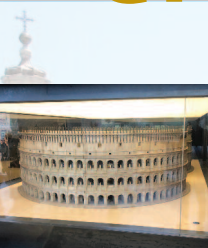


Spring 2019

University of Kent

# theGradPost



Celebrating our  
European Centres



Mindfulness  
research



Get involved



A newsletter created by postgraduates for postgraduates

# Editorial

Hello everyone and welcome to the Spring 2019 edition of *The GradPost*.

Leaves have begun to smoothly grow back on trees and flowers are blossoming once more. Spring time at Kent is glorious, isn't it? The season of rebirth and rejuvenation is upon us, bringing with it the possibilities of a fresh start and new beginnings.

In this issue, we have an array of features for you to feast your eyes upon. Following our regular *KGSA update*, you will find a historical piece written by a student from Kent's Rome campus as part of our 'Celebrating our European Centres' series. Further to that, and similar to the Winter issue, an article on the *Undergraduate to Postgraduate* experience will continue as a recurring theme. This way, you will be able to read about the journeys, experiences and perspectives of other students from Kent campuses. This issue also features: a list of productivity tips on how to stay on top of your studies, a creative writing piece, a celebration of Disability History Month, and an article penned by the Kent Union President!

But that's not all; this issue also includes a new *Test Your Brain* challenge! Think you can solve it all?

You may also be curious to find out what Gandalf has to say in this edition. Go ahead and find out how the notorious protector of Woolf College has been spending his days. Lastly, on the *What's On* page, you can read all about the events that are taking place in our local area.

Do get in touch with *The GradPost* via [gradpost-submissions@kent.ac.uk](mailto:gradpost-submissions@kent.ac.uk) if you have any stories, research or experiences that you would like to write about and share!

## The Editors

### Antonio Kostalas

MSc International Business and Management

### Shelly Lorts

PhD Medieval and Early Modern Studies  
KGSA President

# KGSA update

## Spring is here!



Photo: Timo Kuersten

As we come in to spring, the weather in Canterbury is delightful, which will make for amazing events and activities outdoors. Though most of the work the KGSA did through the winter was behind the scenes, we did host the first of what will become many hikes up the Crab & Winkle Way. We may even make it to Whitstable one day! Our little band of walkers – including the trusty Bilbo – enjoyed one of the colder (yet dry!) days that south-east Britain had to offer. Keep a look out for more in the sunshine.

Inside the warm buildings, the KGSA has been working closely with the Graduate School on initiatives to do with wellness and the community. The first round of Postgraduate Community Experience Awards had a lot of artistic initiatives to offer: quilting and photo competitions took centre stage, sharing the spotlight with pedagogical workshops and informative walks. Another round will be coming up in March, so get those ideas onto paper.

Our second official Accommodation Task and Finish Force meeting of the year went smoothly, and more is being done to ensure that postgraduate accommodation is improved going forward.

The Woolf Common Room will be getting a makeover, which means that our shared space will have a bit more pizzazz for evenings such as our Pal-entine's Pizza Party, for which we're glad we ordered extra pizza this year! Also, the KGSA has exciting partnerships coming up with Origins and Gulbenkian. We'll be hosting receptions and monthly events to munch, mingle and sip. We're working to make the summer term more active for postgrads, because it's important to step away from books and computer screens and enjoy time at Kent outside of academia.

As the days get longer and the weather gets warmer, we look forward to hosting more outdoor activities. Of course, Bilbo will come along, and we're sure that Gandalf will watch and judge from a distance. Be sure to stay in touch, and if there are any events or activities that strike your fancy, be sure to let us know. We'll do our best to make them happen!

### Shelly Lorts

KGSA President



## Cover image

Roman Forum (Forum Romanum), Rome



# Celebrating our European Centres

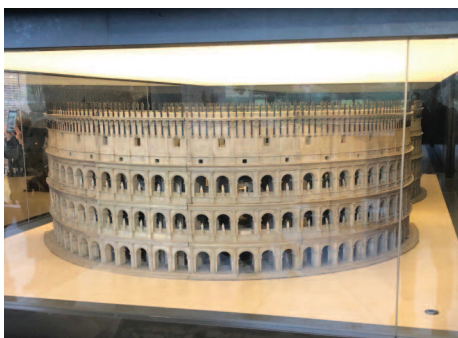
## University of Kent, Rome

### The Colosseum on display

The *Amphitheatrum Flavium*, which became known as the Colosseum sometime in the middle ages – supposedly due to its proximity to the colossus of Nero – can be interpreted as the pinnacle of all that the Roman Empire encompassed. Begun by Vespasian in 70 AD and finished off by his sons Titus and Domitian in 80 AD, the Colosseum was key to the Flavian building programme and to Flavian ideology. In order to wipe away the memory of Nero – as it was built on the atrium of his destroyed Golden House – and legitimise the Flavian dynasty, the Flavian Amphitheatre was built to represent all of the greatness the emperors had achieved for the good of Rome. Suetonius tells us in his works on Titus that ‘Titus did little that was exceptional, apart from the incredible shows he gave for the dedication ceremonies of the hunting theatre [the Colosseum]’. What better way to be remembered by the people of Rome than to spend money on lavish ceremonies for the people themselves to enjoy?

The Colosseum was built east of the Roman Forum at the end of the *Via dei Fori Imperiali*; by the time of its construction, this was one of the only spaces left in the old city centre that had the space for a building of such a scale. In the period when it was built, Rome had become a ‘Cosmopolis’, and it can be interpreted that the Colosseum was built in order to represent this. It would have been inconceivable for anybody who had not seen it with their own eyes. A major part of the Colosseum’s spectacle was the audience and seating arrangements. The seating was arranged in terms of social ranks: the more important you were, the closer you were to the action. It must be stated, however, that this categorisation of the seating arrangements is not 100% accurate, as it is implausible to think that all women, such as senators’ children or partners, would have sat at the top with the slaves. Moreover, people could also give up their seats to other people if they so wished. It is argued that the boxes of the Emperor and the Vestal Virgins would have been located opposite each other. There is not enough significant archaeological evidence to support this claim; however, I believe it to be the case due to the political and social significance of the two parties in question. There is evidence, as well, that suggests that the senators had their own designated seating area next to the tunnel that connected the Colosseum to the Ludus Magnus.

The importance of the seating arrangements was twofold: firstly, it highlighted one’s status in Rome; this was an important aspect of the Colosseum that pertained to both the social and political walks of life. As mentioned before, Vestal Virgins had their own box; their seats could be given up to people of their choosing, which would highlight the prominence of that person and their relationship with the Vestal Virgins, who were revered figures in Rome’s Empire.



1



2



3



4

Secondly, it showcased the imperialism of Rome to any outsiders who may have been attending the shows at the Colosseum. People travelled from all over the world to watch the spectacles taking place at the Colosseum and the seating arrangements continued to represent Rome’s ‘Cosmopolis’ theme.

Romans had this idea that the look of their city had to represent their claim to rule the world. According to the Roman historian Livy, Rome’s shabbiness in comparison with the capitals of the Greek East had been mocked during the middle and late republics, hence why, under Augustus, vast improvements were made to the city, which became a cosmocratic tradition of Rome’s triumphant generals. This further suggests that the Vespasians may have built the great amphitheatre that Augustus had planned. Rome was not just the administrative capital of the Empire (and, in their view, the world), it was the cultural and economic capital. The building of the Colosseum would have materialised this belief and showcased it for all to see. It was paid for from the booty of the Jewish war, highlighting Rome’s economic and military dominance, and it hosted a range of exotic animals and people, emphasising Rome’s cultural dominance. Many people would have only seen elephants and many other exotic animals in the Colosseum because the idea was that if you could not travel the world, then you could see the world in Rome.

The Colosseum was in full flow for around four centuries until it was discontinued, with the last gladiatorial event being hosted circa 434 AD and the last animal hunt being hosted circa 523 AD. In the later sixth century AD, a small church was installed and the arena was used as a cemetery. After this, the Colosseum went into decline. With the collapse of the outer south side in 1362, the materials were used elsewhere in the infrastructure in Rome. It was not until the end of the 18th century that efforts were turned to preservation. The Colosseum epitomised the height of the Roman Empire; it encompassed everything that Romans believed in and the nation managed to showcase this to the rest of the world. Today, it still remains one of the biggest tourist attractions in the world; however, it will never be the same.

**Liam Brennan**  
MA Ancient and Classical History

- 1 A reconstruction of what the Colosseum would have looked like when it was built
- 2 The remains of a senator’s seat, bearing the name of the person whose seat it was
- 3 A coin from the reign of Titus, depicting an elephant that would have been used in the dedication of the Colosseum
- 4 Showing the cross and gravestone which represent the Colosseum’s use as a church and cemetery



# Mindfulness research

## Why is research into mindfulness so complex?



According to Jon Kabat-Zinn, we are mindful when we deliberately pay attention to the present moment without judgement. In line with the apparently important role of attention regulation in this definition, most of my research over the past few years has dealt with the effects of mindfulness training on attention. This could be surprising to many people since, to the public, mindfulness has mostly been considered a way to improve well-being, and not necessarily attentional capacity. More precisely, we have looked at attentional mechanisms of mindfulness in learners across the educational system: primary school children, secondary school children and university students.

In these studies, we have mostly found small or no benefits of mindfulness training in attentional abilities, which conflicts with Kabat-Zinn's widely accepted definition, as many other studies and theoretical models put attention regulation at the heart of mindfulness. Although this meant that we had to reject our hypotheses in many instances, I think these findings are interesting because they show that mindfulness-based benefits for attention are subject to certain conditions that we still need to identify. Furthermore, such results demonstrate how widespread the replication crisis (the finding that putatively well-established effects cannot be replicated by other researchers) and the instability of empirical research actually are.

Apart from an inconsistent pattern of results that are hard to interpret, there are several factors that make high-quality mindfulness research a difficult endeavour, including the following:

- Finding an independent, professional mindfulness teacher who delivers mindfulness training to your research participants. Among others, this implies that you need to have funding with which to reimburse the teacher.
- Working with a sample of participants that commit to mindfulness training. Otherwise, your results will not be traceable to mindfulness training but could mirror the effects of something else that does not interest you.
- Measuring the outcomes of your interest, say attention or well-being, in a certain way. Your measure, for example a self-report questionnaire assessing well-being, should capture changes in the outcomes without being prone to test-retest effects. In a good research design, you test your participants before and after they have received mindfulness training. When you test them the second time, you might want to avoid that their responses are biased due to having administered the test material before.

So far, we have not found a good way to measure mindfulness itself. Most of the existing self-report questionnaires that have been developed to this end carry several problems. Among them is a phenomenon called *response shift bias*.

During the mindfulness course, participants realise that they are less mindful than they thought they were. This results in the paradoxical effect that participants score lower after as compared to before mindfulness training; although, in fact, have become more mindful. The scientific community seems to be divided: some scientists seem to be determined to demonstrate benefits of mindfulness, whereas others appear to want to achieve the opposite. However, as a good scientist, you should strive for neutrality.

Nevertheless, I am interested in mindfulness research because it can tell us a lot about how the human mind works. In addition, different from other psychological topics that seem to have been created for the ivory tower, it can provide findings that are applicable to people's problems. This has been confirmed by a high level of public interest; our research has led to a newspaper article, two TV productions, and several prizes for a collaborating school – something that has never happened with my other research topics.

**Lena Wimmer**

Research Associate, School of Psychology



# From undergraduate to postgraduate

## A series of uncanny coincidences

Yes, I did mean the reference to the *A Series of Unfortunate Events* fiction books. My journey as a student has sometimes felt a bit like a series of unfortunate events, yet it has also felt like a series of uncanny coincidences, especially my change in direction between undergraduate to postgraduate.

I graduated with BA (Hons) in German and French (1:1) from Kent back in 2014, with a job teaching English to German children in Berlin lined up straight after graduation. I never planned to come back for an MA, let alone to do a PhD. But I came back for my MA in Autism Studies in 2016 and have been a part-time student in the Tizard Centre ever since (I often joke that I'm part of the furniture now). My project explores attitudes towards autism in faith-based and non-faith-based communities. Bit of a change from languages! Even more surprisingly, being a social scientist who investigates autism and faith groups suits me so much better than being a linguist, teacher or translator.

I think sometimes we think we know what's best for ourselves, when, actually, we do not.

Although I never planned to come back, I kept getting little seeds planted in my mind in the form of coincidences: my frustration at being unable to build the career I thought I wanted; my line manager who suggested I study for a Master's in Autism Studies; my MA supervisor who mentioned doing a PhD out of excitement and planted that idea in my head; my experiences of and reflection upon faith communities as an autistic person; most importantly, my own self-acceptance of who I am as an autistic person, and that I am not a bag of deficits, but rather an individual whose life experience is equally valid and real.

This does not mean it has all been easy along the way. As any student moving from undergraduate study to postgraduate study, either taught or research, will tell you: it's brutal. I certainly found it that way after two years out. Becoming an MA student can be like being thrown into the abyss with no bungee cord, so I found the same tonne of bricks being hurled at me again when I started my PhD. I still don't really 100% know where I am going in the grand scheme of things; however, what I do know is that this is what I want to do (and what I am meant to do) and to expect the unexpected. This is particularly poignant in a field that is pretty much a blank slate.

Speaking of expecting the unexpected, something I have learned is the interdisciplinary nature of many programmes of study. Never think you have closed more doors than you have opened. I honestly felt that coming into my MA with what I deemed an 'irrelevant subject' would leave me at a disadvantage. It did not, though. My sensitivity to different cultures, my experience of being an Erasmus student in France back in 2012, and other soft skills were not irrelevant. The organisational skills, time management and passion for the subject are not things that are locked to one area; rather, they are transferable. Fortitude to manage inconveniences and other more disruptive events is a characteristic that does not rely on a particular programme of study.

Who knows where the next uncanny set of events will send me – and I wish you the best on your journey.

**Krysia Waldock**  
PhD Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities





# Productivity tips

## Insights from Kent postgraduates

*“Keep yourself ‘happy’ and allow yourself to occasionally be off-topic when overstressed or frustrated. However, this works best when you are putting in the time that is needed. The best way is to have dedicated hours that you will stick to for doing the work. This is completely dependent on you and your course needs. You may work well doing extended typical work hours, or be better off working into the night more often. Find your personal balance.”*

**Nathan Keates**

PhD Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

*“I write a to-do list of tasks I want to get done that day. Writing jobs down means I don’t waste time deciding what I should be doing and allows me to plan my time around these tasks.”*

**Charlotte Wilson**

MA English and American Literature

*“Keyboard shortcuts, Google search operators, DuckDuckGo ‘bangs’, and address-bar site searching. Anything that gets me to relevant information as quickly as possible gives me more time for actually getting work done. I also find that a note-taking app is invaluable – I use Evernote, but Turtl or Keep are solid alternatives.”*

**Khalid Aadan**

MSc Computer Science

*“When I am trying to be productive, I find that I need to have set times dedicated to university work. During ‘work’ hours, I log off from social media so that I have to actively log back in rather than getting lost down that rabbit hole of scrolling media feeds. Maintaining a routine is key and knowing what, where and when I am meant to be helps me to organise my time more effectively (if you haven’t already, I would invest in a manual, old-fashioned organiser).”*

**Lydia Hall**

MA Creative Writing

*“I use the ‘Pomodoro Technique’ (25 minutes of working, followed by a five-minute break), which allows me to focus on the task at hand in bursts, with the benefit of knowing there is a short amount of time coming up to check email, have a wander around, or play on a game on my phone. I find my productivity rises when I have an allocated time to get jobs done.”*

**Megan Batterbee**

PhD English

*“I usually leave my phone at home and shutdown from all forms of social media for a set number of hours.”*

**Eziakakaku (Ziffy) Nwokolo**

PhD Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

*“I wake up (incredibly) early and get the big things done while most people are still sleeping. This way, my most important tasks are out of the way and the day feels more free for things I’d like to do rather than what I have to do. By noon, I’m usually in a more relaxed space with a lot of time freedom. I start with writing out a to-do list and sprint through my tasks before I have a chance to get distracted. Coffee helps.”*

**Shelly Lorts**

PhD Medieval and Early Modern Studies

*“Eat food. Work. Take break. Repeat. That’s my mantra for staying productive at university. The energy acquired through food is critical for attaining focus, which further allows for increased neural processing – this is vital for doing work. I then do my work in intervals. It’s not good to spend excruciating amounts of time doing the same task, which is why I work for a solid 1-2 hours before taking a break. Breaks primarily involve watching an episode on Netflix or having a siesta. I then prepare a nice cup of coffee and small snack before resuming my work.”*

**Antonio Kostalas**

MSc International Business and Management





# Bluebell Woods



The remnants of winter still cling to the air around you, to the stubborn frosty mornings and the chill of the wind as it barrels up Eliot Hill. The rain feels cold and you are reluctant to give up your winter coat just yet. But. Look around you. Open your eyes, your ears, your sense of smell. There is change – a fledgling wisp of warmth behind the cold. Fresh leaves, so small at first, are beginning to demand you take notice as they soak in the increasing sunlight.

Opposite Keynes bus stop, you follow the runes carved on wooden circles that hang from branches. Pathways, carved through the generations of students that came before, twist and turn. They curl round trees and lead you to a clearing. Bunting drapes from the trees, left over from last summer. It looks a little sad, as if winter has bleached the vibrancy from the fabric. You walk past a semi-circle of tree stumps masquerading as stools and climb over a small, drystone wall and stop.

They carpet the ground with blue and green as far as you can see, they carpet the ground with blue and green. Dew drops glisten as the sun comes out from behind a cloud. You are greeted by the smell of spring and the sound of campus life fades away to nothing. Almost reluctantly you follow the narrower path – *the road less travelled*, you can't help thinking of the poem you studied so long ago – as it snakes toward the meadow with its whispering grasses.

There is a patch of earth, clear of any flowers, that you come across and check for any ants. Suitably ant-free, you drop your bag and sit, pulling out this week's reading. Occasionally, you hear someone calling to their dog; perhaps the dog barks a response. Birds sing to one another and you get distracted counting the number of squirrels that scurry down trees, race across the ground with an acorn in their mouths, and run up another tree.

Yellow light filters through the leaves, dappling the pages of your books. A bumblebee bobs from bell-shaped flower to bell-shaped flower. It is easy to imagine a white rabbit in a waistcoat rush by or perhaps a silly old yellow bear to stroll through the bluebells after the bees in search of honey.

A car on University Road could just as easily be Toad of Toad Hall trying out a new automobile. Snuggled warm with your scarf and coat, you spend the remainder of the afternoon alternating between reading and watching spring unfold around you until it is time to head home for supper.

**Lydia Hall**  
MA Creative Writing



# UK Disability History Month

## What it is and why it is important to us

UK Disability History Month (UKDHM) was started in 2010 as an annual event, with the University of Kent's first Disability History Month in 2016. The idea behind UKDHM is to 'focus on the history of our struggle for equality and human rights' (UKDHM, 2018); the events and platform are performed, organised and attended by disabled and/or neurodivergent students and academics. The event is primarily for disabled and/or neurodivergent people, but anyone is welcome to attend. In fact, UKDHM events have covered topics relevant to a much wider and intersectional audience, for example student experiences of stigma. Disability and neurodiversity are not contained entities alone; rather, our experiences of disability and/or neurodiversity are often influenced by our gender, ethnicity, background, or sexual orientation as a few examples, which is why it is so important that a wide audience engages with UKDHM.

The month of events (22 November – 22 December) includes screenings, open lectures and panel sessions, performances and other projects. One of the other projects that was organised this year was a photoshoot – the idea coming from Omolade Adedapo (VP Welfare) – which is called 'Don't Dis My Ability'. A group of five students, including three from the postgraduate community, met with the photographer (Kimberly Ubendran) to create photographs to show our interests, passions and hobbies. This was to challenge stereotypes of what we, as disabled and/or neurodivergent students, look like, what we're interested in, and to show the diversity among us. We also discussed the importance of UKDHM to each of us.

As an autistic PhD researcher with acute visual stress, UKDHM is important to me personally as it gives a voice and agency to disabled and neurodivergent students, letting us write our own narratives. This does not happen enough, and if it does, it's usually tokenistic or our narrative is mediated by 'able-bodied, neurotypical' people and contexts. Other students echo this sentiment; as deaf student Lily Dedman remarks, 'I often find that people often overcompensate or completely ignore my disability. UKDHM has given me an opportunity to explore the topic of my disability with my peers, lecturers and others.'



Another thing many disabled and/or neurodivergent people experience is invalidation of our own experience or unsolicited advice. UKDHM can allow us to stand up and push against these power differentials that can be heavily weighted against us. Kyla Greenhorn, PhD student in Religious Studies, explains this sentiment: 'The next time you encounter a person who may be struggling, no matter their size, take a moment and ask yourself if there is something more going on. And instead of offering criticism, offer compassion.'

UKDHM also fights against the idea of our being an 'inspiration', as Lily discusses: 'Having a hearing loss is not difficult, or hard, or even inspirational; it just is. What makes it hard is the lack of accommodation for people with hearing loss. Nor is being autistic an 'inspiring' aspect about me. It's an intersectional part of my identity and personhood. It does, however, take a lot of personal courage to live the life you wish to lead in a world at odds with your body or neurology.' As Kyla describes, 'It takes an awful lot of courage, strength, and wherewithal to get up every day and continue living when your body wants nothing more than to give up.'

I take comfort in knowing that every day I get out of bed and continue working towards my dreams. I know I am forcing my Fibro to live with me and not the other way around.'

I'll end with this poignant message from Kyla, which succinctly sums up why UKDHM and the 'disabled voice' is so important: 'Recognising people's disabilities, both hidden and visible, is important, not only because in doing so there will be less judgement for someone else's experience, but also because it can make it easier for those with disabilities to navigate a world that just isn't made for them.'

For more information, please see [www.ukdhm.org](http://www.ukdhm.org) and follow UKDHM on Twitter at @UKDHM

**Krysia Waldock**  
PhD Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

<sup>1</sup> Where there are differences in the brain so you experience the world differently, eg autism, dyslexia



# Kent Union presents...

## Aaron Thompson

### It's a new year and we all know what that means...

It's 2019! It's a time when everyone is screaming 'New Year, New Me', attempting new year's resolutions, and trying to find new meaning in life. Whatever you are doing, there is one certainty that we cannot change: assessments and deadlines! As a postgraduate, learning, work and research never really stops. The upside of this is that you are fully engrossed in learning about something you care about or find interesting; the downside, however, is that it is often hard to take time for yourself and focus on your wellbeing.

Michelle Obama once said, 'We need to do a better job at putting ourselves higher on our own to-do list'. This is absolutely true. We often let work rule our lives and forget that we are people too. We are complex beings, all with different needs. In a world obsessed with 'image' and 'reality', which is fuelled by social media, Photoshopped media publications and reality shows, we often compare ourselves to others and this is a dangerous thing.

If you see someone working late nights, for example, that doesn't mean you need to do the same. That person may just prefer to work like that, and it might work for them, but it may not for you. So, find what works for you. Find what it is you love to do (that isn't work) and carve out some time – as often as you can – to do it. You'll feel better, perform better and live a much more balanced life.

To help with any student issues, Kent Union operates an Advice Centre that is bookable by appointment, or you can drop in between 1pm and 5pm every day in Mandela Reception on the Canterbury campus. Students in Medway can access the GK Advice Centre, and students in Paris and Brussels are also able to access the advice centre through email: [advice@kent.ac.uk](mailto:advice@kent.ac.uk). We offer advice on issues including academic appeals, visa/immigration issues, finances and housing.

The University operates a wellbeing service and is engaged in the Big White Wall Scheme, through which Kent students can get 24/7 peer support on issues around mental health and wellbeing. If you're part of a European Centre, the staff there are also happy to speak to you about issues and will refer you to the right services.

Wishing you all a prosperous new year.

**Aaron Thompson**  
Kent Union President



# Get involved

## ReCapture photography competition



The ReCapture photography competition is funded by the Graduate School's Postgraduate Community Experience Awards and is open to postgraduates undertaking a Master's or a PhD at the Canterbury and Medway campuses. It aims to promote postgraduate research through an artistic medium, blending academia and the arts.

The theme of the competition is 'Capturing/ reflecting your research or your experience as a researcher'. Up to 20 images will be chosen by a non-specialist panel, printed and exhibited on both campuses for public voting.

The final awards ceremony will be held on the Medway campus in June, where the winners will be revealed and prizes of up to £250 will be awarded.

Application and submission deadlines are in early April. To submit entries to the competition, an email with specific details needs to be sent to the Graduate School.

For more information on how to apply for the competition, visit: <https://blogs.kent.ac.uk/graduateschoolnews/2019/02/19/recapture>

## Crowdfunding project: Accessible theatre



A new crowdfunding project at the University of Kent has just been launched to create a play accessible for people who are D/deaf or visually impaired.

Kasia Senyszyn, a PhD student in the School of Arts and supported by the Alumni Postgraduate Research Scholarship, is researching how to make theatre more accessible for people with hearing or sight loss. She is using her research to embed captioning and audio description techniques into a show. The project, 'Talk on Tour', includes adapting the script with the playwright and working with access practitioners and D/deaf and visually impaired members of the local community to develop the accessible strategies.

Kasia and her team, who have formed 'Parrot Theatre Company' to develop the production, will then produce and rehearse the show and take it to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in August 2019.

You can support the project by donating via the crowdfunding platform [www.everydayhero.co.uk/](http://www.everydayhero.co.uk/) event/talkontour, or following 'Parrot Theatre Company' on social media to find out about upcoming events.





# Puzzles and quandaries

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 T O V K D Q F N D S I K E U F R U T G A Q U S M E

## Test Your Brain!

### Postgraduate courses at Kent

ANCIENT HISTORY  
 ARCHAEOLOGY  
 AUTISM STUDIES  
 BIOMEDICINE  
 CANCER BIOLOGY  
 COMPARATIVE LITERATURE  
 COMPUTER SCIENCE  
 CONSERVATION  
 CREATIVE WRITING  
 CRIMINOLOGY  
 CURATING  
 ECONOMICS  
 ENGLISH  
 ETHNOBOTANY  
 FILM  
 FORENSIC SCIENCE  
 HISTORY OF ART  
 INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS  
 LAW  
 PHYSICAL ACTOR TRAINING  
 PSYCHOLOGY  
 TOURISM

## Gandalf's Corner

**Dear Gandalf,**

I'm a postgrad who doesn't live on campus, so I'm getting a bit lonely with all the solo research and writing time. How can I make some friends and feel more like part of the postgraduate community?

**Sincerely, Lonely PG**

**Dear Lonely PG,**

Thank you for soliciting my wisdom. While I do have other suggestions, I shall begin by urging you to spend your free hours in the grassy bits of Woolf. You see, this is where I spend my time, and I do strongly believe that the more you follow me around with offerings – the more you stroke me and let me sleep in your lap – your chances will rise significantly of other postgrads coming up and starting a chat: 'Oh, isn't he just the best'; 'You know, we really should just give him unlimited tuna and cream'; 'Let's make his house the most amazing mansion there ever was'. These really are the greatest ways to improve your postgraduate experience.

I guess there are other things you can do, though. First, be sure that you are in the 'University of Kent Postgraduates 2018-2019' Facebook group. You have to be a postgrad to be in it – very exclusive. The most important aspect of this group is that they talk about me

and share my pictures (you should also be following my page: 'Gandalf of Woolf') but I guess it's also pretty good for keeping people in the loop about what's going on. The KGSA (my minions) run the group, and they put on events about once a month just for postgrads. I happen to know that they have new partnerships coming up with Origins and Gulbenkian.

Another option is to join a society or club. There's one for pretty much any interest... though I'm still waiting for the Gandalf Cuddle Club. (Seriously, guys, I've been pushing that for about a year now... get your tails in gear.) The weather's getting nice, so maybe a society that does outdoor activities will suit. You could get a tan in the process.

Better yet, get some of your own stuff started. If you have an idea for an event or party or volunteering initiative, my servants at the KGSA will totally help you get it going. They could probably also get you some funding if it brings postgrads together. (Idea: Gandalf Day. Picture it: The entire day is dedicated to my every whim. There will be mouse-chasing competitions, and a contest to find the best kitty masseuse. The Master of Woolf will pay to import cream from Paris and we can nap for 10 hours in the sun.) If you have a bigger idea (not better... nothing would be better), then why not apply for funding during the Graduate School's



Postgraduate Community Experience Awards? There's another round coming up soon.

Whatever route you choose to take, I hope that you find your own pack. Everyone needs a pack... or at least a cuddle buddy.

### Gandalf the Black and White

House of Woolf, the Second of His Name, Catman, Bestower of Academic Blessings, The Night, Postgraduate King, The Great Protector, Taker of Naps, and Pigeon-Control Commander

# What's on

Got spare time or need a break? *The GradPost* team recommends these events...

## Canterbury History Weekend: Tudors and Stuarts

13-14 Apr 2019

Canterbury Christ Church University  
Old Sessions House

The lectures and guided visits showcase recent research on the early modern period, making it readily accessible to a wide audience. Among the internationally known scholars and popular historians are Alexandra Walsham, David Starkey and Miranda Kaufmann, who will cover topics from the Tudor Counter-Reformation to Black Tudors. Lectures and guided tours are classified under four themes: Kings and Queens; War and Politics; the Church; and Social History, to allow audiences to gain access to new interpretations, ideas and knowledge in a range of early modern topics.

## RSC Live: As You Like It

17 Apr 2019

Gulbenkian Cinema, Canterbury

Director Kimberley Sykes directs a riotous, exhilarating version of Shakespeare's romantic comedy. Rosalind is banished, wrestling with her heart and her head. With her cousin by her side, she journeys to a world of exile where barriers are broken down and all can discover their deeper selves.

## Autism Arts Festival 2019

27-28 Apr 2019

Gulbenkian, Canterbury

The Autism Arts Festival is a two-day festival of arts by and for people on the autistic spectrum. It aims to be both a celebration of autistic creativity and an attempt to develop the idea of a relaxed performance further, to create an entire festival that's as accessible to neurodivergent people as possible. The festival will also include an exhibition in the Studio 3 gallery curated by the WEBworks collective which will run from 18-28 April 2019. Gulbenkian and University of Kent's School of Arts in Canterbury will be hosting a range of performances, screenings and events.

## May The Fourth Be With You

4 May 2019

Dreamland, Margate

Dreamers, ravers and space invaders rejoice – Dreamland's Sunset Sessions return to Margate on Star Wars Day. Dreamland, Margate has announced the line-up for its first Sunset Session of the year with performances from DJ Jazzy Jeff, DJ Yoda, Huey Morgan and Boogie Storm.

## Sweeps Festival

4-6 May 2019

High Street, Rochester

The modern-day Sweeps Festival is a colourful mix of music, dancing and entertainment with more than 60 Morris teams and entertainers celebrating throughout the three-day festival. Medway's annual Sweeps Festival recreates the joy and laughter enjoyed by the chimney sweeps from 4-6 May; the one time of the year the sweeps could leave the soot behind and have some fun. Their fun included the Jack-in-the-Green ceremony, a seven-foot character that they used to wake at dawn on Blue Bell Hill in Chatham. The Jack-in-the-Green would walk with the chimney sweeps in their parade.

## Jane Eyre at Smallhythe

18-19 May 2019

Smallhythe Place, Smallhythe, Tenterden

After a harsh and cruel childhood, the young Jane becomes governess to the daughter of the enigmatic Mr Rochester. As Jane and Rochester's relationship grows, it is overshadowed by doubt, dark shadows and terrible secrets.

Hotbuckle return, bringing their inventiveness, humour and unique magic to Brontë's compelling tale. Suitable for ages 11+.

## Cathedral Crypt Concert

31 May 2019

Canterbury Cathedral

Presented by University of Kent Chamber Choir and Consort

From Vivaldi's dramatic Credo, across Europe to American spirituals, and choral music from the Baroque to the present-day, the works of Haydn, Lassus and Sarah Quartel are to launch during the Summer Music Week.

## Dickens Festival

1-2 June 2019

Rochester Town Centre

Charles Dickens lived in Medway for almost 20 years, absorbing the area's architecture, character and colour and bringing it to fictional life in some of his best-known works. For over three decades Rochester has celebrated its proud association with Dickens and, this year, it is delighted to present a family festival packed with Dickensian delight and Victorian intrigue.

# University of Kent

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