospital

This one-day event, part of the annual programme of the **History of Books and Reading (HOBAR) research collaboration** at **The Open University**, explores in the centenary year of the war's end the legacy of wartime bibliotherapy. It brings together early career researchers and advanced scholars with practitioners, policy makers, charities, and representatives from the culture and heritage industries to foster an interdisciplinary dialogue about the curative power of reading during and after the war. How is that curative power understood now? How was it understood in 1914? How has it been managed since in the voluntary sector and in institutions? In what ways does the legacy of First World War bibliotherapy remain active in contemporary policy-making in the charity sector, and in work with veterans and settled refugees?

Led by three members of **The Open University's Department of English & Creative Writing**, [Siobhan Campbell](#), [Sara Haslam](#), and [Edmund King](#), this event will contribute to and shape understanding of the therapeutic importance of books across disciplines and help to generate further focused research in the Humanities and beyond.

Proposals of 300 words for 20-minute papers by **Friday, 4 May 2018** are welcomed from PhD students, ECRs and established scholars working in the field. There will be a dedicated PhD/ECR panel during the day. Topics include: **the healing book; creative and expressive writing interventions; reading, writing and trauma; author-based studies on literary caregiving of any type; hospital, prison, and asylum reading/libraries and mental health/wellness; curating generative archives; documenting resilience and identifying outcomes.**

#### Please send proposal and enquiries to the conference organisers:

Dr Siobhán Campbell, [Siobhan.Campbell@open.ac.uk](mailto:Siobhan.Campbell@open.ac.uk);

Dr Sara Haslam, [Sara.Haslam@open.ac.uk](mailto:Sara.Haslam@open.ac.uk);

Dr Edmund King, [Edmund.King@open.ac.uk](mailto:Edmund.King@open.ac.uk).

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