CAITLIN KITCHNER

Bio: I am a first year PhD student of historical archaeology whose research explores the construction of political material culture between 1815-1822. This follows on from my MA dissertation on the Peterloo Massacre.

Summary: Voting turnouts continue to be low especially with young people. Britain has a long history in the fight for voting and worker’s rights. To help people engage more with politics, this research explores the artefacts and landscapes of worker’s politics in early 19th century northern England. It uses archaeological and historical methods. This past is still vital today with items such as banners being used in protest events like the Women’s March. By combining artefacts of the past and present, archaeology becomes part of encouraging people to be more active in their democracy. Have a go at creating your own banner inspired by those from the 1800s to today.

EMMA ANDERSON

Bio: Emma is in her second year of a PhD in social psychology at York St John University. Her research involves using a critical discursive approach to explore how happiness is conceptualised in ‘expert’ texts (popular psychology and self-help books) and in everyday talk. Before returning to full-time education, Emma worked in magazine journalism and arts fundraising.

Title: The art of happiness: a critical look at wellbeing advice

Summary: In the last 20 years, there has been an explosion of interest in happiness in academia, the media and, more recently, UK government policy. I’m interested in how contemporary ideas about happiness are constructed and legitimised, and how these ideas influence the way we see ourselves as citizens – specifically, how it may help transform social problems into individual ones. I have analysed four best-selling books: The Happiness Project by Gretchen Rubin; I Can Make You Happy by Paul McKenna; Happiness: Lessons from a New Science by Richard Layard; and Happiness by Design by Paul Dolan (the latter two, notably, are economists and government advisors). I’m presenting my findings in six linoprints, partly as a playful response to the dominance of scientific discourses in happiness literature; and partly because, by creating mirror images, linoprinting serves as a metaphor for the value of seeing the ‘everyday’ reflected back in a different way.
and Hoodie Horror is no exception, so let’s explore a few key scenes and see what we can interpret from them. Perhaps you’d like to offer your own ideas for an alternative representation of young people.

LAUREN STOCKELD

Bio: Lauren is a first-year PhD student at the Centre for Medieval Studies. Her work focuses on four words for built structures in English up to 1250. She’s hoping to learn a lot about how the Norman Conquest affected society and language and how medieval English functioned in a multilingual environment. She also gets to spend a lot of time looking at castles.

Summary: Our language is like a fingerprint of our history: as society changes, so do the words we use. This means that studying vocabulary from the past can help us to understand the past. This is what Historical Semantics is all about.

A single word can change in meaning over time, but also can be used differently in one time period across different genres of text, different regions, different authors even. By looking in detail at how a word is used in all these situations, it is possible to learn huge amounts about how people of the time understood the world around them.

So, if you’re interested in how bags, bone-chambers and beef dinners can shed light on the history and language of medieval England, come and check out my Buzzfeed-style articles!

LINDA WALZ

Bio: Linda Walz is a PhD student in Linguistics at York St John University. Her main interest lies in the construction and negotiation of identity in interaction. She is particularly fascinated by personal narratives told during life transitions, such as international relocation.

Title: Does moving abroad make you a different person?

Summary: An increasing number of people decide to live in a foreign country. This affects their daily life as they are confronted with unfamiliar situations and need to establish new relationships. Consequently they may feel that they are changing as a person. Many people who move abroad keep a personal blog as an online diary to document and reflect on their experiences.

My research understands identity not as a quality that individuals possess, but as something that emerges from their actions: who we are is shaped by what we do, and language is an important means of creating identity. I am using discourse analysis to examine how bloggers categorise themselves and others and how they construct similarity/difference, authenticity and legitimacy. This provides insights into discourses of migration and identity and helps us understand the role of language in shaping who we are.

MARTIN SCOTT

Bio: An MSc student of Cognitive Neuroscience at the University of York with an interest in the mechanisms of vision-related neurodegenerative disease. I hope to pursue work as a research assistant in this field when my studies conclude, with the eventual aim of progressing to a PhD.

Title: Assessing the benefit of Ranibizumab treatment for AMD – A follow-up

Summary: Wet age-related macular degeneration (AMD), a form of blindness experienced by the elderly, is characterised by the growth of fragile blood vessels underneath the macula, an area of the eye involved in the central field of vision. These vessels leak, and cause the gradual formation of a central vision blind-spot, with corresponding areas of the brain becoming inactive. The drug “Ranibizumab”, used to treat wet AMD, prevents or slows the growth of these blood vessels, reducing leakage when injected into the eye. Our research investigates how the long-term treatment of wet-AMD with Ranibizumab effects the structure and function of the brain area responsible for visual processing - the visual cortex. A topic of interest is whether the visual cortex functionally reorganises, allowing inactive brain areas to process input from still-functioning parts of the visual field.

WINOJITH SANJEWEA

Bio: Initiated into Kandyan dance at the age of four, Sanjeewa's talent for dance was soon recognised and acknowledged at national inter-school dance competitions in Sri Lanka. On completing his A/Levels, Sanjeewa was recruited to the national dance and drum ensemble in the country paving the way for him to perform nationally and internationally. In 2014, Sanjeewa received a fully funded scholarship and currently reading for a PhD in Education and Theology at York St John University, York.

Sri Lankan Performing Arts: Both Hindu and Buddhist, both Tamil (சிங்களம்) and Sinhala (සිංහල) and the oppression caused by this came to the fore through the LTTE organisation and was transformed towards the civil war that continued for several years. Not only the race but also the art was separated in that process.

Bio:

A psychology graduate, currently studying an MSc in Cognitive Neuroscience. I have real passion for vision science, extending to the complexities of how the eyes and the brain communicate in order to give us what I regard as the most under-appreciated sense, vision.

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