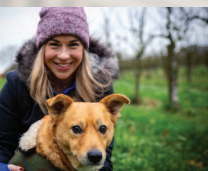


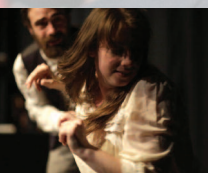
Autumn 2019

University of Kent

theGradPost



Join The GradPost



Edinburgh Fringe



Gandalf Column



A newsletter created by postgraduates for postgraduates

Editorial

Hello and a warm welcome to the new postgraduates of Kent's 2019/20 academic year! We hope that you are all settling into university life well.

The GradPost is a newsletter catering to the postgraduate community. It is written by fellow postgraduates and includes a variety of articles and updates about life at Kent.

In this Autumn 2019 edition, you will find an article about a student's transitional experience from undergraduate to postgraduate; maybe you share some similarities? You will also find a feature about the history of Autism Pride, as well as helpful start-of-term tips written by other postgraduate students.

For those interested in theatre, an update on the Parrot Theatre Company will also follow in this issue and you can read all about their journey. For those who like puzzles and quandaries, have a go at the Test Your Brain challenge at the end of this issue! The challenge includes a word search about some of Kent's sports societies – think you can find them all?

Finally, at the back of this edition you will find a What's On page detailing some events happening in the coming months within the local area. We highly recommend scheduling a day to discover what Canterbury has to offer as a city.

The GradPost community is always looking for more members to join the team. So, if you are interested in being an editor, sub-editor, proof-reader, contributor or photographer, please reach out to gradpost-submissions@kent.ac.uk

Happy reading and welcome to the 2019 academic year at the University of Kent!

The Editors

Antonio Kostalas

MSc International Business and Management

Shelly Lorts

PhD Medieval and Early Modern Studies
KGSA President

KGSA update

What a year!

As I write this, it's been 371 days since Bilbo and I boarded a plane in Los Angeles and made the 11-hour journey over a continent and an ocean – and away from a home and a family – to get here. I'd already lived in Kent for a year (I did my Master's while living in Woolf), but this was the big show. This was the all-or-nothing, no-takesies-backsies, leave-another-life-behind, and bring-my-dog move. It was absolutely terrifying, and I crumbled for a hot-mess minute.

But despite the fear and anxiety, I (and Bilbo) did it anyway, and it's this type of boldness that every postgraduate possesses. So congratulations on taking the leap. For feeling the fear and doing it anyway. For gathering yourself up from the puddle of stress such a decision can turn you into and for blazing forward with the audacity of a person braver than the one you thought you were.

The autumn term at the University of Kent will buzz. As you make your way onto campus, you'll feel it – it's that pulsating excitement of a new year, with new possibilities, new challenges, and a palpable anxiety coming off all the 'new kids' as they gaze around Canterbury, eyes wide and blood pressure high.

Every officer in the KGSA has been there. We feel you, and that's one of the main reasons that the Postgraduate Committee exists; we're here to be sure that you have someone on your side. We'll answer your questions and point you towards the correct buildings. We'll advocate on your behalf when the inevitable glitches arise. We'll even feed you pizza, fish and chips, and lots of wine if you want. Because we're here for a good time as well as a degree.

To make the most out of your time at Kent, be sure to follow all of our outlets. My Twitter (@unikentshelly) and the exclusive 2019/2020 Postgrad Facebook group will be the main places to keep up to date on postgrad activities and events, including a Welcome Week calendar that will keep you occupied, distracted from moving jitters, and meeting new friends. We make it a point to keep promoters, spammers and non-postgrads out of our platforms, because we want them to be safe and engaging places. We want them to be full of cat pictures and personal invites for impromptu meals in the Woolf Common Room or a pub in town. We want them to be places where students can post questions and mingle and make new friends. So post away; start a cat thread that keeps us entertained and allows us to procrastinate hard.

Besides the social aspect, the KGSA works diligently to make sure that postgraduate interests are considered and made a priority within the University. If you're having issues, come to us and we'll do what we can ... even if that's just pointing you in the right direction for the help you need.

We're a committee run for students and by students. We're in the trenches with you, and we want to be sure that your time in postgraduate study is happy, healthy and full of that fabulous adventurous spirit that prompted you to get on that plane, or in that car, or on that train for a course at Kent.

For me, the fear and anxiety of starting over in a new country were subsumed by research and writing, by feeling my way through the terror and newness to a new person, and by growing in ways I didn't know I needed to. Your time here will be challenging, no doubt. But use that nervous, nail-biting, can't-sleep energy to form anew. The person you'll become is well worth it.

Cheers, my dears!

Shelly Lorts

President of Kent Postgraduate Officers (KGSA)
PhD student, Medieval and Early Modern Studies
Twitter: @unikentshelly



Cover image

Graduation 2019

Tips for starting a new year

"I cannot get along well with online or phone calendars. I buy my academic diary in July and start filling it with important dates, to do lists and everything I need. I am completely lost without it. I make sure to get the ones where you can see the whole week at once, as there is nothing worse than flipping a page and realising I've forgotten about a birthday or an important meeting until the last minute. This also contributes to my insatiable stationery addiction."

Megan Batterbee
PhD English

"I personally find a new academic year can come with us setting highly unachievable demands of ourselves with all the things we should do and ought to do. The best tip I can give is to not be too hard on yourself and yes, you may need to put yourself out there, but it is okay to prioritise looking after yourself amongst the list of duties you have."

Krysia Waldoock
PhD Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

"Get into a routine that suits you, and prioritise work during those hours. Try not to feel guilty for having less productive days, it's only natural for the pace of your research to vary!"

Hannah Lilley
PhD Medieval and Early Modern Studies

"I live by my Filofax. Some dates you know from day one so you can put them in straight away and build from there. I think a really key thing to consider when you start a new academic year is if and when are you going back home to your parents. Work that out and put that in your diary (be it a calendar on the wall, your phone, or a physical diary) because then you can organise your time so that, in theory, you don't have to do so much academic work at home."

Lydia Hall
MA Creative Writing

"I wish someone had told me how to take better notes in the beginning! I was doing the reading for classes and just scribbling down notes in a notebook and when it came time to write essays at the end, it was a nightmare to go back and find the reference information, page numbers for quotes, etc. Now I take notes on Evernote on my computer, keep them super organized, color code them, always write down all the reference info before I start reading and always write down the page numbers! It makes a HUGE difference in keeping you organized and saving you time!"

Meghan Hughes
MSc Environmental Science

"For those of you postgrads living in Woolf College this academic year, my first and most important piece of advice would be to invest in a small fan. You will need it for the summer term at UKC, believe me! Also, take advantage of the facilities that the University has to offer. The library, for example, is one facility that I feel I didn't use to the fullest. There are so many great places to study there, like group study rooms, and there is such an extensive collection of books. Make the most of your time at Kent!"

Antonio Kostalas
MSc International Business and Management

"Remember that your worth is not tied to the work you produce."

Anna Hegland
PhD Medieval and Early Modern Studies

"Keep track of things you've done (literature you've read, conferences you've been accepted to, blog posts you've written), so when you inevitably feel like you haven't accomplished enough, you can remind yourself that you've been more productive than you think."

Megan King
PhD History

"Always always always write down the full article/book/website reference before you start taking notes! You think you'll remember the book by just a scribbled note of author surname or something vague like 'glass book', but when it comes to writing those quotes up into an essay you'll kick yourself when you have to go into detective mode to work out what your past self was reading!"

Fawn Todd
MA Medieval and Early Modern Studies

"Whilst the idea of a to do list and furiously marking something off is a great feeling, I like to do this on something removable like scrap paper or via a Post-it note in my diary rather than on the diary paper itself. Might be a little obsessive, but I find that this way, writing down the things you did do rather than focusing on the things you inevitably didn't cross off your to do list is great! I also have a pad called 'let's get stuff done' that divides things into 'important stuff' and 'less important stuff' to give me a sense of priorities and urgency. Also, I have found that understanding when you work best is essential. My maximum brain power is between 10-12, so I always try and write in those spaces and use afternoons for admin/smaller tasks that don't need as much focus."

Ellis Spicer
PhD History

"Set time aside for yourself. Graduate research is challenging, and it's all too easy to get burnt out or fatigue yourself into unhealthy levels of stress and exhaustion. Maintain your hobbies. Get plenty of fresh air. Removing yourself from that paragraph, section, or chapter you've been toiling over for the past two weeks is both a healthy choice and a useful tool in maintaining an objective outlook on the work you're doing and the progress you're making."

Noah Smith
PhD Medieval and Early Modern Studies

"Go to things and meet people. Often word-of-mouth is a good way to find out about events. Create a network as soon as you can and keep adding. It makes things so much easier."

Charlotte Hanson
PhD Creative Writing

"Remember to take breaks. I struggle to concentrate for extended periods of time, so try to work in short bursts with frequent breaks (even if it's just taking five minutes away from my laptop to make a new cup of tea!). People work best in different ways and figuring out what works for you is super important."

Katie Toussaint-Jackson
PhD Medieval and Early Modern Studies

"Pay attention to your mental health. Yes, your studies are important, but so are you. There are resources available if you need help – even if it's just reaching out to a friend and saying, 'I'm not actually doing well'. Ask for an extension on that paper if you really need it. And take some time to get out in the sun! Try studying or reading outside. Take it from someone who had to have a month of prescription level Vitamin D – your body (and your brain!) will thank you."

Katharine Wright
MA Medieval and Early Modern Studies

"If you read something that might be useful, write it down somewhere. You think you'll remember where you read it, but you won't and you will drive yourself crazy looking for it. Maybe keep a notebook of quotes and interesting information, with full details of where you found it. BACK YOUR WORK UP. In multiple places. Not just on pen drives which you might lose. Use Google Drive or whatever too. Finally, befriend your librarians. Use their knowledge. (If you ask really nicely they might let you borrow reference-only books and stuff.)"

Rhiannon Sandy
Swansea University

Join *The GradPost*

The GradPost: Contributors, photographers, proofreaders, designers and editors wanted!

The GradPost is a quarterly magazine created by postgraduates for postgraduates. We write about campus events, research and other aspects of university life.

Writing for *The Gradpost* brings the opportunity to bring your research to a wider audience – something so key for many of us as postgraduates! We like to feature research and thoughts from a wide range of disciplines and at various stages. One of the team's articles recently got cited at a small/medium size conference on communication and 'autistic space' in London – you never know who will be reading *The GradPost* and the impact it will have!

We hope to encompass the entire Kent community, both from the UK campuses and globally. We currently have on our editorial team: a PhD student in English, a PhD student in MEMS, a PhD student from Tizard Centre with a sociology/interdisciplinary background, an MA student in Creative Writing and an MSc student in International Business and Management. We've also had other editors and contributors from a wide range of backgrounds including Psychology, Linguistics and Physical Sciences. We are a friendly team – we don't bite!

We've updated some features over the past year to help make *The GradPost* more relevant – including a Gandalf column and quizzes in each issue, and regular creative writing features.

I personally joined *The GradPost* team to help meet other postgraduates from a wide number of disciplines and get further editing experience. I already wrote a blog but writing and editing with a team, and learning from others is something I really wanted to gain. It also helps me think of how to make my research relevant to a wider audience of people. I've also met some lovely people through doing it.

If you want to get involved, please contact our team by emailing thoughts, ideas, articles – anything you think will benefit our future editions – to gradpost-submission@kent.ac.uk. We are open to all ideas.

Krysia Waldock

PhD Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

Here is the current editorial team for *The GradPost* – we thought we would like to introduce ourselves to you to start the new year. We can't wait for you to join us!



Co-Editor-in-Chief

Shelly (@unikentshelly)

PhD Medieval and Early Modern Studies, entering second year of study
President of Postgraduate Officers (KGSA)

Interests: Wine, dogs, wearing yoga pants as often as possible.



Managing Editor

Meg (@MeganBatterbee)

PhD English, entering third year of study

Interests: Walking on beaches, cats, terrible romance novels, biscuits of all kinds.



Proofreader and contributor

Krysia (@krysiawally)

PhD in Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, focusing on autistic people and spirituality, entering year 2 part-time

Interests: General social justice warrior and disability activist in my spare time, as well as a keen blogger (<http://krysiawally.blogspot.com>) and Sunday Breakfast Show panelist on BBC Radio Kent.



Co-Editor

Antonio (@antoniocostas)

MSc International Business and Management

Interests: Playing the guitar, exercising, and taking long naps.

Services available at the University

There are services that the University provides that everyone should know about from the get-go; here is a short list that will prove invaluable during your time at Kent.

University Medical Centre

For those at Canterbury campus, register at the University Medical Centre as soon as possible. Whether it's for general medical advice or ordering repeat prescriptions, being registered with a local doctor is essential during your time at university. See their website for registration – www.umckent.co.uk Medway students – local GP surgeries will register you, as you have to live within a certain number of miles from the doctor's surgery.

Nursing Services

University Nursing Services on the Canterbury campus offers a confidential drop-in service, which provides support and advice, treatment of minor illnesses and minor injuries, contraceptive advice including chlamydia screening, free condoms and access to emergency contraception. Registered nurses run a magnificent 24-hour service – one I have personally benefited from (hours of dedicated care from the incredible nursing staff as an in-patient at Nursing Services gave me eternal respect for the incredible work they do). They are based in the old banking hall next to Campus Security. www.umckent.co.uk/university-nursing-service

Student Support and Wellbeing

Student Support and Wellbeing provides mental health, disability and specific learning difficulty support for students and staff, assisting with diagnosis, treatment and ongoing support. It is this department that assists in the creation of Inclusive Learning Plans (ILPs) for students, tools that assist students and staff in providing an educational experience that provides for the needs of everyone. Their website gives comprehensive information about emergency support, healthcare, e-therapy guides.

For information on contact and making appointments: www.kent.ac.uk/studentsupport

They provide a crisis drop-in service at both the Canterbury and Medway campuses at the following times:

14.00-16.00 at Canterbury

Student Support and Wellbeing Reception, H Block, Keynes, Canterbury campus

14.00-15.00 at Medway

Student Support Office, Gillingham Building, G0-05, Medway campus

They also have a 'productivity tools' website, detailing free productivity and working tools for all students: www.kent.ac.uk/tools

Student Learning Advisory Service (SLAS)

This department assists everyone from foundation to PhD, and provides a wide array of workshops, learning resources and mentoring support on a variety of things, such as study skills, written communication, critical thinking and revision strategies. There are workshops on both Canterbury and Medway campuses, and they provide specialised resources for postgraduate students.

Campus Shuttle

Campus Shuttle between Canterbury and Medway campuses – an essential tool for anyone who wishes to commute between campuses. This coach service operates seven days a week in term time, takes approximately 50 minutes, and is completely free on the production of a valid KentOne card or Kent Union staff card. See www.kent.ac.uk/campus-shuttle for more details and to book a seat.

SpotLight: Advice Centre

What is the Advice Centre?

The Advice Centre is here to help support students through their time at university and to try and resolve practical issues that students might have. We are independent from the University and we offer free, impartial and confidential advice.

You may not need us now, but we are here to support you if you ever do.

Who are the advisers?

The advisers have a wealth of experience, totalling almost 60 years between us! We are generalist advisers with experience in academia, housing, funding and immigration. We regularly advocate for students and work behind the scenes to ensure that students get the best opportunities whilst at university.

What does the Advice Centre do?

The Advice Centre can help students with a multitude of issues in the following topic areas:

- Student finance and funding
- Financial hardship and budgeting
- Housing
- Tier 4 visas
- Academic issues such as academic appeals, concessions and disciplinary hearings
- Non-academic disciplinary procedures

Where is the Advice Centre?

We are based in the Mandela building, next to Venue and behind the main Co-op shop on Canterbury campus.

How can I contact the Advice Centre?

The Advice Centre is open Monday to Friday 10.00-16.00 in term time (13.00-16.00 during the vacation period). We have a duty adviser every day who can see students for 10-15 minutes at a drop-in session. Students can also call us on the advice line (01227 827724) or email us on advice@kent.ac.uk. For in-depth advice you can book a 45-minute appointment with an adviser.

Victoria Kemp

Adviser, Advice Centre



Autistic Pride at Kent

University of Kent was the venue of an Autistic Pride event on 1 September 2019. To commemorate this, one of the organising team has given a short outline of the history of Autistic Pride.

Pride helps us to remember the value and importance of our individuality. It allows people to find commonalities, build communities and promote acceptance of differences. We are all unique, but we are not alone in this world. Born out of a response to repression, imposed shame and stigma, Pride events provide a platform for social demonstration against discrimination as well as celebration of equality for us and everything that makes us autistic.

The first ever Autistic Pride event was in 2005. The concept of autistic pride was modelled on gay pride and mad pride, and is a celebration of neurodiversity. It's more than just 'raising awareness'. It's an autistic-led celebration of autistics, as well as demanding civil rights and shining a light on the injustice we have faced. The ethos is about moving away from the negativity associated with the medical model of autism, which defines autism as a spectrum of deficits and difficulties, towards positive aspects of neurodiversity and promotion of the autism rights movement.

The origins of Autistic Pride events grew from the first Autistic Pride day on 18 June 2005, organised by Aspies for Freedom. June is now considered to be LGBT Pride month, originally focused on the commemoration of the Stonewall Uprising of June 1969. Police raids on gay bars were still common only two years after the decriminalisation of homosexuality and counterculture demonstrations were influential in raising awareness of human diversity. The repression and stigmatisation of minority groups provides parallels with the autistic experience. Aspies for Freedom petitioned the United Nations for the autistic community to be recognised as a minority status group in 2004 and Autistic Pride raises awareness of the ongoing campaign to gain official recognition.

Autistic Pride is about celebrating identity and not viewing autism as a medical condition with implications of treatment or cure. This is the founding principle of the autistic-led events. They are about creating space to be autistic; it's about belonging and finding each other for support. As a community. We are stronger



together. We are proud. Although April is autism awareness month, the concept was originally from the perspective of non-autistic people based on the medical model of autism. Autistic people criticised the 'light it up blue' aspect which supports the stereotypical and inaccurate view that autism is predominantly a male condition, ignoring female and non-binary autistics.

"One day our descendants will think it incredible that we paid so much attention to things like the amount of melanin in our skin or the shape of our eyes or our gender instead of the unique identities of each of us as complex human beings."
Franklin Thomas, activist, philanthropist, and former president of the Ford Foundation

Susie Bass
MA Autism Studies

Our Autistic Pride Kent logo – designed by Sharmin Faruque, MA Autism Studies

Edinburgh Fringe feature

Kent PhD student takes on Edinburgh Fringe



Kasia Senyszyn, 2nd year PhD student in the School of Arts, has just returned from directing and producing a hugely successful week-long run of the play *Talk* at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival this August.

Kasia's PhD involves researching how to make theatre more accessible for people with hearing or sight loss. Kasia was able to put her research into practice by embedding captioning and audio description techniques into her production of *Talk*, which she created with her theatre company, Parrot Theatre Company. Whilst there are some shows that now have one or two assisted performances during their time at the Fringe, very few caption or audio-describe the entire run, making *Talk* one of just a handful. It was also the only company to offer additional resources, such as an audio description introduction, cast clips and scene-by-scene synopses, which were developed by Kasia and were very well received by audience members.

The process of adapting *Talk* to make it accessible for people with hearing or sight loss included working with the playwright to adapt the script in order to integrate the audio description, and with access practitioners and D/deaf and visually impaired members of the local community to develop and test accessible strategies for the show. This was kindly supported by the University, which offered Parrot Theatre Company a performance space for their Canterbury-based preview of 'Talk' in the Lumley Studio at the end of July. After the performance, the cast and directors spoke to members of the audience to gather feedback on how successfully the captions and audio description had made the play accessible and what could be improved upon to develop these resources.

Once up at the Edinburgh Festival, the company found that being part of making the Fringe more accessible connected the production team to a much wider network of theatre practitioners.

This of course, opened up the play to audience members who otherwise could never have enjoyed the show. As well as this, Kasia produced an online survey for audience members to fill in so that they could give the company more insight into how they can develop their resources further.

Talk was a huge success at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival with near-sell-out audiences and fantastic feedback and audience reviews. Kasia and the cast and crew were thrilled with the comments they received about the production and their commitment to making it accessible was a huge part of the show's success. They are proud to be one of the few companies making theatre truly accessible to everyone.

To hear more about the company and Kasia's research, please check out their upcoming productions, workshops, events and activities via the company's Facebook, Twitter and Instagram (@ParrotTheatre) accounts, or find out more at www.parrot-theatre.co.uk

Kasia Senyszyn
PhD Drama

Conference experiences

Conferences are a part of postgraduate life. Here, we hope to break down different aspects of this experience and show that they aren't as daunting as they may first seem.

First conference reflection

I attended the IASSIDD (International Association for the Scientific Study of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities) annual congress in Glasgow between 6 and 8 August 2019. This was my first time not only attending such a large event, but also presenting an academic paper in an oral presentation. I presented a paper titled 'An exploratory study of attitudes towards autism amongst church-going Christians in four Protestant Churches in the South East of England' that I am currently working on for publication with Professor Rachel Forrester-Jones, University of Bath (and Honorary Professor at the University of Kent). Our paper was presented in stream F10 named 'spirituality and belonging'. The Tizard Centre usually has a strong presence at this conference, so I was by no means going to this alone.

I was pleasantly surprised at how 'unbusy' the conference felt – I was expecting huge swathes of people and large crowds everywhere. This was not the case at all, although it did take a good morning to get orientated around the conference centre and knowing where everything was. There were multiple streams (between 10 and 15) of short 15-minute presentations, interspersed with keynote speeches and other activities. I was fortunate in that there were a few other PhD students from the department also going, so we were able to contrast and compare the streams we were interested in.

I surprisingly did not find presenting scary, possibly because I am used to speaking on radio relatively frequently, and am used to standing in front of a seminar room full of students! I guess you could say other people were feeling the nerves for me, but I refuse to feel scared now standing in front of a room of people like I used to. I also need to be confident, given the sensitive topic area that I cover in that paper and my current PhD research. Being a presenter was really useful in terms of networking, and it gave me something concrete to talk about with other people. I usually really struggle approaching people and being able to network well over 'small talk', so this was much easier in terms of knowing what people wanted to talk to me about. I felt much more in control!

A couple of the other streams were also useful in terms of my current PhD work and thinking. It was useful to see what other work is going on in parallel fields to mine. It certainly gave me food for thought!

You can find out more about our findings from the paper I presented through the following link: <https://bit.ly/31kumBA>

Krysia Waldock

PhD Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

Co-organising a conference: South East Hub 2018

The South East Hub is a History conference at the University of Kent on the Canterbury campus. Organised by postgraduates for postgraduates, the event has taken place intermittently – and in a variety of different guises – since 2005. Last academic year, I had the privilege of organising the South East Hub, which took place on 19 June 2018, alongside another History PhD student, Ellis Spicer. What made us want to take on the (at first quite daunting) task of putting together a conference? We both wanted to obtain experience of organising academic events. This, alongside the prospect of doing something slightly different from day-to-day thesis research, was what propelled us to volunteer as organisers for the South East Hub. Yet facilitating the conference ended up offering us so much more: the opportunity to hear some thought-provoking papers, invaluable networking opportunities, and ideas for our own theses going forward.

Deciding on a theme for the conference that was broad enough to make room for papers on a range of different topics, but also sufficiently niche to enable methodological and conceptual connections across presentations, initially seemed difficult. We were both in the phase of gathering secondary literature that would inform our studies when we volunteered to organise the conference. My thesis looks at a group of female medical personnel who worked at Ravensbrück concentration camp in Nazi Germany, and Ellis's thesis analyses British Holocaust survivor associations. What had struck us both was the categories that cropped up repeatedly in the broader scholarship we delved into: victims, perpetrators, bystanders, and collaborators. Historians often group the people they analyse into these categories, or acknowledge that a historical actor could be both a victim and a perpetrator, for example. We thought that the South East Hub could be the ideal opportunity to bring together papers that critically engaged with the utility of the aforementioned categories in modern history generally. And it was this that spawned the title of the conference: 'Victims, Perpetrators, Bystanders and Collaborators: Redundant labels, useful categorisations, or somewhere in between?'

Once the date for the conference was set, we hammered out a call for papers in January that encouraged interdisciplinary approaches to the conference theme, and promoted this as widely as possible. We mostly utilised social media, the Royal History Society and the Institute of Historical Research websites, and internal emails to circulate the call for papers. The March deadline for submission of abstracts soon crept up on us, and in the meantime, we had secured a venue for the conference, organised catering, and started thinking about a dinner to bring together presenters socially the evening before the event. We then put together panels, organised panel chairs, e-mailed details to those giving papers, and got down to more nitty-gritty organisational things in the run up to the event. Ellis had previously worked in Events at the Houses of Parliament, and this meant she had an eye for tiny details I probably would have overlooked, such as the provision of water bottles (having a conference in the summer meant that this was absolutely necessary!) and stationery for our participants. It was really important to us that people would feel at ease with regard to the logistical aspects of attending a conference. Giving a paper can be stressful enough without having to worry about things like trains and accommodation, so we strove to provide participants with as much information as possible about travel and places to stay in Canterbury.

Aside from Ellis temporarily losing her memory stick that contained all her thesis work to date (we blame conference organisation stress!), the day ultimately went very smoothly. We had some fascinating discussions that are detailed on a blog post I wrote for the Centre for War, Media and Society (<https://research.kent.ac.uk/war-media-and-society/?article=543>). I would absolutely recommend organising a conference to all postgraduates. While undoubtedly stressful at times, with many things to consider that you wouldn't initially think about, it was an immensely rewarding experience and one that I would definitely repeat again, although maybe when the thesis is submitted! Hearing discussions continue on into the evening as we relaxed with drinks and food at a nearby pub filled me with a warm and fuzzy academic-y feeling, and made the stress one hundred per cent worth it.

We would like to thank CHASE DTP and the School of History at the University of Kent for generously financially supporting the South East Hub 2018.

Kate Docking

PhD History

Tips for chairing a successful panel

If you or your fellow grad students are involved in organising a conference, chances are good that you'll be asked to chair a panel. Chairing a panel sounds intimidating – it's an important role and no one ever likes to mess up – but it's far easier than most people think. During my time on the organising committees for two graduate conferences (and while chairing at a few more), I've compiled a list of tips and tricks for painless panel chairing (some of which can be applied to chairing seminar papers as well!).

- 1 Basic details:** These are easy to overlook – do you know when and where your panel is? How much time has been given over to this panel, and how much of that time should be devoted to Q&A? What's the name of this panel, or the topic the speakers will cover? These are all questions that the conference organisers should be able to answer for you (if they haven't included it in their request to chair already), so a quick email should cover it.
- 2 Information about the speakers:** Some conferences ask for a short biography when you submit an abstract, some don't. No matter what, it's good practice to share some information about each of the speakers on a panel, including name, title or position, and their current research. Some speakers will include their funding information (if relevant) and some research interests. If the conference organisers haven't asked for biographies, it's perfectly acceptable for the panel chair to contact the speakers and ask for one. Ask the organisers for the speakers' email addresses, if needed, and take the time to introduce yourself as well.
- 3 IT:** Some conferences will ask speakers to submit PowerPoint presentations early, so that they're ready to go on the day. Even when this is the case, many people will make changes to their PowerPoint or bring a backup copy on a USB stick, just in case. It's a good idea to ask the conference organisers how they're planning to handle IT – will you need to load PowerPoints onto the computer, or just open them before the panel begins? Make sure you know the kind of computer and presentation set-up for the room beforehand, so that any troubleshooting can be handled quickly and smoothly.
- 4 Names!:** If you haven't already, introduce yourself in person to each of the speakers. Find out how to pronounce their name, if they prefer to use a nickname, and review their biography with them, if needed. Check the title of their paper (it can change!), ask if they have handouts that you can help distribute, and make sure their PowerPoint is ready to go.
- 5 The role of the chair:** Your job is to be a welcoming, calming presence in the room. The speakers may be nervous, the auditors might be slow to come in after a coffee break; welcome

everyone with a smile and remind people of the panel name. Don't focus on yourself. It's fine to include your name in your brief welcome, but your role is to facilitate – the speakers should be the centre of attention. Some chairs like to read all the biographies at the beginning of the panel, so as not to take time between papers; some like to read each speaker's bio before they present. Both are fine! Make the choice that feels right to you. It's also normal to announce that questions should be saved for the end.

- 6 Q&A:** This is the most difficult part of chairing. People love to respond to papers by talking about their own research (usually with a comment, not a question); there are also people who monopolise the Q&A session by asking multiple questions, leaving no time for others to speak. In some extreme cases, an auditor will attack a speaker, belittling them or their research. Remember: you're in charge. Protect the speakers, divert rude comments firmly, and make sure everyone gets a chance to talk. Set the tone by thanking the speakers, and ask them all to return to the front of the room. Have a question for each speaker ready to go, in case no one raises their hand, or one speaker is ignored.
- 7 Ending the panel:** Once you've wrapped up Q&A, it's good practice to thank the speakers again, verbally and with applause. You can do this very easily, by saying something like "Please join me in thanking our speakers one more time, for such thought-provoking papers." Make sure PowerPoints are closed and USB sticks are returned, and enjoy the rest of the conference!

While these tips don't cover every panel experience, they do provide ground rules that work in many conference situations. Every conference, every panel, and every speaker will be different. My best advice is to not be afraid to ask questions.

Anna Hegland
PhD Medieval and Early Modern Studies

Large conferences: small fish in a big pond

Whether as an observer, the chairperson of a panel, or presenting a paper myself, I enjoy attending conferences. The International Society of Eighteenth-Century Studies (ISECS) Congress was no exception. Over 1600 delegates from across the world congregated in Edinburgh in July 2019 for a five-day extravaganza of everything eighteenth century. The size of the event was incomprehensible: every time slot had 32 different panels presenting simultaneously. The conference itinerary took the form of a tremendous volume, which I littered with Post-it notes and highlighter marks to try to keep track of the panels I couldn't miss. The organising committee must have had a mammoth task in fitting everything in – and

managed magnificently. Panels from 08.00-18.00 for five days (except for one half-day) was intense: at one point, I was held together with industrial amounts of concealer, tea and more shortbread than a human should consume in a lifetime.

Obviously, with a conference this size, it was impossible to keep track of and follow everything. While the experience I had was incredible, and encompassed a diverse variety of fields, I couldn't help but wonder what I was missing out on. There was a fantastic amount of live tweeting happening, which I attempted but proved to be terrible at – I am physically incapable of concentrating on papers, taking notes, and tweeting at the same time. This helped me engage with the panels that I couldn't attend, but I still can't quite grasp the idea of a conference where, realistically, no one could have an identical timetable and shared experience.

Having said this, conferences are not just about the experience within the panels. The coffee breaks were fantastic chances to meet those whose work I admire from across the globe. It was terrific to catch up with people that I met at previous conferences, and share our disbelief at the scale of this event. Exploring Edinburgh on my own, I stumbled upon a fantastic literature exhibition at the National Library of Scotland, wandered the Royal Mile aimlessly soaking up the atmosphere, and found a bagpiper repeatedly playing Happy Birthday (I couldn't figure out if this was a request or a regular part of their repertoire).

The highlight of the conference week for me was climbing Arthur's Seat – an ancient volcano – on my own, with my trusty inhaler, multiple breaks and a minor crisis half way up. Reaching the top on my own, I felt like I could achieve anything. And I did. My own paper was the following morning, and I felt more self-assured than I had in any of my other presentations. My paper, 'Re-establishing identity through testimony: the rape survival narratives of Mary Hays' *The Victim of Prejudice* (1799) and Mary Wollstonecraft's *Maria, or The Wrongs of Woman* (1798)' went down incredibly well, though the subject matter was a lot to handle at 8am. I made sure to give a comprehensive content warning (as I do for all of my papers), and had accessibility copies of my full presentation, should they be required.

This conference made me realise exactly why this kind of event is important as a PhD student: to be right in the heart of sharing ideas, making new connections, and feeling a part of this overwhelmingly inclusive community.

Megan Batterbee
PhD English

Puzzles and quandaries

Test your brain!

T U V L R I L H A F X Z F L P A S E F I
 N L L A B T O O F N A C I R E M A P I G
 H D U G K A R A T E Y D A S B V H E G Q
 Z A N N C I R E V D B U N A R L F C R P
 K N U I Y S Q U A S H Y S D G Y A P R E
 R C Q L B L B X G Y R K J W N G E I K H
 L E U C T V R A Y B E Z O N I O Y H V U
 R Z I Y T I F R D T Y H B J C M C Z J O
 E T D C H L M W B M C L P M N O M X D J
 K T D V F F F A E X I U E B E T E I R J
 O U I F O M L O T X O N C C F S K L N J
 O H T D O L L U K E S A T I S I T O J G
 N F C O T I L L L D F A F O A P I D J P
 S L H W B J B E G H R R R Z N E E N X N
 W O E L A N O N Y O F C I K K A B O A E
 I G H W L L X B W B A V M S X O U W I I
 S B D B L T I I L L A R W X B L T K D L
 J A J W T E N N I S W L I V N E X E W J
 E X Z O Y G G O J T I S L J B H E A L L
 A B H D B K J C M H O C K E Y G R T G E

University of Kent Sports Societies

AMERICAN FOOTBALL
 BASKETBALL
 FENCING
 HOCKEY
 LACROSSE
 SWIMMING
 SQUASH
 SNOOKER

AIKIDO
 BOXING
 FOOTBALL
 KARATE
 QUIDDITCH
 TAEKWONDO
 VOLLEYBALL
 ROWING

BADMINTON
 CYCLING
 GOLF
 DANCE
 RUGBY
 TENNIS
 ULTIMATE FRISBEE

Gandalf Column

Dear Gandalf,

I'm a new postgraduate starting my studies at the University of Kent in September. I'm a little nervous about what life will be like, and how to get the most out of my time. What kind of things are around for postgraduates, and how does it all work?

Sincerely, New Kid on the Block

Dear New Kid on the Block,

When it comes to postgraduate study, you've made the right choice. I can tell you with certainty that due to my tutelage, the postgraduate college at the University of Kent is the safest in all of Britain from rogue squirrels, fat pigeons, and the soul-crushing depression that results from a lack of time stroking cats. As you'll see in the bio on my Facebook page (facebook.com/GandalfofWoolf), it was quite a journey for me to get to Woolf College. Now that this has become my home, I am here to free postgrads from the oppression of procrastination and lead them to the enlightenment of scholarly pursuits. My rule over Woolf is magnanimous and my presence is a gift.

Once you get to know me well, and once you've appeased me with a glorious amount of attention, the best thing to do in order to make your time here fabulous is to get to know all the working pieces. Here's a handy guide:

Woolf College: This is the college to which all postgraduates belong – not just the ones who happen to live in the halls there. The colleges at Kent are like Harry Potter houses: everyone is sorted into one, and they each have a committee that helps to plan events for students or advocate on issues. Of all of the colleges at Kent, Woolf is the most active because the Postgraduate Committee (KGSA) works year 'round. Despite its name, the logo for Woolf College includes my handsome silhouette. (Huge downside: there's an official dog at Woolf now and people joke about calling it "Woof" College. This joke is deplorable.)

The Graduate School: This is a staple of the postgraduate community, and the Postgraduate Officers work closely with the Grad School team to make postgrads as comfortable as possible. Be sure to check your university email every week, because they send out a newsletter with all of the free workshops and classes that are available. Plus, they put on events that include free food, which I encourage all postgrads to hand humbly down to me.

The KGSA: This is the Woolf College committee of postgraduate officers. With funding from the Woolf Master's office, the Graduate School, and the University, the KGSA puts on events for



postgrads to eat, mingle, and decompress from academic life. They also run initiatives to improve postgraduate experience, such as creating the Accommodation Task and Finish group, which brings together officials from all over the University to make Woolf accommodation better; a lot of work has been done, but there's still some more to go. They also created the Postgraduate Freecycle, which allows students who move out of halls to donate everything they're not taking with them, so that incoming students can come and get everything they need (for free) to set up their rooms. Most importantly, the KGSA is responsible for my care and wellbeing. They also run the exclusive postgraduate Facebook group, which is a hub for all the info you might need, as well as a way to make new friends before you come (facebook.com/groups/kentpostgrads20192020). Also be sure to follow Postgraduate President, Shelly, on Twitter for up-to-date info on events and news: @unikentshelly

Students' Union Vice-President (Postgraduate Experience): This is a brand-new role, so we're excited to see where it goes. The Students' Union is different from the Postgraduate Committee (KGSA); while the KGSA is run solely by a team of postgraduate volunteers, the officers in the Union have one-year, full-time positions, for which they either take a sabbatical from study, or they serve right after they've finished their degrees. The Students' Union is part of a national network of unions, and it's designed to represent and serve all students on a larger scale.

Woolf Common Room: This is located in the Woolf Academic building, right next to the KGSA office. It has a wall that is all windows, and looks out onto the grounds of Woolf College, so it's super easy for me to keep an eye on postgrads here, or let them know when I need their servitude. This is the main social space for postgrads, and it's in the middle of a huge refurb; it will be furnished with a kitchenette, mega-screen TV, new sofas, and a couple of study tables. It also has a printer.

The Postgraduate Study Hub: Located in the very centre of campus (and far enough away that I dare not venture to it, lest I run into dreaded undergrads), this Hub is exclusive to postgrads. You'll need your student card to get in. It's a quiet place for when your procrastination techniques (like binging Netflix and YouTube in your rooms...I see you) are getting in the way of actual work.

So there it is, the quick-and-dirty guide to postgraduate basics at Kent. Of course, the most important thing to take away from this is that I am the most important aspect of postgrad life. The more adoration, snacks, and strokes you give me, the more blessing I will bestow upon you. And don't you forget it.

Gandalf the Black and White

House of Woolf, the Second of His Name, Catman, Bestower of Academic Blessings, The Night, Postgraduate King, Fabulous Feline of Blean, 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...

Taking To The Skies

17 June – 17 September 2019

Medway Archives Centre, Strood

Come and see the free exhibition about the Short Brothers in Kent – 40 years of aeronautical innovation and change. Closed Weds and Sun. See www.medway.gov.uk/archives for more details.

Making a Splash: 100 Years of Fashionable Beachwear 1890-1990

7 September – 12 November 2019 (Tues-Sun only)

The Seaside Museum, Herne Bay

An exhibition of 100 years of fashionable beachwear by Kent Costume Trust. The museum is open Tuesday to Sunday between 11.00-16.00. For more information, see www.theseasidemuseumhernebay.org

NT Live: Fleabag (screening)

12 September 2019

Gulbenkian Cinema, Canterbury

See the hilarious, award-winning, one-woman show that inspired the BBC's hit TV series *Fleabag*, broadcast live to cinemas from London's West End. Written and performed by Phoebe Waller-Bridge (*Fleabag*, *Killing Eve*) and directed by Vicky Jones, *Fleabag* is a rip-roaring look at some sort of woman living her sort of life.

Student Event: Garage Coffee Takeover

18 September 2019

Gulbenkian Café, Canterbury

This is a student event as part of University of Kent Welcome Week 2019. Local Canterbury-based coffee suppliers Garage Coffee host a chilled evening of excellent coffee, a quiz and games in the Gulbenkian Café. All entry money (£2) goes towards the cash prize pot – so the more that come along, the bigger the prize! So grab your mates and form a team and head to Gulbenkian for a coffee-fix and quizzing.

Murderous Medway Crime Writing Festival

21 September 2019

Rochester

The Rochester Literature Festival invites you to the second Murderous Medway Crime Writing Festival. There are five perceptive panels on topics such as *Lines of Duty*, *Crimes Seen* and *Location, Location, Location*. See <https://rochesterlitfest.com/> for further information and tickets

Salute to the 40s – One of Britain's Best Vintage Festivals

21-22 September 2019

The Historic Dockyard, Chatham

Relive the 1940s with the help of hundreds of re-enactors over the weekend! Dance the weekend away with plenty of opportunities to lindy hop and jive. Don't worry if you're not sure how – the Bournemouth and Southampton Lindy Hoppers will be on hand to teach visitors and dance with you to the music! New for this year ... a vintage street market will line the streets. Full of vintage trade stalls and food stalls, this street will capture the essence of Portobello Market. You'll be sure to find anything from military memorabilia to your next fashion must-have accessory.

Annie

14-19 October 2019

Marlowe Theatre, Canterbury

The smash-hit production of *Annie* comes to Canterbury direct from London's West End. This 'glorious revival' (*The Times*) stars *Birds of a Feather's* Lesley Joseph as the tyrannical Miss Hannigan. Set in 1930s New York during the Great Depression, brave young Annie is forced to live a life of misery at Miss Hannigan's orphanage. Her luck soon changes when she's chosen to spend a fairytale Christmas with famous billionaire Oliver Warbucks. Meanwhile, spiteful Miss Hannigan has other ideas and hatches a plan to spoil Annie's search for her true family ...

Ed Gamble: Blizzard

23 October 2019

Gulbenkian Theatre, Canterbury

After a sellout national tour in 2017, Ed Gamble is back with another bracing flurry of idiocy.

Of *Mock the Week* (BBC2), *The Russell Howard Hour* (Sky), *Comedy Central* at the Comedy Store (Comedy Central), *Drunk History* (Comedy Central), *The Apprentice You're Fired* (BBC2), *Man Down* (Channel 4), *Conan* (TBS) and a short film he can't remember the name of where he killed a man from *The Bill* (ITV) with a spade. Co-host of the hugely successful *Off Menu* podcast, with James Acaster, which has reached no.1 in the iTunes charts.

[Editor's note: I saw this show when it first came to Canterbury in May and it was hysterical – I thoroughly recommend it! Megan]



University of Kent

The GradPost team Autumn 2019

Editorial Team

Megan Batterbee

PhD English

Lydia Hall

MA Creative Writing

Antonio Kostalas

MSc International Business and Management

Shelly Lorts

PhD Medieval and Early Modern Studies,

KGSA President

Krysia Waldock

PhD Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

Contributors

Susie Bass

MA Autism Studies

Sharmin Faruque

MA Autism Studies

Ashley Dee

Photographic contribution

Kate Docking

PhD History

Rachel Forrester-Jones

Professor of Social Policy, University of Kent

Gandalf

House of Woolf

Charlotte Hanson

PhD Creative Writing

Anna Hegland

PhD Medieval and Early Modern Studies

Meghan Hughes

MSc Environmental Science

Victoria Kemp

Adviser, Advice Centre

Megan King

PhD History

Hannah Lilley

PhD Medieval and Early Modern Studies

Rhiannon Sandy

Swansea University

Kasia Senyszyn

PhD Drama

Noah Smith

PhD Medieval and Early Modern Studies

Ellis Spicer

PhD History

Fawn Todd

MA Medieval and Early Modern Studies

Katie Toussaint-Jackson

PhD Medieval and Early Modern Studies

Katharine Wright

MA Medieval and Early Modern Studies

Graduate School

Felicity Clifford

Sarah-Jane Killick

Abigail Stavroulakis-McMahon

Production, Design and Layout

Design and Print Unit