

KATHLEEN MCILVENNA

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EDUCATION

2012-2019	PhD History (part-time, Institute of Historical Research, University of London/The Postal Museum)
2010-2011	MA Historical Research (Institute of Historical Research, University of London)
2002-2005	BA (Hons) History (University of Liverpool)

Favourite university module

The one I remember most vividly was the special subject on the Reformation with Martin Heale, mainly because I enjoyed the discussion debates and source work rather than the subject matter.

Favourite history book

This is very hard but works that have probably influenced me most in terms of subject matter have been Old Age by Pat Thane and Saving and Spending by Paul Johnson, and in terms of approach and the power of history Theatres of Memory by Raphael Samuel.

EMPLOYMENT

2023-present	Senior Lecturer in History (University of Derby)
2017-2023	Lecturer in History (University of Derby)

2016	Postdoctoral Researcher (Kingston University)
2015	Visting Lecturer (University of Westminster)
2014-2015	Visting Lecturer Fellow (University of Hertfordshire)
2012-2014	Curatorial Assistant, Tower Collections (Royal Armouries)
2012	Museum Assistant (London Borough of Enfield)
2011-2014	Administrative Editor (<i>History Workshop Journal</i> ; break 2012-2013)
2008-2010	Development Administrator (Science Museum Group)

As my career and education history might suggest, becoming an academic was never the plan following my undergraduate degree. I had many different jobs before I thought I'd follow a museum and curatorial career. I did an MA as in the 2010s you needed a postgraduate qualification for a curatorial role. It was my part time position at the wonderful History Workshop Journal and a conversation with Catherine Hall which made me consider a PhD and an academic career. I worked throughout my PhD, still hedging my bets on which direction my career would take, and I was fortunate enough to get my permanent role at Derby whilst finishing my PhD. My museum career and experience, alongside teaching experience, were integral to getting that role.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

'Sick Leave in the United Kingdom Post Office, 1850-1908' (with Harry Smith, David R. Green, Laura Newman, Joe Chick, Holly Marley, Natasha Preger, Douglas Brown, and Nicola Shelton), *Economic History Review* (2026).

'Addressing Health Pensions Database, 1860-1908' (with Harry Smith, Douglas Brown, David R. Green, B. Jackson, Holly Marley, Laura Newman, Nicola Shelton, and Natasha Preger), UK Data Service, SN:9323 (2025), <https://data.addressinghealth.org.uk/>

Nineteenth-Century Communications: A Documentary History, 1780–1918:

Volume III: Cultures of Communication (co-edited with Karin Koehler, Eleanor Hopkins, Nicola Kirby, Ellen Smith, and Harriet Thompson) (Routledge, 2025).

'Création d'une bureaucratie sanitaire. Maladie, pensions et service public au sein de la poste britannique du XIXe siècle' (with David R. Green and Harry Smith), *Revue d'histoire de la protection sociale* 17:1 (2024), 32-55. (Translation: 'Creating a Health Bureaucracy. Sicknes, Pensions and Public Service in the 19th-century British Post Office').

"'The natural foundation of perfect efficiency': Medical Services and the Victorian Post Office' (with Douglas Brown and David R. Green), *Social History of Medicine* 33:2 (2020), 539-558.

"'The widows and orphans of servants are dying': The Place of the Family in the Design and Application of Nineteenth-Century Civil Servant Pensions', in Carol Beardmore, Cara Dobbing, and Steven King (eds), *Family Life in Britain, 1650-1910* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 71-93.

'Developing Local Narratives for Objects in National Collections: Lessons Learned from the "Number please? Working with the Enfield Exchange" project' (with Hilary Geoghegan and Merel van der Vaart), *Curator* 60:2 (2017), 217-233.

Perhaps unusually, I haven't published many single-authored articles or chapters. I enjoy working in a collaborative and interdisciplinary way, but it is also worth noting that collaborating with others has enabled me to keep the momentum of research and maintain a publication profile whilst on maternity leave and over Covid. The Wellcome Trust funded collaborative project, Addressing Health: Morbidity, Mortality and Occupational Health in the Victorian and Edwardian Post Office, has had the biggest impact on my career and research so far. As part of this project I worked with historical geographers, historical demographers and an epidemiologist. We're still working on publications connected to this project and I have also included

the dataset and online datamapper connected to this project as a publication. I feel it has been a really important part of my work as an academic so far and hope to do more with it in the future. The edited collection of primary sources listed here was a four-volume project for which I collaborated with literary scholars, who introduced me to a wonderful array of sources I'm now using in my work. As a result, my research interests have taken a variety of turns from the workings of bureaucratic institutions to the experience of retired and sick workers. My current project returns to my love and passion for material culture and collections through a new project on retirement gifts. I am hoping all of these interests will eventually come together in a monograph on the culture of retirement in the long nineteenth century.