What might we gain from paying more attention to the soundscapes of modern healthcare environments? In this presentation, Victoria Bates will consider how we might use the subjects (and sounds) of hospital acoustics, silence, noise and music to learn about issues as wide-ranging as patient experience, cultural change, space and place, architecture and design history, and shifts in healthcare philosophies. She will provide examples from her new research project on the sensory history of National Health Services hospitals in the UK, using this as a starting point to invite the audience into a wider discussion about relationships between sound, space and health (past and present).

Dr. Victoria Bates is Senior Lecturer in Modern History at the University of Bristol. She specialises in the modern history of medicine and the medical humanities, with a current focus on the sensory history of the modern hospital. Her work has been published in a range of journals within the fields of medical history, cultural history, medical humanities and design. She is also involved in a number of collaborative projects with artists and technologists, in order to explore how history/humanities approaches can feed into creative, artistic and design interventions within healthcare spaces.