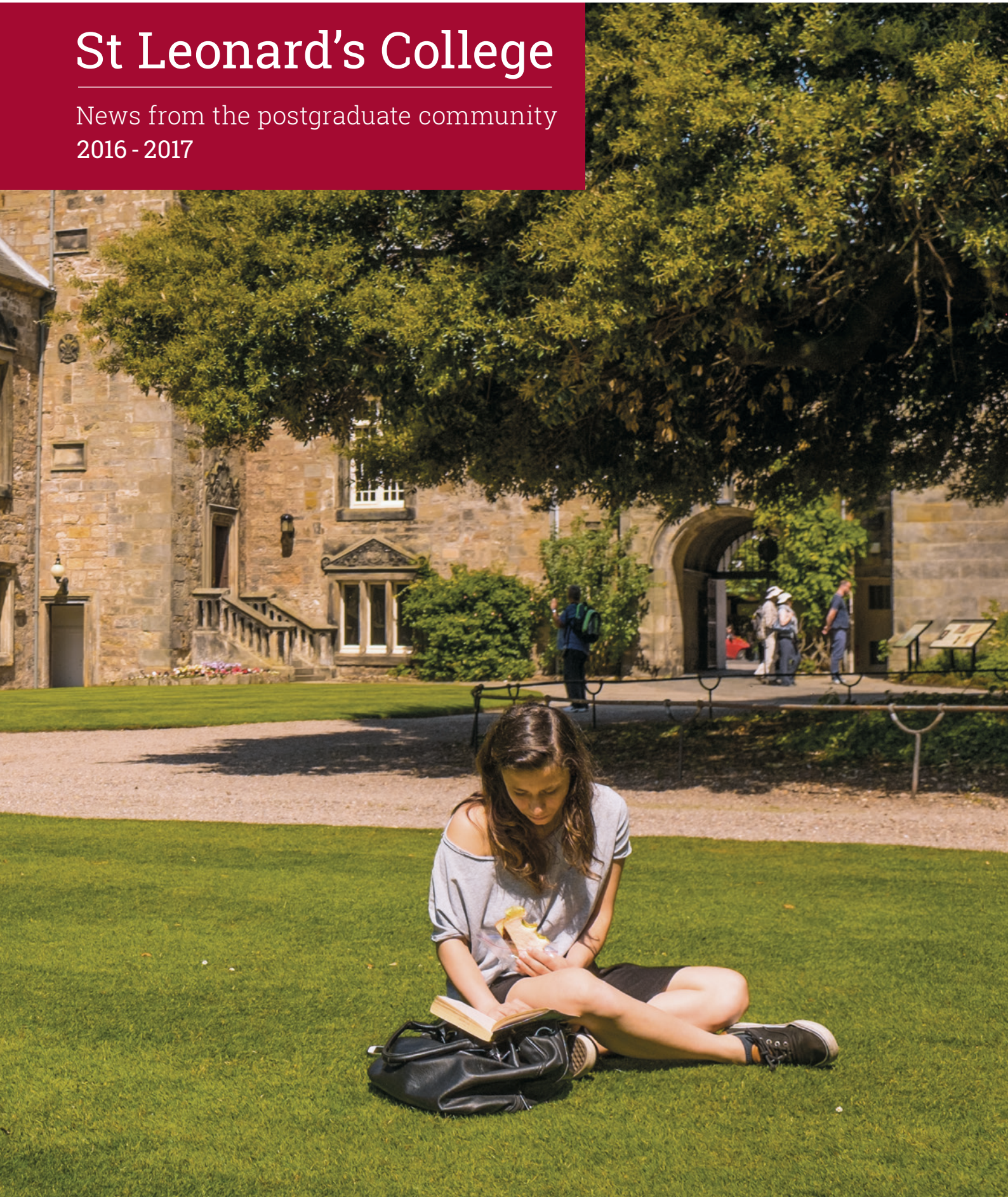




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St Leonard's College

News from the postgraduate community
2016 - 2017



Welcome



Proctor

"Welcome – or welcome back! – to St Andrews for the start of the new academic year. I'm looking forward to meeting as many of our postgraduates as possible this session, and hope to hear that you are making good progress in your studies as well as enjoying life in this beautiful corner of the world. St Leonard's offers you a community for events, support and feedback: but it's only as active as you – the members of our community – can make it. Please do get involved and help us to maintain the lively intellectual and social environment we all thrive in!"

Professor Lorna Milne
Vice-Principal (Proctor)



Provost

"St Leonard's College was re-launched in 2013 as a postgraduate college dedicated to meeting the needs of this community. Our mission is "to promote a culture and environment in which scholarship, creativity and discovery will flourish." St Leonard's provides a unique focal point for our PGR and PGT students and most importantly it is your college. The shape and traditions of this College are gradually forming and I urge you to take advantage of the opportunities for fellowship and intellectual exchange that it offers."

Professor Derek Woollins
Provost of St Leonard's College



Pro Dean (Taught Postgraduate)

"As Pro Dean for Taught Postgraduate programmes, I would like to warmly welcome you to the University of St Andrews

Your time at St Andrews will be short in comparison to many new students; therefore in order to benefit from the fantastic opportunities on offer here you will need to start enjoying them right away. Unless a particular event or society is explicitly aimed at the undergraduate students, you will always be made very welcome. Many opportunities are available through the student societies to travel and explore Scotland or engage in sport or other interesting social activities. I hope you make time to benefit from the wider academic community here and to socialise with fellow students from across the institution. Please also get involved in student representation to provide feedback to help me improve your taught postgraduate student experience. With best wishes and a very warm welcome."

Dr Clare Peddie
Pro Dean (Taught Postgraduate)
E: prodean-pgt@st-andrews.ac.uk



Pro Dean (Research Programmes)

"Welcome to St Andrews! You are about to join a world-leading research environment and I hope you enjoy your time here as part of it. I am the Pro Dean dedicated to research postgraduates and I will be one of the people helping you to get the best out of the coming years of study. Through the Schools and St Leonard's College – our virtual postgraduate college, to which you now belong – we are committed to nurturing your skills and to providing the best training to prepare you for the future. The University has much to offer you beyond work, with its excellent sports facilities and lively student community. The coming weeks will be hectic, as you get to grips with your new environment, but I strongly encourage you to take the time to explore and to find your own place in this great town. St Andrews has a long and bright tradition – I look forward to seeing you develop your own place within it."

Dr James Palmer
Pro Dean (Research Programmes)
E: prodean-pgr@st-andrews.ac.uk
@j_t_palmer



Postgraduate Development Officer

"I am the Postgraduate Development Officer for 2016-2017. This is a new role created to liaise with all services related to postgraduate life that do not fall under the categories of academic or social. These services include CAPOD, Accommodation, Student Services and Registry. I want to ensure that the postgraduate voice is heard on all issues affecting us and to set precedence for future Development Officers for example by setting up monthly meetings with key staff members to ensure I am kept up to date with each area I am responsible for. I am currently in my second year of a PhD in Neuroscience having completed a BSc in the same subject here at St Andrews. I have been involved with the Postgraduate Committee and will continue as a member. I was previously the Secretary (2014-2015) and Extraordinary member (2015-2016). Within the Student's Association I sit on the Students Representative Council (SRC). I hope you have an excellent time here at St Andrews and love it just as much as I do. If you have any questions, comments or issues you want to make me aware of, please contact me. I will do my best to help and take comments on board."

Alison Holiday
Postgraduate Development Officer 2016-2017
E: pgdevo@st-andrews.ac.uk



Postgraduate Society

All matriculated postgraduate students, both taught and research, are automatically a member of both the Postgraduate (PG) Society, 'the home society' and St Leonard's College 'the home' within the University, which work closely together to enrich your experience.

The PG Society also provides formal representation within the Students' Association and University.

The Postgraduate Society organises events ranging from whisky tastings, ceilidhs to bus trips through the Postgraduate Society Committee. All postgraduates who are keen to get involved with the society are encouraged to attend the committee meetings. We are always happy for new members to join and bring in new ideas about what the Postgraduate Society can offer to the postgraduate community.

@StAPGSociety
www.yourunion.net/pgsoc
@pgsoc
@groups/pgsoc

St Leonards College
@StLeonards_PGs
http://bit.ly/stl-college

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Postgraduate Convenor



Euan Grant
Postgraduate Convenor

What do you study?

I'm beginning my second year as a PhD student in Divinity. I study the subtleties of mediaeval ideas of human nature, and their relevance for modern Christian thinking about human freedom and responsibility, particularly in relation to what is called Original Sin.

Why did you choose this topic?

Because all of the modern writers on the topic were missing the point! And whatever you might wish to say about the mediaevals, their whole academic culture was dedicated to getting swiftly and directly to the point, and not moving on again until every possibility for understanding it was explored and exhausted.

What is your role for?

The Postgraduate Academic Convenor is the hinge between the Students' Union and the University in terms of representing postgraduate students on academic matters. I share the representative role with Alison Holiday as Development Officer, whose remit is non-academic matters: everything from accommodation through library provision to welfare. In times past there was only one Convenor, but that proved too much to handle unassisted.

What it means nowadays is plenty of committee work for me, and that's what I get from the representative structures in the Union – mainly class representatives, plus the super-delegate-like Postgraduate Executive Representatives – their view is what gets put forward as the official student position at the higher-level University meetings. So if there's anything that you have strong feelings about, do get in touch!

“The Postgraduate Academic Convenor is the hinge between the Union and the University in terms of representing postgraduate students on academic matters”

What motivated you to apply for the position?

Apart from the fact that the role was sitting vacant after the election, and I was beginning to feel like Cincinnatus at the farm, I have a fanatical devotion to the ideal of committee governance (it was the mediaeval Dominicans, you know, who have a strong claim to have invented it) – or at least a fascination with the practice.

But apart from peering into the arcane mysteries of university management, I wanted to do whatever I could to make sure that academic representation was sensible, and to see what could be done to make the sense of common enterprise and intellectual collegiality

which characterises the School of Divinity a common factor in the academic experience of postgraduates throughout the University.

What do you want to achieve while you are representing the PGs?

The University is a pretty small place, but even at this size it's far too big for change just to be pushed through from the centre. My hope is that the positions which I occupy as Convenor in the Union and the University will let me give heft to anyone who finds that the usual due processes in their departments aren't solving their problems. I'd love to abolish something – some set of forms or useless structures – but the people who write policy documents and so on are actually a very committed and efficient group of people here, and they've generally consolidated enough that slashing and burning is rather out of the question...

What would you like to happen with PG representation?

Representation and engagement are great bugbears for the sort of people (like me, it would seem) who end up on committees and in student unions. The problem, of course, is that when things are going well, most people don't really need to be part of some official body bigger than their classes or seminars, their groups of friends and colleagues. Certainly, I'm personally very happy studying at St Andrews, and I believe that most postgraduates will rub along just fine in their degrees, undertaking good research (or following a good Masters course), making good friends, and having a good time. What I would like to say, though, is that the whole structure of representation is there precisely for when this rosy picture falls apart. Whether it's academic matters, problems with bad supervisors or inefficient departments, or any other sort of concern, Alison and I have been given big, fancy gowns on the strength of our willingness to help however we can. If ever we can, don't hesitate to let us know.

Careers Centre

by *Bhavya Rao, Careers Adviser*

From CVs, Jobs, Applications, Interview skills and beyond...

The Careers Centre offers information about the full spectrum of career and further study opportunities in the UK and abroad. We understand that you may well have chosen your programme to improve your subsequent employment prospects, whether in academia, research or elsewhere. Whatever your situation and aims, the Careers Centre is able to provide you with the relevant information and advice for you to move forward successfully. We also have a searchable database for our enrolled students to see what UK and EU graduates on particular programmes went on to do next – a useful source of ideas and reassurance.

1. One-to-one advice: The Careers Centre offers one-to-one appointments where you can discuss any career-related issue with our team of careers advisors. Our advisers are professionally trained graduates from a variety of backgrounds with knowledge in specialist areas.

2. Specialist Careers Advisers work with CAPOD to provide a range of workshops: These workshops are designed to support your employability skills by guiding you in areas such as: 'CVs and Job Applications, Getting into the Shortlist', 'Interviewee Skills: How to Impress a Panel', 'From PhD to Postdoc, Making the Transition'.

3. Career Centre Workshops: A range of one-hour workshops organised by the Careers Centre include CVs, interview skills, LinkedIn for networking and many more.

4. Careers Fairs: The Careers Centre organises three Careers Fairs each October – Law Fair, Management and Finance Careers Fair, Science and Technology Careers Fair. This is a great opportunity to meet and talk with top employers in St Andrews.

5. Destinations data: Discover what careers graduates who have studied your subject have gone on to do. On the Careers Centre website see Using my degree, What Can I Do With this Major? and Options with your subject. Have a look at St Andrews graduate destinations which track where our alumni are working six months after leaving the university.

6. Alumni Networks: An extensive network of alumni who have volunteered to help students with their career progression. Saint Connect is the Career Alumni Network for the University of St Andrews with over 4,000 members in 90 countries. We have alumni clubs and active alumni groups all over the world with 52,000 alumni worldwide. Over 15 Careers Centre-led Networking Events globally.

7. Careers Centre website: Access to jobs databases, further study opportunities and funding databases www.st-andrews.ac.uk/careers.

Thinking about moving on after your PG degree at St Andrews?

How can the Careers Centre help you?

Early use of the Careers Centre

We encourage you to make early use of the services offered by the Careers Centre, so that you can fully benefit from the many opportunities which St Andrews offers. Many employer presentations take place in the first semester, and the Careers Centre communicates closely with Masters students to ensure that you are fully aware of resources and opportunities.

How to make appointments?

www.st-andrews.ac.uk/careers/students/careerdecisions/getcareersadvice

What happens in a careers appointment?

The Careers Adviser's role is:

- to agree with you the structure of each appointment to ensure your issues and questions will be covered
- to offer impartial, non-judgemental advice and guidance
- to offer accurate and up to date information
- to focus on your needs and interests
- to know where to find the answers and show you where and how to access information to research queries for yourself, rather than knowing the answer to every question
- to help you recognise where you currently are in the stages of career decision making and advise you on moving closer to a well-informed, realistic career decision
- to refer you to sources of specialist information or services where appropriate overall
- to encourage and motivate you and give you practical advice.

Where are we located?

The Careers Centre is located at 6 St Mary's Place, directly opposite the Students' Association building, and can be easily accessed. There is a ramp for wheelchair users.



Saint Andrews BioNetwork

Connecting biologists since May 2009

by Barbara & Morag, Bionet Co-Presidents

The postgraduate biology network (or Bionet) was founded in 2009 to bring students in the various buildings and research groups of the School of Biology together. We aim to facilitate networking and knowledge transfer through social events, talks and other educational activities. Our talks are usually on a Thursday evening, in addition to the occasional pub evening and weekend trips.

Since the new committee took over at the end of January there have been a variety of events. We kicked off the year with a pub social in February in Bionet's favourite drinking hole, the Brewpub, so everyone could meet and ruin their New Year's resolutions. In March we met in the Gatty Marine Lab for a presentation from first year PhD Morag on 'Harmful Algal Blooms in Scottish Aquaculture', a talk that was well attended and



Social events include occasional pub evening and a weekend trip



A screening of the fantastic environmental film, *Racing Extinction*

stimulated a lot of debate over wine and nibbles afterwards.

In April Bionet visited the National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh to experience their Celtic exhibition, as well as a little bit of capital culture. It was a great educational trip to the museum (where we spent a disproportionate amount of time in the zoology section), and also a great opportunity to hit a few of the Edinburgh tourist attractions on a beautiful sunny day. A screening of the fantastic environmental film, 'Racing Extinction', in Sandy's Bar was the highlight of the Bionet calendar for May. Professor Chris Clark, Director of the Bioacoustics Research Program at Cornell University, and member of the team that produced the film, not only gave us an introduction over Skype, but was also kind enough to take questions afterwards and humour us through some technical difficulties! The film was very thought providing and we all learnt a lot.

The most recent talk was presented by Fran from the BMS building on her fascinating PhD work with larvae as a model for tuberculosis infection, which really highlighted the diversity of research within the School of Biology. A lot of us are leaving for exciting fieldwork over the summer, so things

"We aim to facilitate networking and knowledge transfer though social events"

will get a little quieter. After the Bionet summer BBQ, we are looking towards the new term and a new group of first year biology PhD's joining us with talks and events kicking off again in September.

If you are a new Biology PhD, or just like the sound of Bionet, get involved! To be added to the mailing list, or if you have any suggestions or questions, you can contact us on:

bionetwork@st-andrews.ac.uk

Keep an eye on our homepage and facebook for regular updates and hopefully we will see you at a Bionet event soon.

Postgraduate Biology Network
<http://standrewsbionet.weebly.com>
 @pgbionet



BioNetwork screens interesting science related films

Lessons from Lecturing

by *Kirsty Graham*, third year PhD student,
School of Psychology & Neuroscience



© Laurence Winham

In April, I went from never having lectured before to giving three lectures in two days. In that whole month, I gave five lectures over three weeks. I had helped in tutorials, but I had never stood in front of a class of expectant undergrads. My first surprise was how few undergraduates attend lectures. A study at Harvard (<http://hilt.harvard.edu/files/hilt/files/attendancestudy.pdf>) found that each lecture is attended by an average of 60% of students, and I've anecdotally heard similar numbers at St Andrews. Considering both the financial cost of attending lectures and that students who attend lectures generally get better grades and that the whole idea of university should be to go to class and learn, I was pretty shocked when I was told by one of the students that "this was a really good turnout" when about a third of the students were absent.

Because I was nervous before the first lecture, I asked my cousin who is a teacher and a violinist how he had felt when he started teaching. He

said, "I tried to think of teaching like a performance, and that helped me to get over my nerves". Great advice for musicians and actors, maybe less so for those who get stage fright. I found that what helped me was the realisation that I had new knowledge for these students, knowledge that I now took for granted, but remembered being excited to learn when I was an undergraduate myself.

The two undergraduate lectures that I delivered were on great ape evolution and social learning mechanisms. I also gave a series of three lectures for the St Leonard's College Lecture Prize. This was really fun, because I got to propose the lectures that I wanted to give, I was accepted for the prize, and then I got to write and deliver entirely my own lectures. I chose to give them on animal communication, covering a number of species along themes that built

"I tried to think of teaching like a performance and that helped me get over my nerves"

from lecture to lecture: from signals to meaning to syntax. The lesson here was that preparing a lecture from scratch takes much longer than you'd think.

I laboured over small details, wanting to make the lectures (like the prize stipulated) open to all levels of students across all disciplines.

Overall, I really enjoyed giving the lectures. The undergraduate lectures were the most satisfying

– it's a huge ego boost to hear from students that they "loved your lecture; it was really clear and precise". More practically, it's satisfying to pass knowledge on to other people. If you get the chance to give lectures during your PhD, it may be daunting, but I highly recommend it to give yourself a taste of teaching. I look forward to lecturing as part of my job as I move higher in academia.

Kirsty Graham
@kirstyegraham



St Leonard's Lecture Prize Series

Reflections from a Panel Member

by *Mattias Eken*, second year PhD student, School of History

This year I had the pleasure of being asked to help select the winners for this year's St Leonard's Lecture Prize series. Having never before been on a panel of this kind I thought I should briefly say something about two things that struck me during the process. The first is the simply astonishing creativity and ability of St Andrews students to come up with fascinating topics for lectures. It genuinely is true. This year we had over twenty applications and many showed simply fascinating approaches to interdisciplinary issues and how they could be portrayed in an engaging lecture series. One of the lectures this year will combine such different things as Shakespeare and cognitive science. I would never have thought of that! So, my first advice is very simple if you are reading this and thinking about putting your name forward for next year's series: do it! It does not matter how weird or strange your idea may seem at first. If you think it is worth talking about then we want to hear about it. What have you got to lose?

The second observation is of a more practical nature. If you want to get on the good side of the judging panel from the start then follow this top tip: put your name in every file. With three to four files per candidate to review it can (and usually does) get very confusing if each file does not have the candidate's name in it. No one likes an annoyed panel member. Least of all their office colleagues. So if you are thinking of proposing a lecture, or for anything you submit to be reviewed for that matter, do us all a favour and put your name in the file.

Having said that, I hope you will join me at this year's St Leonard's Lecture Prize series. The topics are simply fascinating and I look forward to seeing what other weird and wonderful ideas are out there in the future!

What is the St Leonard's College Lecture Prize?

It is a competition hosted by St Leonard's College to give postgraduate students the opportunity to deliver an original series of three research-based lectures.

Who selects the winner?

There are two panels one for Arts and Divinity and the other for Science and Medicine. Proposals will be judged by a panel of staff and students from the appropriate Faculty.

What could I win?

There two prizes of £300 will be awarded to the postgraduate students selected to deliver the lectures.

When do I give my lectures?

Successful applicants will deliver their lecture series around March / April.



The European Student Conference on Behaviour and Cognition

by *Georgina Glaser, PhD candidate, School of Biology*

Attending a conference as a student can sometimes be harrowing. Individuals can feel anxious about having their presentations scrutinised by more senior academics, and networking turns into a requirement rather than a natural side effect of integrating with other attendees. On the other hand, student-led conferences can be rewarding. Attendees are provided with a comfortable and relaxed environment to socialise and spark conversations with other early-career researchers. In March, the University of St Andrews hosted the Third European Student conference on Behaviour and cognition. Over 50 students from countries across Europe, such as Italy, the Czech Republic, Austria attended, and ranged from undergraduates to PhD students. The organising committee created a warm and friendly environment by encouraging academic discussions, most of which stemmed from the exciting research projects presented by the 18 student speakers.

“Attendees are provided with a comfortable and relaxed environment to socialise and spark conversations with other early-career researchers”

With a strong concern for the environment, the organisers strived to achieve a ‘green’ conference. For instance, they printed conference programmes on recycled paper, provided attendees with recycled water bottles, and served only vegetarian or vegan lunch options. Although the change in food options was at first controversial, attendees seemed nothing but supportive of the decision.

Aside from student research, a scheduled break out session consisted of a round table discussion focusing on gender equality in science. Students

engaged with each other in their perceptions of gender equality and spoke about potential solutions or actions they could incorporate into their own workplaces.

Although a stimulating environment was the priority, the conference also organised a ceilidh so that attendees could enjoy the fun side of Scotland. This was held at the Student’s Union, and the attendees were enthusiastic and frolicked mostly, but not always, to the instructions of the caller. For most attendees, the ceilidh was a completely novel experience, which they embraced whole heartedly.

When the conference ended, the organisers were overwhelmed by the wave of praise from students and plenary speakers, who seemed not only impressed by the conference but grateful for the opportunity to attend. Due to the success of this conference, there are already volunteers to host next year’s conference in the Czech Republic.



Santander Research Mobility Award 2016

by *Kristin Eggeling, School of International Relations*

Thanks to the generous support I received from the Santander Research Mobility Award, I was able to travel to and present parts of my doctoral research at the International Political Science Association (IPSA) World Congress for Political Science that took place in Poznan, Poland between 23 and 29 July 2016. At the congress, I participated in a panel on the role of small states in world politics, where I served as a discussant for a colleague’s paper, and presented a piece of my own original research entitled ‘Small in size, big in perception? Qatar’s use of cultural diplomacy as virtual enlargement’. Next to receiving invaluable feedback to get my paper fit for publication, I also had the opportunity to discuss my work with leading academics in the field, and got the chance to network with scholars from all around the world. Attending and presenting at the IPSA Congress has thus helped me to improve my transferable academic skills, and provided me with new ideas on how to continuously improve the quality of my doctoral research. Again, I would like to thank Santander and its support through the 2016 Research Mobility Award, without which I could not have attended the congress.



© Sabrina Theys



The panel discussing “Small States in a World of Inequality” included Matthew Crandall (left) from Tallinn University; Catlyn Kirna from Tallinn University; Sarina Theys from Newcastle University; Kristin Eggeling; and Gabriele Giovannini (right) from Northumbria University.



Four Stages in a Field Research PhD

by *Kirsty Graham*, third year PhD student, School of Psychology & Neuroscience

Doing fieldwork for your PhD is incredibly rewarding, but it also changes the balance of your workload so that the bulk of writing can't happen until your last year. Now that I'm in the third and (hopefully) final year of my PhD, I'm looking back on what worked and what I wish I'd known earlier. My research topic is gestural communication of wild bonobos, for which I conducted two six-month field seasons in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). This article is less of an instructional guide and more of a 'heads up' for things to expect when your PhD involves fieldwork.

The Preparation

My first semester of first year was spent reading. Someone recently told my partner "read as much as you can in your first year, because after that, there's not enough time!" I tend to agree. It's important to cover as much reading as possible in the first year, and then you just have to keep up with new articles as they come out. Google scholar alerts really help to keep up with new publications – I left them running while away on fieldwork, so I didn't miss anything and came back to a pile of interesting new studies.

"It's important to cover as much reading as possible in the first year, and then you just have to keep up with new articles as they come out"

On top of reading, there's a lot of preparation for fieldwork: ethics and risk assessment approval from the School; permission to work at the field site during the desired months; research permit and travel visa for the country you're working in; booking flights, arranging in-country transport and accommodation; getting the required and recommended vaccinations; and, aside from all that, planning and refining the research methods that you'll be using.

The Fieldwork

Fieldwork is the fun part. My fieldwork was at Wamba in Northern DRC (Democratic Republic of the Congo), at quite a remote field station. We didn't have internet, only a satellite box with which we were allowed to send and receive only two emails a week. Electricity was solar powered. We had pit toilets and bucket showers. In the field, there are no distractions, only research. I was out most days following the bonobos in the morning and inputting data in the afternoon/evening. In your free time it's a good opportunity to read those long classics that you'd never otherwise have time for (I got through *Ulysses* and *War and Peace*, among many others!). *The Innocent Anthropologist* is a great book to read about fieldwork – whether or not you're an anthropologist, I can guarantee you'll relate to a lot of the situations.

The Analysis

Oh, video coding! I got back from fieldwork with about 359 hours of video footage, which I then had to watch, look for gestures, and re-watch the gestures in slow motion while coding them. For every two months of fieldwork, it took one month of video coding. Another student told me, "however long you think you're going to take to code the video, double it". It was good advice.

"On top of reading, there's a lot of preparation for fieldwork and, aside from all that, planning and refining the research methods that you'll be using"

No matter how you collect your data on fieldwork, we're likely in the same boat – I had to wait until all my data was collected and all my video was coded before being able to start analysis. This means that while other students who are doing discrete experiments might have been able to analyse and write as they went along, you have to wait until the end and then write up the same amount all in one go. On the bright side, your supervisor can't ask for "just one more experiment" in your last year.

The Writing

So far, I've found that writing and analysis go along hand in hand. First, I'll write an abstract that helps to guide my analysis. Then I'll analyse my data. Then I'll come back and write a paper or chapter around it. Often I'll feel like I've come to the end of what I need to analyse for a chapter, but upon writing realise that there is something else it would be nice to include.

The 'Thesis Bootcamp' workshop revolutionised my writing. It gave me the confidence to know that I can write quickly if I have to, and I found the Pomodoro technique is a nice time management writing tool. If you get the chance, take the bootcamp! And to end on some advice from the bootcamp – the sooner you get to the first draft, the easier the rest will be. That's what I'm working on right now. Wish me luck!

"The 'Thesis Bootcamp' workshop revolutionised my writing. It gave me the confidence to know that I can write quickly if I have to, and I found the Pomodoro technique is a nice writing tool"

Fieldwork and travel advice

"There are two main places within the University webpages to check for information on fieldwork and travel"

1. The St Leonard's College Resource webpage explains when work is classed as field work, who you should notify and what you should do before any work begins.

For further information check:

www.st-andrews.ac.uk/pgstudents/stleonards/resources/fieldwork

www.st-andrews.ac.uk/staff/teaching/strategypolicy/policy/postgraduate

2. The University provides guidance on university travel insurance, trip planning and fieldwork risk assessment for more hazardous activities. Before you leave on fieldwork you will need to do a travel risk assessment.

Information can be found on the Environmental, Health and Safety Services Moodle page:

<http://bit.ly/moodleEHSS>

The following is available:

- Travel advice and updated (e.g. for Zika virus).
- Information on the use of Airbnb.
- Planning and risk assessment material.
- Travel insurance information including geographical restrictions.

Who you should notify?

- Supervisor / Director of Postgraduates.
- PGR Pro Dean
- Registry to update your Location of Studies (reg-support-pgr@st-andrews.ac.uk).
- EHSS (Environmental Health and Safety Services)
- International Cultural Adviser if you have any visa issues.



Looking back to PhD and ahead to Civil Service

By *Dr Nino Kereselidze, PhD in International Relations, St Andrews, 2015*

Nino Kereselidze embarked on a PhD in International Relations at the University of St Andrews with full University and external funding in 2012 and graduated quite unprecedentedly under three years. In all instances she was selected on a highly competitive basis. In this article Nino shares her experience at St Andrews with advice for those who contemplate to apply and in acknowledgment of the funding she received.

For Nino, three years of full time postgraduate programme was labour-intensive and even more so was managing funding from a number of prestigious institutions during various stages. Her advice to international postgraduate applicants is that the university is the first place to start. Embarking on her degree would have been impossible without the University of St Andrews Postgraduate Scholarships and the School of International Relations (IR) scholarships.

“The breadth of support that this university offers to students in every dimension is remarkable”

The next step is matching funding from external sources. Open Society Foundations (OSF) with Global Supplementary Grant Program (GSGP) enabled Nino to get her research project off the drawing board. In her final year Nino was awarded a bursary from the Thomas & Margaret Roddan Trust.

Besides managing co-funding, handling multiple tasks and staying focused is a key. Postgraduate study is a mixture of thesis writing, courses, training, teaching, public lectures, conferences and publications. Soon Nino was a tutor on undergraduate modules and carried out her research in the School of International Relations. Apart from that she worked as an Assistant Warden for Student Services and assisted at matriculation for Registry. As she often shared with other founding members of the Georgian society at St Andrews: “Patience with procedures coupled with perseverance are essential elements for such accomplishments”.

Completing a PhD is utterly impossible without the genuine guidance of a supervisor. Nino remains deeply respectful of unwavering enthusiasm with which her supervisor Professor Rick Fawn, Director of the Institute of Middle East, Central Asia and Caucasus Studies (MECACs) has supported her to orchestrate her work, and continues to train the academic and policy community.

As Nino says: “The breadth of support that this university offers to students in every dimension is remarkable.” Nino’s fieldwork in Azerbaijan and Armenia was made possible with the Field Research Grant. Other than that, the Centre for Academic, Professional and Organisational Development (CAPOD) was a useful place not only for skills development courses, they also supported her with Research Development Funding.

Another dimension of the doctoral studies is participation at conferences. In this respect, the Academic Swiss Caucasus Net (ASCN), University of Glasgow, and University of Nottingham provided Nino with excellent platforms to present her work outside St Andrews.

“Postgraduate study is a mixture of thesis writing, courses, training, teaching, public lectures, conferences and publications”

National government’s support to international education stays at the core. It was a strong returning commitment that enabled Nino to win the government scholarship founded by the Prime Minister of Georgia the final year. Nino firmly believes that bringing academic and civil society perspectives in civil service is what needs to be done in Georgia. Since she defended her dissertation on Foreign Policy of the European Union in the South Caucasus, joining the European Integration Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia has been the right place to contribute. Immediately after graduation she got an offer from the foreign office building on her previous work at the Embassy of Georgia to London and United Nations International Maritime Organisation.

“Completing PhD is utterly impossible without a genuine guidance of a supervisor”

Last but not least, continuity with the previous work is important. When Nino started her doctorate she had already been employed at the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia. Work related missions to Brussels enabled her to collect thesis interviews, as well as allowed her an opportunity to grow from a senior specialist to an acting head of division.

Nino studied towards a doctoral degree during the 600th anniversary campaign. For her, as a St Androean, it is important to sustain this community by giving back.

Upcoming events and funding

The following events are well worth applying for as they will look great on your CV and can help you out financially.

St Leonards Associate Researcher (Autumn)

The Associate Researcher is to provide Sixth Form students at the St Leonard’s school with a link to the research community at the University by contributing to the “Theory of Knowledge” course with four presentations over the academic year. The position carries a stipend of £400.

St Leonard’s-Santander Research Mobility Scholarships (Spring)

The Research Mobility Scholarships provide financial assistance to those planning to study/research overseas (maximum award £1,000). It is only available to the postgraduate community. If you have ambitious and interesting plans for research or study in countries within the Banco Santander Network, then consider applying. Banco Santander SA Network:

Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, China, Colombia, France, Germany, Ghana, Mexico, Poland, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Qatar, Russia, Singapore, Spain, United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, USA

2016 St Leonard’s Prize Lecture (Spring)

St Leonard’s College runs an annual competition for the Prize Lectures. For further information see page 9.



© Emma-Louise Bryant

Scottish Researchers Monkeying Around

By *Emmie Bryant*, third year PhD student, Psychology & Neuroscience

Given the world class research occurring at our institution, I don't think it would surprise you to know that the University of St Andrews owns a primatological field station. It may however surprise you to know that you will find this field station in Scotland, about halfway up the hill in Edinburgh Zoo.

The Living Links to Human Evolution Research Centre was established in 2008 in partnership with the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland, and since its inception has played host to many researchers from the Scottish Primate Research Group. Researchers from St Andrews, Stirling, Edinburgh and other universities in Scotland and the north of England come to Living Links to undertake studies with captive primates living in large naturalistic enclosures, both observationally and experimentally. Observational studies often involve watching how the monkeys interact with each other and with their environment, while experimental research seeks to

understand how the monkeys think by giving them puzzles. All of the work is non-invasive and designed to be intellectually enriching. After the welfare of the monkeys themselves, public engagement is a top priority of the centre. Experiments take place in dedicated research rooms viewable through large windows from the visitor decks, so everyone who comes through the centre can watch the research in action.

Living Links houses two mixed-species groups of brown capuchin monkeys and common squirrel monkeys, who are naturally found living together in the rainforests of South America. More than sixty monkeys in total live at the

centre. There are two groups, East and West, and the facility is set up like a mirror image. Each side has two indoor enclosures, one for each species, and a large outdoor enclosure. This design was set up with research in mind, so if it is necessary for a study to use a control group it is possible to do this with other variables (such as diet and environment) controlled for.

So what is it like to be a researcher there? I am studying memory in the capuchin monkeys and have been based at the centre for the

last 12 months. All research has to first be approved by the University's ethics committee, and then by the team

“Observational studies often involve watching how the monkeys interact with each other and with their environment, while experimental research seeks to understand how the monkeys think by giving them puzzles”

“When I first started, I took some convincing that I wasn't just looking at thirty identical monkeys – and I struggle with human faces! How was I going to be able to tell all these monkeys apart?”



Pictured in front of My Primate Family Tree is Dame Anne Glover, former Chief Scientific Adviser in Scotland who also served as the Chief Scientific Adviser in Europe. Capuchins are on the bottom left of the tree with the smaller squirrel monkeys.

of senior researchers and keepers at Living Links to ensure that there are no negative welfare implications for the primates. Once your study has been given the seal of approval, you receive your coveted researcher badge and start training.

The first stage of almost any study is to ensure you can reliably identify all the monkeys. When I first started, I took some convincing that I wasn't just looking at thirty identical monkeys – and I struggle with human faces! How was I going to be able to tell all these monkeys apart? Luckily, the wonderful team of dedicated keepers and the presence of researchers who had been there before me provided me with a wealth of different identifiers I could use. While one person would identify Figo by his large ears and narrow face, someone else would know him because of the dark spot on his left cheek. The alpha males are the easiest to learn because they are simply so much bigger and more butch than the other group members, but gradually I began to tell them all apart. Now, a year later, I can even see the subtle family resemblances between siblings.

Once you're comfortable with identifying the monkeys, you're ready to start your observational study. However for my research, I need to work

with them face to face to give them memory tasks, so the next stage for me was to learn how to work with them safely. Once I had donned my fetching boiler suit and protective gloves, I entered the research rooms and started learning how to use the cubicles. Via the use of moving plastic slides, the array can be configured into two rows of continuous tunnels connecting the indoor and outdoor enclosures, or up to four separate cubicles on each row. This means that monkeys can be separated from the rest of the group if necessary, which is often helpful for certain cognitive tasks and also enables low-ranking monkeys to participate without having their rewards stolen by more dominant group members. Research is completely voluntary: a researcher simply opens the slides to the enclosures and waits for a monkey to come in. As these are highly intelligent animals and the experiments are intellectually stimulating, usually the challenge is not trying to get monkeys to come in but trying to get them to leave when they've had their turn.

Research with the monkeys at Living Links covers a diverse range of topics outside of trying to get an insight into their minds. Welfare is paramount, so there have even been observational studies looking into the impact of

experimental research sessions on the behaviour of the groups. When a slight increase in aggression involving participating monkeys was observed, it was realised that this was because they were as standard given a “jackpot” reward (a large peanut still in its shell) upon completion of their session, which they would then take outside in front of the others. Other studies range from tool use to social learning, to watching who the monkeys socialise the most with to seeing how and where they rub onion on each other, so there really is a bit of everything.

As for me, my experience working with the monkeys has been incredibly fun and very rewarding. I have become very attached to the little critters, and through all the frustrations you would expect from a PhD working with animals I don't think I'd have it any other way. When I joined the university in 2013 and heard then-current Living Links researchers talking about monkeys as if they were people, I thought they were utterly bonkers. After just a few weeks with them, I was doing exactly the same.

CAPOD Development Opportunities

M skills

M-Skills, which stands for Masters' Skills, is an extra-curricular programme for all taught postgraduate (Masters) students at the University of St Andrews.

It brings together Masters students from all Schools and disciplines to help equip them with a range of useful skills and experiences for their year at St Andrews, and beyond!

PGT Mentoring

There are mentoring schemes running in Management, History and Computer Science to help incoming Masters students to network and ask questions of Masters students graduating in 2016.

GRAD skills

GRADskills combines the expertise of St Andrews' own academic and support staff with that of external consultants and training professionals to provide a diverse and interesting programme of generic skills development opportunities, courses and events. We seek to include a broad range of inputs from sector bodies and national organisations such as Vitae, the flagship national training and development organisation for researchers.

Online training resources

We realise that you will not always be able to attend face-to-face workshops and events. For that reason, in order to give you access to development opportunities at a time and place that suit you, we have a range of online training courses and other resources available.

For more information:

www.st-andrews.ac.uk/capod/students/pgresearch/onlinetrainingresources

Postgraduate X-Change seminars

The X-Change seminars provide a great opportunity for Postgraduate students from all Schools and at any year of study to present their work to an interdisciplinary audience. This is a fabulous chance to get used to public speaking and building your confidence for engaging with your peers. It is useful to consider how other people may think about your research.

Every seminar is followed by a free networking lunch from 1-2pm for all participants (including the audience).

For further information:

www.st-andrews.ac.uk/capod/students/pgresearch/gradskills/x-change

CAPOD

E: capod@st-andrews.ac.uk
T: (01334) 462141
@StAndrews_Learn

What researchers say about GRADskills

All of it was very beneficial, very well structured and pertinent.

The presenter made the topic very interesting and relevant. Terrific!

Gets one thinking about one's career path and how to better prepare for that 'dream' job.

What last year's M-Skills students said...

I've found the M-Skills workshops I attended to be a great way to meet other postgrad students and learn skills that are helpful to me right now, and into the future.

I found my first semester to be a whirlwind. Having a chance to learn about how to organise my time and work has been great. I know I'll use these skills after graduation too.

GRADskills Innovation Grant & PG Conference Fund

The GRADskills Innovation Grant and Postgraduate Conference Fund are a means by which research postgraduate students are encouraged to think more creatively about ways in which their transferable skills development can be facilitated. This can either be via innovative projects to develop training resources or activities that can be made available to postgraduate students through the GRADskills programme or via organising a conference for other postgraduate students.

- Funding up to £2,000 is available for Innovation Grant projects.
- Matched funding of up to £1,000 is available to support postgraduate conferences.

Applications are invited from research postgraduate students and staff at the University of St Andrews for funding:

www.st-andrews.ac.uk/capod/funding/innovation

Tips and experience

- If you are organising a conference/workshop, have an organising committee and work as a team; work should be delegated between committee members.
- Use colleagues with a range of skill and expertise. You will need to

communicate, project manage and organise logistics.

- The committee will gain valuable skills and experience from planning and hosting the events. It will look good on a CV or resumé!
- Early on you will need to fundraise and write a funding application.
- You will also need to advertise through various social media, ideas for this include hosting photo/logo competitions to peak interest. If used

effectively social media will maximise awareness of the conference and therefore increase attendance.

- Attendees appreciate an equal balance of male and female researchers for the guest speakers and workshop hosts.
- Presenting at a conference is a valuable experience.
- Talks and workshops help provide specialist knowledge and training on specific research techniques and analytical approaches.



© Julianne Mentzer

Dare to Tell

By *Julianne Mentzer, School of English*

This three-day conference celebrating the 400th anniversary of the publication of Ben Jonson's first Folio of Works focused on bringing together Jonson scholars, early career researchers, and postgraduate students for an interdisciplinary investigation of Jonson's works and legacy.

The conference itself provided a venue for the presentation of new scholarship in the field as well as an interactive viewing of St Andrews' Special Collections holdings of various editions of Jonson's Works and related rare books, the premiere of the play *Ben and Jamie*, a drama workshop, and a roundtable discussion about the future of Jonsonian Scholarship with eminent scholars.



© Amanda Stansbury

Society for Marine Mammalogy

By *Joanna Kershaw, School of Biology*

The UK & Ireland Regional Student Chapter of the Society for Marine Mammalogy encourages interdisciplinary exchanges between young scientists from different backgrounds and research institutes. The successful 2016 annual student conference was held at the Sea Mammal Research Unit at the University of St Andrews. There were 55 attendees from 13 different Universities across the UK for the two-day conference.

The event consisted of student presentations, guest lectures and workshops exposing students to different areas of research. Student presentations covered a range of topics including behaviour, population biology, telemetry and human

interactions. Presenting students spoke for five or fifteen minutes followed by questions and discussion; this provided a valuable experience of presenting their research and receiving feedback.

Three popular workshops were run, these included a necropsy on a harbour porpoise, a workshop on acoustics and one on using captive seals in research. These workshops explored cetacean biology, the regulations, logistics and ethical considerations of using animals for research.

You can read all final project reports from the CAPOD webpage: www.st-andrews.ac.uk/capod



University of
St Andrews

St Leonard's College

University of St Andrews, College Gate, St Andrews, Fife, KY16 9AJ

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