



Dear Woolf Friends,

Last month I presented my work at my very first Woolf Research Afternoon. Though I was very nervous, I was also intrigued by the idea of 'academic speed-dating', a fitting term coined by our Executive Director, Dr Esther-Miriam Wagner, in which everyone was allowed five minutes to present their research. Not only this, but there was a prize at stake! Woolf colleagues and students were competing to have their name engraved on the coveted Marguerite Plate named in honour of Lady Marguerite Woolf.

When the first session began, I was pleasantly surprised to see how my colleagues managed to describe their work within the allocated five minutes. PhD Scholar Mohammed Ahmed was first with his research on Jews in Qur'anic exegeses. Next, we heard from Hina Khalid, Honorary PhD Scholar about her research in national and religious identities in colonial India. We then took a musical turn with Research Fellow Dr Danielle Padley exploring Anglo-Jewish Music-Making in Victorian England. She was followed by our newest PhD Scholar, Peach Hoyle, who shared their plans to study interfaith relations between Muslim and Jewish women. Closing the session was Professor Philip Wood discussing group formation among religious communities.

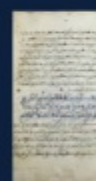
Our breaks were accompanied by coffee and cake, a staple at Woolf events. PhD Scholar Alissa Symon started session two with her doctoral research on American Jewish involvement in Israeli politics. Dr Elizabeth Phillips, Public Engagement Fellow then spoke about her new book focusing on eschatology

## Upcoming Events

6 December  
Reading Group:  
Qur'an and Bible



13 December  
Historiography and  
Politics in the Late  
Medieval Islamic  
Mediterranean



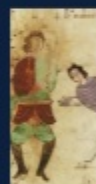
16 & 17 January  
Perspectives on  
Judaism and Islam



26 January  
London Patrons'  
Tour



31 January  
Making martyrs in  
medieval Iberia



7 February



and Christian politics. Dr Jan Vandeburie explored Mary worship from an interfaith perspective and PhD Scholar Hope McGovern explained her work on re-examining documentary hypothesis to identify authors of religious texts. Last up for session two was our very brave MPhil student Ruby Haji Naif who presented her proposed master's thesis on Muslim and Jewish organisations in Israel.

The third and final session featured the Woolf Institute's flagship projects. The Woolf Diversity Study was introduced by Dr Julian Hargreaves and this was followed by convenor of our Bible and Qur'an reading group Rick Sopher, who discussed the similarities between the two holy books. Then, it was my turn to present the Faith in Mental Health project and what has been accomplished so far. Luckily my nerves held off and I managed to explain my work without any problem. To my surprise I even enjoyed it!

After my slot Dr Chris Cooper-Davies told us about the Commission on the Integration of Refugees which had its first hearing this week in Birmingham. Finally, closing the presentations, and the winner of Woolf Research Afternoon 2022, was Dr Katherine O'Loone on our Forgiveness and Future-Building project.

The evening ended with a dinner at St John's College at which our guest of honour, Lady Brenda Hale, gave the after-dinner speech. She talked movingly and powerfully about her experiences as President of the Supreme Court when religious beliefs and practices were called into question.

I very much enjoyed my first Woolf Research Afternoon and was greatly reassured by the encouragement of my colleagues and students. The enthusiasm everyone displayed reinforced my belief that interfaith dialogue does not have to be hours of 'back and forth' but can simply be talking about our various perspectives and experiences.

Best wishes,

Seherish Abrar

Research Assistant & Social Media Manager

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Reading Group:  
Qur'an and Bible



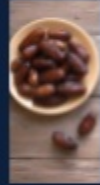
8 February

London Research  
Day



30 March

Iftar



6 June

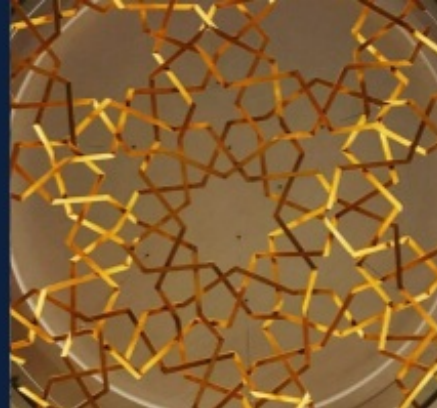
Woolf Institute  
Garden Party



# Watch Again

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## Research Day



On 16 November the Woolf Institute hosted its annual research day. Staff and students showcased the breadth of their research, and were joined by many Woolf friends and peers.

Congratulations to the winner of the research day, Dr Katherine O'Lone who shared her work on the Forgiveness and Peace-Building project. Our runner up was first-time research day presenter, Seherish Abrar.

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH THE PRESENTATIONS](#)











## William Kessler Essay Prize Winners

Abigail Wong & Tom Gregory



Last week we held the annual William Kessler Essay Prize Award Ceremony where the four shortlisted essays were presented. After some mingling with the Woolf staff and guests the judges Dr Chris Cooper-Davies and Ani Avetisyan announced the winners.

Congratulations to Abigail Wong and Tom Gregory on winning the William Kessler Essay Prize!

[CLICK HERE TO READ THE WINNING ESSAYS](#)

## REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

*Naked Reflections Podcast x The Woolf Institute*

THE UK ASYLUM SYSTEM IS BROKEN. THE WOOLF INSTITUTE COMMISSION ON THE INTEGRATION OF REFUGEES AIMS TO HELP FIX IT...



The system for those seeking asylum in the UK is not working, with damaging effects across society and for refugees. That's why the Woolf Institute has just launched its Commission on the Integration of Refugees with an aim to improve the refugee and asylum system for everyone, especially refugees. Two of the Commissioners, Janice Lopatkin and Jehangir Malik share their thoughts.

[CLICK HERE TO LISTEN](#)

## COMING SOON

*Naked Reflections Podcast x The Woolf Institute*

## TIME TO TALK

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFORMATION](#)

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