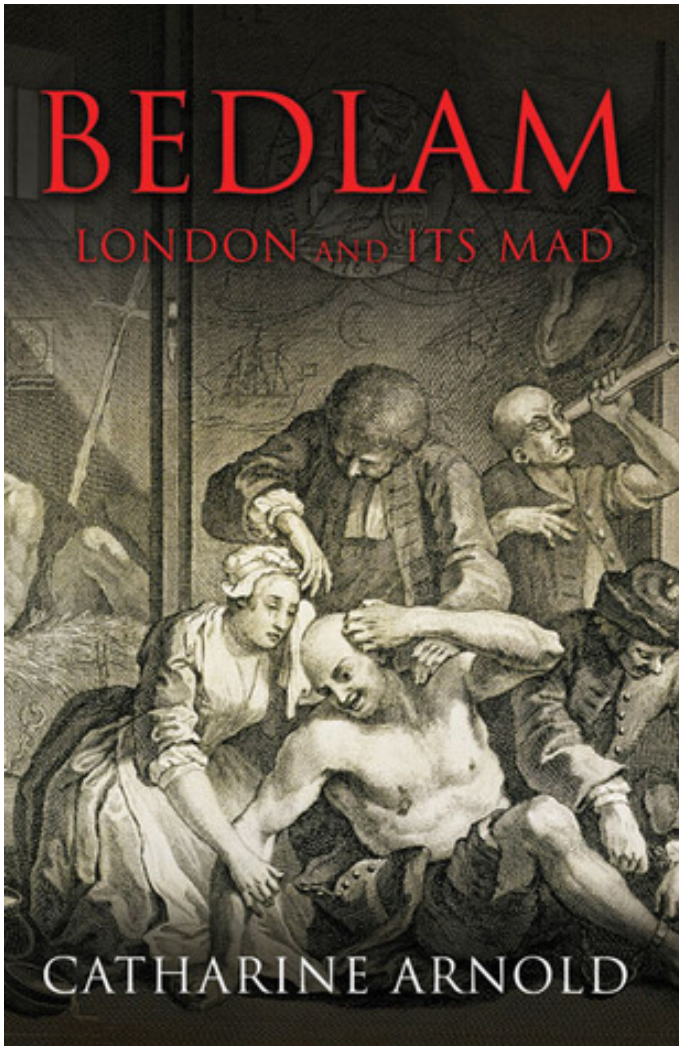


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**Catharine Arnold**

**Bedlam: London and Its Mad**



Title: Bedlam: London and Its Mad

Author: Catharine Arnold

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## Description

"Bedlam!" The very name, derived from a nickname for the Bethlehem Hospital, conjures up graphic images of naked patients in filthy conditions, or parading untended wards deluded that they are Napoleon or Jesus Christ. This common image of madness can be traced to William Hogarth's 1735 *Rake's Progress* series, which depicts Bedlam as a freak show providing entertainment for Londoners between trips to the zoo, puppet shows, and public executions. That this is still the most powerful image of Bedlam, more than two centuries later, says much about the prevailing attitude to mental illness, although the Bedlam of the popular imagination is long gone. The hospital was relocated to the suburbs of Kent in 1930, and Sydney Smirke's impressive Victorian building in Southwark took on a new role as the Imperial War Museum. Following the historical narrative structure of *Necropolis*, this history examines the capital's treatment of the insane over the centuries, from the founding of Bethlehem Hospital in 1247 through the heyday of the great Victorian asylums to the more enlightened attitudes that prevail today.

## Insightful reviews

Steven: "Some interesting information, but very poorly structured in parts. The "timeline" is based more around events/persons that impacted the institutions, rather than a linear chronology, and that makes for some muddled reading at times."

Jennifer: Though filled with interesting anecdotal and historical stories (which I usually love), I struggled to finish this book. I enjoyed the anecdotes, but found the narrative hard to follow at points and not enticing to read. Many times it seemed as if there were so many random stories, the importance of each story got lost. Lots of stray threads. It's an interesting topic, but I think it would have been better served developed in a more thorough and less random way. Worth a perusal if you're into British or psychiatric history.

Catherine: Got halfway through and although I liked the topic, I found the writing style hard to read and continue reading. There was a lot of times I had to reread the chapter as the flow was hard.

Interesting facts what I did read though.

Ilsa Bick: If William Hogarth's vintage portray is your inspiration of Bethlem Hospital, you're now not alone. Having expert in an asylum with a protracted and illustrious background (even Dickens visited Hartford's Retreat—founded in 1822 and now The Institute of Living—during his first American travel and public entry to psychological associations used to be universal perform at the moment either in nice Britain and the U.S.), I've continually been drawn to studying extra approximately (the frequently notorious) Bethlem Royal Hospital. Its position has replaced a number of occasions over, and the construction Victoria would've recognized is now the Imperial conflict Museum which I've visited. Arnold's publication is an interesting examine the hospital's history, whose improvement mirrors altering conceptions, either criminal and medical, on psychological disorder inside of nice Britain.

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matt.geek.nz: started out very gradual - as a well-liked background i assume you'll want to remain relatively on the subject of your sources, and while the assets are few you do not have a lot to paintings with - however it picked up at round the mid-16th Century. the twentieth Century is handled in lower than chapters. Although sufferers featured within the ebook they have been sketched very in brief and it focussed extra on physicians and the improvement on attitudes towards psychological overall healthiness and the evolution of treatments, in addition to where of the asylum in society. It hinted at extra attention-grabbing books and works: Robert Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy, James Smyth's Sketches in Bedlam, and the paintings of Richard Dadd and William Hogarth.

Fred Reinheimer: "Image now not available" A first rate and infrequently attention-grabbing historical past of the 1st of the old-time psychological hospitals and by means of extension psychological affliction ordinarily injured yet now not ruined through the 3 phrases which entitle this review. those are inserted periodically within the position of illustrations. Wtf? Readers will be clever to familiarize themselves with the final installment of William Hogarth's "A Rake's Progress". A portray proven in basic terms partially, in sepia, within the conceal art. Google should still suffice.

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