

# **Santander Travel Award Report**

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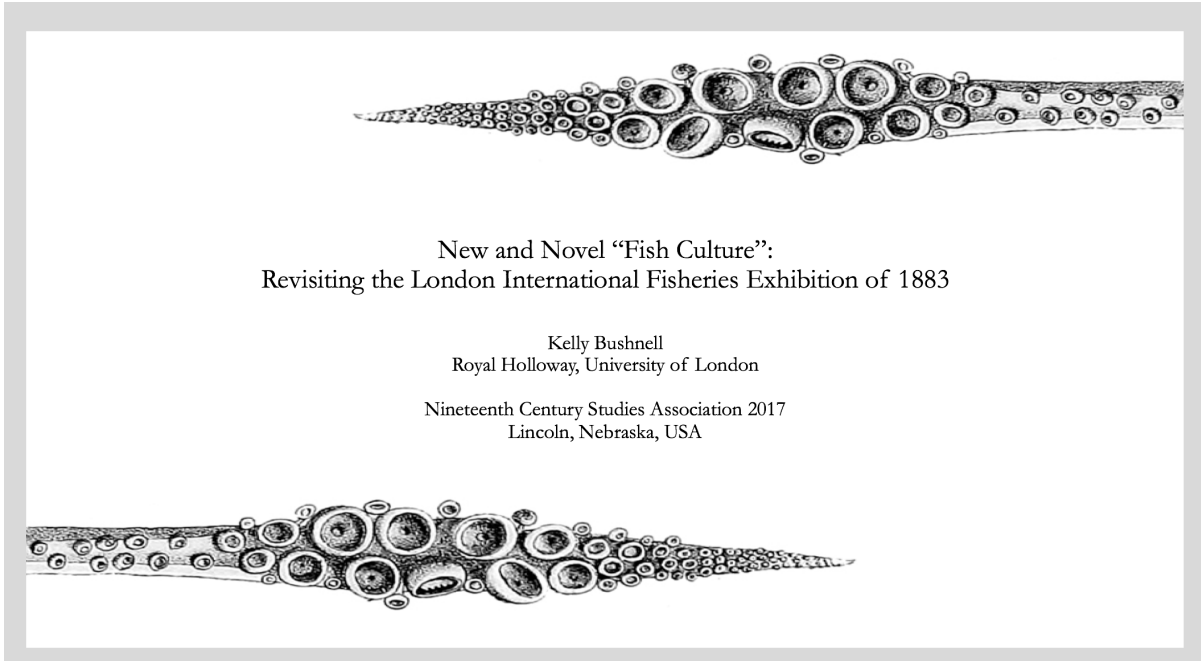
During the 2015-16 academic year I received a £500 Santander Travel Award to travel to Lincoln, Nebraska, USA to present a paper at the annual conference of the Nineteenth Century Studies Association. The award covered my lodgings and all of my meals and incidentals while I was there, and allowed me to enjoy the experience of such a large and vibrant conference without having to worry as much about my budget (always a concern, of course, as a postgraduate student).

The theme of the conference was ‘The New and the Novel in the Nineteenth Century’, and my paper was entitled ‘New and Novel “Fish Culture”: Revisiting the London Fisheries Exhibition of 1883’. The twenty-minute paper was drawn from a chapter of the thesis at in the Department of English at Royal Holloway which analyses the historiography of the 1883 International Fisheries Exhibition in London through the lens of material culture, art and literature. I presented this paper on a panel of three papers about animals on display in Europe in the nineteenth century; the others explored performing elephants in France, and American bison, respectively.

The most valuable part of this experience as the feedback I received from fellow delegates. There has never been any scholarship on the 1883 International Fisheries Exhibition, and I had yet to present any of my own research on it at conferences. People seemed genuinely interested in the exhibition and I received many great tips on sources I might chase down to find out more. I was writing the final chapter of my thesis at the time as well, and being able to talk about my research on the exhibition was invaluable to reframing the conclusion to my thesis.

The conference also included two marvelous plenary speakers on Dickens and cholera, respectively, a visit to the art museum at the University of Nebraska, and a visit to the International Quilt Museum, where textiles move fluidly between “folk” and “fine” art. I attended over a dozen panels in the two days I was in Lincoln, and a professor from Rhode Island who attended my talk has asked me to be on a panel with her at the same conference in 2017 in Charleston, South Carolina, USA. (We have proposed a joint session on memorial cultures in nineteenth-century maritime art and literature and should hear soon if we have been accepted.)

Receiving the Santander Travel Award to attend this conference has made an enormous impact on my research, my academic network, and the feedback I received there gave me the momentum to finish my thesis in the months to follow. On the following pages are the title slide of my presentation and few photos I took on the conference field trips around Lincoln. (I can easily send these to you as .jpeg as well.)



Title slide of my PowerPoint presentation.



Examples of quilting fabrics from early America at the International Quilt Museum, Lincoln.



Gallery of contemporary quilts at the International Quilt Museum, Lincoln.



Bookshop cat in Lincoln.