

9–11 September
University of Westminster
London

CRITICAL LEGAL CONFERENCE 2026

with the LEGAL HUMANITIES ASSOCIATION

PROTOCOLS

INFRASTRUCTURES OF THE NORMATIVE

CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS

PHD AND ECR WORKSHOP

Thursday 10 September 2026, morning

Jointly organised by the Critical Legal Conference and the Legal Humanities Association

Taking Guardiola's proposition that "protocols aren't rituals, but they can end up taking on the symbolic and cultural dimensions of rituals" as its point of departure, the workshop asks how law's inherited forms, functions and rituals organise not only conduct but desire—and what becomes of them when the authority of law proper is fractured by technology, neuro-capitalism, capital and the erosion of the international legal order. Goodrich writes that "we belong because we choose, and we write because it expresses our desire"; elsewhere, the essay becomes "the theater that stages in advance the future of law." Thinking through the histories sedimented in legal form, the protocols governing its present and the forces already pulling it into other futures, we will ask which counter-forms might reopen desire, imagination and collective possibility: which rituals must be refused, which forms invented, what law schools might become, and what kinds of legal scholar, jurisdictional designer or inspired essayist their reinvention might call into being.

The Critical Legal Conference and the Legal Humanities Association warmly invite doctoral students and early career researchers to this inaugural joint workshop. Come whether or not law and humanities is already your field — we are as interested in those arriving from elsewhere as in those who have been here a while.

Two sessions

The workshop runs in two formats. Neither is a panel: in both, you are in the room as a participant rather than an audience.

SESSION ONE

SALON

Peter Goodrich and Ingrid Guardiola in open discussion with the participants on the question above. No papers, no respondents: a conversation that the room joins from the beginning, and which the readings are there to make possible.

- **Professor Peter Goodrich** (Cardozo School of Law, New York) writes on legal rhetoric, the image and the juris-literary. His most recent book is *Law, Ethics and the Office of the Jurist* (with Shaun McVeigh, Routledge 2026).

- **Dr Ingrid Guardiola** (Universitat de Girona) is an essayist, film-maker and cultural researcher working on technology, gender and the image. She is the author of *L'ull i la navalla* (The Eye and the Razor, 2018; Premi Crítica Serra d'Or) and of the forthcoming *The Servitude of Protocols*, and directed the Bòlit Centre for Contemporary Art in Girona from 2021 to 2025.

READINGS, CIRCULATED IN ADVANCE

To be read before you come. The Salon is a discussion rather than a set of presentations: these three texts are what the room has in common.

- Peter Goodrich, 'Writing – écriture', *Northern Ireland Legal Quarterly* 77 RS (2026), 46–56.
- Peter Goodrich, 'Opinions and Decisions: Legal Essays', in Christy Wampole and Jason Childs (eds), *The Cambridge History of the American Essay* (Cambridge University Press, 2023), 425–440.
- Ingrid Guardiola, *The Servitude of Protocols* (forthcoming) — introduction and epilogue, translated from the Catalan by Julie Wark.

SESSION TWO

PUBLICATION AND ITS PROTOCOLS

Editorial board members from key journals in the field join the workshop. There is practical guidance in this — how these journals read, what makes a piece land, how to take a chapter towards an article. There is also the harder question, which is the workshop's own: what happens to a piece of thinking when it must assume the shape that lets it count, and what survives the assumption.

Before you come

Alongside the readings, bring one protocol from your own working life that you find yourself obeying — an ethics approval form, a submission template, a supervision or assessment procedure, a platform's terms of use. We will read it as closely as the texts, and for the same things: what subject it produces, what rite it replaced, and what it lets you want.

How to join

The workshop takes place on the morning of Thursday 10 September and is open to all CLC delegates undertaking doctoral study or in the early stages of a research career. Attendance is included in your conference registration. Places are limited.

Sign-up is required. It takes two minutes, needs no sign-in, and tells us who is coming so that we can send you the readings in good time.

SIGN UP

With very best wishes,
The Critical Legal Conference and the Legal Humanities Association