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# KING'S PARADE

THE MAGAZINE FOR MEMBERS & FRIENDS OF KING'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

*In this issue*

**DIVIDE AND RULE?**

**IN CONVERSATION  
WITH AISHA YUSUF**

**Q&A WITH  
MYFANWY HILL**





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# Welcome

from Life Fellow, Tess Adkins



When the landmark decision was taken in 1969 for King's to become co-educational, it was – perhaps unsurprisingly – largely at the instigation not of the Fellowship but of a group of energetic and enterprising students.

Three years later, their endeavours came to fruition as the first cohort of women were admitted to the College, outnumbered as they were by their male counterparts by approximately ten to one.

It was that same Michaelmas term in 1972 that I was appointed as a Fellow, and exactly 20 years afterwards that I found myself – in my role as Senior Tutor – addressing a conference entitled “Is King's still a male College admitting women?” – once again organised thanks to the imagination and enthusiasm of a committed group of students. At the outset of the conference I gave a speech in which I encouraged those in attendance to regard the anniversary as not only a celebration of the many exceptional women who had been through King's in those intervening years, but also as an occasion for a rekindled awareness of all that remained to be done.

As the College now prepares to mark 50 years since the arrival of female students, the search for equality of opportunity goes on – not merely between men and women but for all, regardless of gender, race, class or sexual orientation. As students, Fellows and alumni alike, we must remain vigilant to the ways in which the problems of representation, discrimination, harassment and violence persist, both within our own community and across the world. Addressing these problems will require both structural change and changes to attitudes and behaviours. It is a process in which we are all embroiled.

My hope, as it was in 1992, is that the anniversary will offer a catalyst for renewing our energies. It is an opportunity to assess what has improved, to engage in dialogue across the generations, and to tackle the inequities of today. 50 years on there is no room for complacency, and there is still much to be done.

# TAKING UP THE MANTLE

*PhD students Auriane Terki-Mignot and Charis Idicheria Nogossek are undertaking a survey on gendered experiences of higher education, drawing on Andrea Spurling's groundbreaking report published by King's in 1990.*

Historian Auriane came across the Spurling Report after being alerted to its existence by a member of her research group: “When I first read the Report I felt like a lot of the structural barriers to women in higher education had since been removed, but what really struck me was just how similar some of the quotes were to comments that I hear from women in the University today. So I thought it'd be important to identify more precisely what has and hasn't evolved.”

Charis, a student in the Sociology Department, adds: “The questions that Spurling was asking remain intensely pertinent, and some of the themes that were evident in her Report are also coming across very clearly in our own research, particularly related to the progression of women in academia and the need for more inclusive practices and opportunities.”

The pair are currently analysing the results of a quantitative survey, before conducting interviews to gain some more qualitative insights. Charis comments:

“We've been really heartened by how many students and Fellows have participated; people clearly have something to say and it feels like this is the moment that they want to say it. With the number of responses we've had, it feels like even more of a responsibility to put forward new recommendations with the intent to improve experiences.”

For Auriane, the support of a group of female Fellows who took part in the original Report has been instrumental: “It's been amazing to see the passion these women have and the incredible energy they're capable of deploying in order to get things moving and to empower future generations.”







# MY PhD

with Bethan Clark

If we look at the tree of life, what I find most amazing is the diversity of living things and the processes by which that diversity has been generated. My PhD in the Department of Zoology allows me to combine my interests both in evolution – of the past, present and future – and in development, or how a single cell can turn into many different cells arranged precisely in a body.

Most developmental research is carried out in a few select organisms such as fruit flies, chicks and mice, but because there isn't much diversity within those species, they don't make especially good representatives of variation or patterning. To really understand where variation comes from, we ideally want to look at closely related species between which we're able to make meaningful comparisons

– to pick apart the differences and work out which genes are involved in the formation of those traits.

In order to do this I'm looking at fish from the cichlid family, which is remarkable because of how many species there are, how quickly those species have evolved, and the enormous variety in colour and body shape that the fish exhibit. The particular species I'm studying is *Astatotilapia calliptera*, which is thought to resemble the common ancestor of all the many species of cichlid found in Lake Malawi, and from that perspective is useful in helping us comprehend how such a considerable morphological variety might have developed.

Importantly, there's even variation between *A. calliptera* fish found in different parts of Lake Malawi, and in satellite lakes as well. One of the variations that I'm looking at is in the colour and number of the egg spots found on the anal fin; these spots provide a really useful case study because of the role they play during the cichlid's courtship behavior, and so are likely to have had a significant impact on the evolution of the species. It's known that the egg spots are mainly made up of an orange pigment cell called xanthophores, and that the evolutionary origin of these cells was linked to a change in the regulation of a gene which is involved in the 'shiny' cells, iridophores. Fish exhibiting these egg spots have this gene enabled in the iridophores, with the difference in colour appearing to be largely dependent upon the proportions of pigments in the xanthophores.

Part of my work has been verifying the role of iridophores and xanthophores by imaging the fish and seeing exactly how those cells interact to form the spots. The real puzzle I'm trying to solve, though, is in understanding the role of another cell type – the black pigment cells called melanophores. These melanophores aren't in the spots themselves and are scattered more sparsely throughout the fin, but despite this they still seem to affect the number of spots that appear. The work we've done suggests that a gene called *oca2*, which is required for synthesising the black pigment, could be underlying this variation in spot number.

To investigate this we've been using a gene editing tool called CRISPR-Cas9 – basically a molecular pair of scissors – with which we can cut out the *oca2* gene, introducing a mutation that causes albinism. We then breed the fish selectively over two generations to ensure the mutations are successfully passed on through the germline to the offspring. The idea is then to look at how the spots form in these albino fish compared to the

'wild-type' fish, in order to infer the role of *oca2*. Already we can see subtle differences in the albino cichlids: the spots are delayed in forming, are generally smaller at an equivalent stage of development, and don't appear in exactly the same place on the fin – the iridophores often shifting nearer to the body, where the melanophores would usually be. This difference in location isn't something we'd been expecting, but previous work on pigmentation development in zebrafish has also indicated that the presence of melanophores can influence the mobility of iridophores, so it's interesting that our results seem to support this. What I also think it demonstrates well is the range of developmental levers that can be pulled to make evolutionary change, and how that change can often be indirect and dependent on multiple interactions which we wouldn't obviously consider to be connected.

Once the experimental work has been completed I'm hoping to do some computational modelling, the like of which has been done in zebrafish but not in cichlids. Although the cichlids are reasonably amenable to lab conditions, it'd be a lot easier to work with a simulation than with real fish!

**Bethan Clark is a second year PhD student working in the Morphological Evolution Group in the Department of Zoology.**







# Q & A with Myfanwy Hill

*Stem cell scientist, lecturer in physiology, and practising vet Myfanwy Hill will soon be taking on the additional responsibility of Senior Tutor at King's, succeeding Tim Flack in the role.*



**As Senior Tutor you'll have oversight of the many cogs of the wheel that form the student experience – from setting the overall admissions policy right through to graduation. What do you consider to be the biggest challenges facing Senior Tutors across the University today?**

The single biggest issue that we have to tackle is student well-being. Cambridge has always been a high-pressured environment and the pandemic has only exacerbated the stresses that students are under, so a critical task that I and other Senior Tutors are going to be concerned with is trying to identify where the pinch points are in our students' lives and, if necessary, restructure their workload to distribute that pressure more evenly across the year. There's also a lot of evidence to suggest that students with an active social or sporting life not only experience lower levels of stress, but also do better in their exams, and we need to ensure that the demands for academic excellence don't come at the cost of health or relationships. Studying here is never going to be easy – and it shouldn't be – but that doesn't mean it has to be painfully hard.

**Do you have any other immediate priorities that you'd like to address?**

I'd really like us to start thinking more coherently about employment skills and how we might support students as they progress onwards from their studies. Traditionally we've tended to focus on the ways in which we can help students make the transition to Master's degrees or doctorates, but we need to remember that an academic career won't necessarily be the right route for everyone, and equip students with the skills and experiences that might equally help them in careers outside of academia.

**After this summer, the vast majority of King's students won't have any memory of the College before the pandemic. Does that worry you?**

To a point. There are definitely things that have been lost, the foremost of which I think is the sense of community which was quite particular to King's, and which has been difficult to sustain over the past couple of years. But it's also a good opportunity to reflect on the things that we value, and to make meaningful improvements in how we collaborate and interact as a community. A lot of that is about increasing face-to-face interactions, enabling greater contact between students and their Tutors or Directors of Studies, and providing more individualised support. But it's also about creating opportunities that allow the students to mix with all of the Fellowship, not least the Research Fellows and Associates who offer such an important interface

between the world of postgraduate study and the world of work, and can often prove to be the most relatable role models for our students. King's is notable for rejecting some of the more hierarchical traditions that other Colleges still retain, but during the height of the pandemic that segregation took on another form. One of the great advantages of the collegiate environment is that it enables us to be exposed to and challenged by new ideas and viewpoints, but in order for that to happen we need to be back in the same room together, at the same table, and having more conversations across the generations.

**The pressure on individual students – and indeed academics – over exam results must presumably also reflect onto the role of the Senior Tutor. Is there anything that can be done to dilute that pressure?**

For me, success is all about helping the students to achieve the absolute best that they can, not about their final grade. Of course, we all want our students to be getting lots of Firsts and will do what we can to support that, but students are real people – they have real pressures and will experience real struggles during their time at university – and it isn't always going to be possible for everyone to receive top marks. Finishing a Cambridge degree in itself is an enormous achievement, and we need to acknowledge that results are contextual, and should be celebrated contextually as well.

**The coming academic year marks 50 years since the admission of women as students at King's. What do you consider the biggest challenges around gender equality in higher education, and how can King's bring about constructive change both this year and beyond?**

King's has a really important role to play in acknowledging the problematic history that Cambridge has when it comes to admitting women, and it's fair to say that any celebrations should be accompanied by a measure of indignation that it's such a brief period of time. There are still a number of attainment gaps within the University that need to be addressed; a recent study found an average 8% difference between male and female students achieving Firsts – a gap which is particularly pronounced in STEM subjects and which inevitably then has a knock-on effect for research funding at postgraduate level. But I also hope the anniversary can impel us to assess the intersectionality of these inequalities – whether they be caused by gender, race, or class – and to diminish their impact and influence on students' lived experiences.



## IN CONVERSATION WITH AISHA YUSUF

**Born in Nigeria, Aisha Yusuf moved to Sweden for her undergraduate studies in biomedicine, and it was at Stockholm's Karolinska Institute that she first became interested in oncology. After getting a taste of life in a research laboratory during a summer internship, she hasn't looked back:**

"I'm a naturally inquisitive person and fascinated by how the human body works, so medical research was always a path that interested me. The internship was my first experience of lab research as opposed to more pedagogical forms of learning, and it gave me a very practical idea of what a career in research might be like, not least in demonstrating the many things that could go wrong!"

A further placement through the Erasmus scheme saw Aisha come to Cambridge during the summer of 2018, and she's now been awarded a prestigious Gates Scholarship to undertake a PhD in Oncology, based in the Early Cancer Institute. "My research focuses on oesophageal cancer, which has a particularly high mortality rate because it's so difficult to identify before it spreads to other parts of the body. In a nutshell, I study the early genomic events that might help us with early detection of the cancer, in order to bring that mortality rate down from about 80% to hopefully in the region of 20%.

"There are actually two types of oesophageal cancer: adenocarcinoma and squamous cell carcinoma, the latter of which is more common in developing countries, and which I'm focusing on. Although it's a cancer with a highly heterogenous genomic landscape, one feature which is common to most patients is the presentation of a pre-cancerous lesion called dysplasia; it's this lesion which we're targeting for early detection. At the moment the traditional method of doing so is via an endoscopy, which is both an unpleasant experience for the patient and prohibitively expensive, meaning that it's not ideal for triage or as a mass screening tool. Here in the Fitzgerald Lab, we're looking at other methods of early detection such as the cytosponge – a device which can be easily swallowed and which then collects cells for sampling when it's pulled back through the oesophagus."

After spending the first year of her PhD optimising her experimental and computational methods, Aisha's research is testing the efficacy of the cytosponge in detecting early squamous cell carcinoma, in support of her colleagues working on the clinical implementation of the device: "I'm looking at biological markers that can help us identify those early carcinomas. To do this I start by taking biopsies of the lesions, then micro-dissecting them and sequencing the DNA in the lesions. I can then analyse the data from the DNA and try to see if there are genomic alterations that could indicate that the lesion is pre-cancerous or cancerous."

Aisha's now roughly halfway towards reaching her target number of samples, but can she make any interim analyses? "It's too early to draw solid conclusions but there are certain signals that can be detected on the cytosponge that are indicative of disease, although these signals are highly attenuated because of the presence of other non-cancerous cells from the oesophagus. It's encouraging that I've been able to identify those signals without having to also micro-dissect the cytosponge, and what I'm trying to do now is to see if I can computationally remove the 'noise' from the sample to produce clearer results."

As a break from this cycle of DNA extraction and analysis, Aisha recently presented her work at a major gastroenterology conference in San Diego: "It was my first time in the US and my first time presenting my PhD work to anyone other than my departmental colleagues, which is a very different environment! Sometimes when you're doing a PhD it seems like the more you learn, the less you really know, and that's when you feel most like an impostor. But it was so rewarding to be able to communicate the research, to answer questions about it, and a real privilege to get feedback from the wider academic community."

This idea of 'impostor syndrome' is something Aisha has previously discussed on her YouTube channel, Practice Makes Pipette, in which she tries to demystify the academic process and provides updates on her research, often with a refreshing candour about when things don't go to plan. How did the channel come about?

"When I started thinking about going onto a PhD I wanted to hear the experiences of people in a similar field with whom I might be able to identify, but all I could really find were very senior academics whose experiences

didn't really resonate with me. It also seemed to me that people were comfortable sharing their successes but more reluctant to communicate their difficulties, or the times they feel like they've been struggling. Learning can be a messy process and I wanted to provide a more honest and realistic perspective on what undertaking a PhD might actually be like. So despite being quite a private person, after a year in Cambridge I set up the channel so that it could help someone else who might identify with me as an early-career researcher and as a black Muslim woman. Sometimes it helps to see someone who looks like you achieving the things you want to achieve; it can normalise the process and validate your dreams, no matter how crazy they might seem."

**Aisha Yusuf is in the third year of her PhD in Oncology, supported by the Gates Foundation.**







# Divide and Rule?

Emma Prevignano's PhD looks at the history of the metric system and what a group of science practitioners – including engineers, chemists and mathematicians – thought about the movement to standardise weights and measures up to and during the French Revolution.



The political fragmentation of 18th century France meant that an assortment of feudal lords and corporations had the power to issue units of measurement, and to determine what standards should be used within their area of influence. The result was a proliferation of thousands of different units – of length, weight, and area – that often varied from town to town. The standardisation of these base units had clear advantages for trade, but where did the initial impetus for the metric system come from?

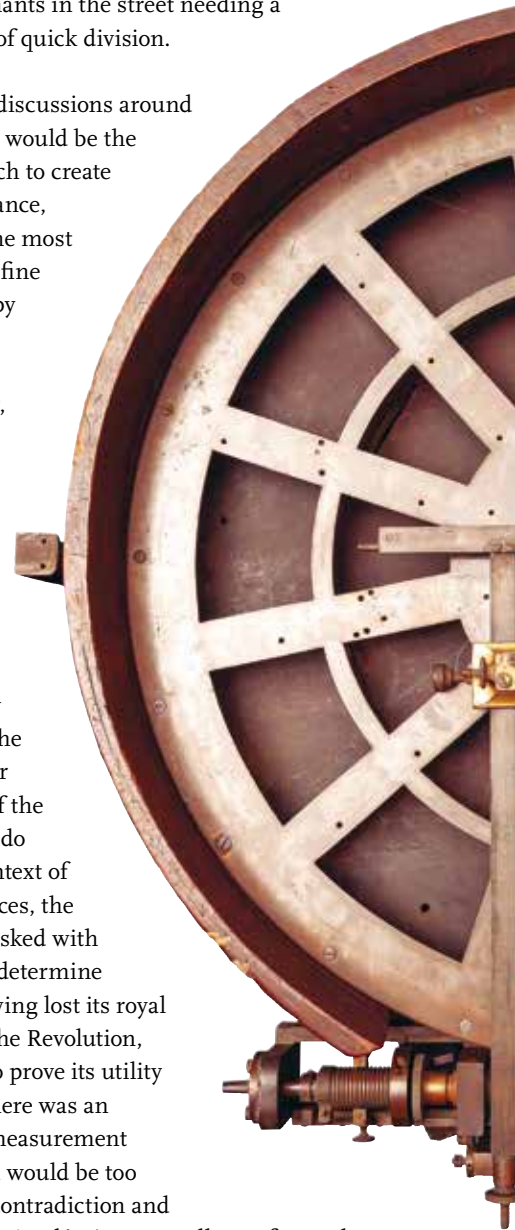
“It's important to distinguish between standardisation in general, and standardisation using the metric system. The idea of unifying all these different units of weights and measures was desirable for fiscal reasons – it made commerce much more viable and enabled the state to get a much better understanding of the amounts of goods being imported and exported. The motivation for the metric system was more theoretical, and started as something of an intellectual pursuit among a group of *savants* in the late 17th century. This pursuit was taken up by chemists like Lavoisier who were captivated by the idea of defining a new set of units that would not only be decimalised in order to simplify their complex calculations, but also be anchored to a stable parameter found in nature rather than a tangible – and changeable – everyday object.

“There was also an international dimension, in that metrification was seen as a project that could bring together science practitioners from different countries to form a sort of global community, and could foster diplomatic ties, particularly with Britain. Indeed, one of the reasons why the French National Assembly voted through the introduction of the metric system so quickly in 1790 was in order to try to enable a joint reform before the close of the British Parliament.”

As it happened, the alliance never came to be, and the Terror of the ensuing years largely prevented any renewed engagement with politicians and scientists across the Channel. Within France itself, however, the upheaval had enormous significance for discussion around the regulation of measurements: “In many ways, standardisation and metrification were actually *ancien regime* projects, but it was during the Revolution that the movement gathered momentum. If we look at the debates before the Revolution, there was a sense that while feudalism was an obstacle to reform, it was one that could be overcome either with the co-operation of feudal lords or through the bypassing of feudal rights. After the Revolution the project became inflected by the process of detachment or distancing from the feudal order, and support for metrification could be interpreted as a symbolic show of allegiance to the revolutionary project.”

Did the project enjoy unanimous backing at that point, or was there still resistance? “The principle of standardisation had widespread theoretical support, but the disagreements centered around the extent of state intervention in its introduction; there was certainly a feeling that the project might not be feasible in practice, or not worth the new government's time and resources. As for the metric system itself, there was a good deal of intellectual resistance – partly on the grounds of history and tradition, and again partly around its practical application. Some sources of the time make the distinction between the benefit of the new system to the *savant* making decimal calculations at their desk, and the drawbacks to the merchants in the street needing a more intuitive method of quick division.

“There were also lively discussions around what natural parameter would be the most suitable from which to create the base units. For instance, before the Revolution the most prevalent idea was to define the new unit of length by measuring the rod of a pendulum with a one-second swing. However, this encountered some difficulties when it was discovered the period of the pendulum swing was sensitive to gravity, and therefore to the altitude of its location. From my research though, I get the sense that the reason for the ultimate rejection of the pendulum was more to do with the fluctuating context of the Académie des sciences, the body which had been tasked with recommending how to determine the new base units. Having lost its royal privilege as a result of the Revolution, the Académie needed to prove its utility to the new order, and there was an underlying fear that a measurement based on the pendulum would be too accessible and open to contradiction and attack. The proposal the Académie eventually put forward – defining length from a sub-division of the meridian of Earth – required huge state funding and was hardly within the reach of the average practitioner!”







Such a project inevitably proved to be a colossal undertaking, and quickly stretched the patience of the new government: “In 1792, the Ministry of the Interior realised that the mission was taking too long and that they really needed to start implementing standardisation. So provisional measures, based on an older meridian survey, were created on the expectation that they wouldn’t change that much when the surveyors returned to Paris. When they finally did, in the winter of 1799, the process of manufacturing the provisional metric instruments had already made significant progress, to the extent that they would be largely unaffected by the actual survey – the results of which would be used to craft the official platinum standards of the metre and kilogram.”

*“Metrification was seen as a project that could bring together science practitioners from different countries to form a sort of global community, and could foster diplomatic ties.”*

While it was one thing for the government to issue a declaration about the introduction of the metric system, it was a more daunting logistical proposition to actually implement it. How did that process work and where did the responsibility fall? “Initially it wasn’t even clear the degree to which the government would try to implement the new system; there were some practitioners who considered the theoretical re-definition to be sufficient. The question of implementation started to become important during the Jacobin rule when the reform was reframed as a project “for the people”, as opposed to being for the intellectuals or businessmen. It was at that point a small office called the Temporary Agency for Weights and Measures was established, with responsibility for introducing the metric system.”

Although the implementation is often considered as a state imposition on a stubborn populace, Emma thinks this representation is inaccurate: “That doesn’t really seem to have been the experience of the Agency, who actually found more support among traders and artisans with vested interests in the project than they did

among other governmental departments. The greatest resistance was probably indifference; the Agency had a real struggle in enrolling the assistance of other parts of the administration whose attentions had been diverted by the ongoing economic and employment crises.”

By 1801, the Agency had developed an established local network of correspondents, ambassadors and inspectors of weights and measures to accelerate the process of implementation. The burgeoning success of the project led to revived discussions about the possibility of its international adoption: “The fact that France could implement a standardised system based on a good natural parameter was presented by reformers as evidence that the Republic could do something that monarchies couldn’t. And then as more Republics were created, such as the sister Republic in the Netherlands, there was renewed hope for the creation of a sort of metrological front that could transcend different political systems.”

With almost all countries in the world today having adopted the metric system, how does Emma assess the UK government’s apparent desire to bring back imperial measurements: “In a way, there’s a parallel between the support for the metric system in the 18th century and the wish to reintroduce imperial measures today, in that they both involve a wish to return to the past. Whereas the aim of the government today appears to be based on nostalgia for empire, supporters of the metric system in the 17th and 18th centuries were looking back to the Classical, pre-feudal world, where they thought the world of measurements was somehow closer to the state of nature.

“Where the parallel completely fails is in the fact that metric reform was fundamentally progressive; it was an idea that was designed to improve people’s lives and leave them less beholden to a convoluted system of different weights and measures, and to foster international co-operation and exchange. The resistance to the metric system today doesn’t appear to have quite so lofty ambitions!”

**Emma Prevignano is in the fourth year of her PhD in History, funded by the Cambridge Trust and the Gerda Henkel Stiftung.**

*Previous page: view from above of a dividing engine (~1800) used for the precise marking of navigational tools. Below: a provisional standard brass metre rule made by Étienne Lenoir in the 1790s. Both instruments are housed at the Whipple Museum.*

# From the Archives

On 13th March 1993, the 20-year anniversary of the arrival of female students was marked with a conference that asked the question “Is King’s still a male college admitting women?”.

Organised predominantly by the student body, the event consisted of keynote speakers, a dinner (where the portraits in Hall – all male – were covered up for the evening), and a series of workshops that included Mary Beard leading a session on gender-specific teaching styles, Marilyn Butler on misconceptions of feminism, and Melissa Lane on the ethics of positive discrimination. As Erika Swales put it, the overall aim of the conference was to encourage the entire King’s community to “reflect on conventions and customs that so far have gone unquestioned” and to “chip away at the symbolic order”.

Another aspect of the day saw a disused corridor in the Keynes Building converted into a collaborative art space to be adorned by a mural of the ‘Green Goddess’ designed by undergraduate Lara McClure, and spontaneously added

to over the course of the day. After an afternoon of splashed paint and spilt tea, Lara wrote:

“Our imaginary woman is as real as she is symbolic. At once a goddess, a blushing virgin, a lascivious harlot and that second-year linguist who lives down the corridor, we painted her as a monument to all Kingswomen. Each of the elements included in the mural were chosen carefully to represent an aspect of this multi-persona, and we let her hold a book and a wine bottle because she was an undergrad at King’s. [...]

“It became an entire day of positive female reinforcement. We started out to cover a conservative rectangle of the wall with a predetermined concept, but ended up filling an entire corridor with our status, identity, random thoughts and



expressions in bold strokes of colour. One glance at the rolls of film Kate [Lewis] took confirms the mood of the painters by mid-afternoon; exhausted, ecstatic, exhilarated – and somehow disbelieving that what we had just done was ever allowed to happen at all.

“Given the wide range of ideas the mural represents, and the fact that we deviated utterly from the original plan, the ease with which the day’s achievements can be seen as a coherent and logical whole is nothing short of remarkable. It suggests a common agenda shared by all those involved, and an underlying message both positive and defiant; we are Kingswomen, we are happy but we are not complacent and our work is not yet finished.”

Did you attend the conference in 1993, and do you have any memories or photos of the event? Let us know via [communications@kings.cam.ac.uk](mailto:communications@kings.cam.ac.uk).



Conference organisers Tania Burchardt, Lara McClure and Kate Lewis.







## Course of EVENTS



Felicity Brown joined the Development Office at King's in 2013 and as Events Manager is responsible for the organisation of around 15 alumni reunions, dinners and other occasions over the course of a year.

"The planning for an event usually starts at least six months in advance when we start to pull together a programme, which might consist of panel discussions, research presentations, walking tours, recitals and exhibitions. There's inevitably a lot of collaboration required across the College to put on any event, from the catering team who provide the fantastic lunches and dinners, through to the housekeepers and gardeners who keep King's looking so lovely."

That collaboration can be especially important on the day of an event, when Felicity and her colleagues often need to respond to eleventh-hour changes and – more often than not – last-minute amendments to seating plans. Felicity is sanguine about such difficulties: "We try to plan for all eventualities but you have to accept that things sometimes can and will go wrong, and that you can't control everything at all times. It's how you deal with those unexpected situations that define whether an event goes well or not, and we know that even up to an hour before an event, those seating plans should be considered provisional!"

"King's is obviously an amazing place with beautiful grounds and buildings, and is a great space within which to work. But the most unique thing about organising events here is less about the physical space and more about the people. The real joy of the job is in the relationships that you build with alumni who come back regularly for their class reunions, or for the annual Members' Tea, and who get to know you by name and are always so pleased to see you and to be here again."

Among the hundreds of events that Felicity has managed during her time at King's, are there any that stand out in her memory? "The launch event for The King's Campaign in 2018 was a real learning curve for me, with lots of new challenges and stresses – from the decorations in the Hall through to the projections that illuminated the interior of the Chapel. It was very much an all-hands-on-deck effort, but the results were spectacular."

With so much to think about, is it ever possible for Felicity to appreciate the events herself? "The point I can usually start to relax is the moment when everyone sits down to dinner, and you know that the daytime programme is over and we're in the capable hands of the catering team. That's when you can see the finish line and actually start to enjoy it!"

## MAPPING THE PAST

*Second-year historian Anmona Siddaqua is one of 36 students taking part in this year's Summer Research Programme for undergraduates to sample what it might be like to go on to further study.*

Anmona is working alongside King's Fellow Katie Campbell on a project looking at the effects of the Mongol conquest on Central Asian cities, specifically concentrating on the city of Otrar in present-day Kazakhstan. "Otrar was abandoned in the 1800s but during the Middle Ages it was quite a strategic city with a population of more than 20,000. Previous archaeological work has uncovered a lot of material evidence of vases and kilns from that period which give us a good idea of where people lived and worked within the city."

"To help with future excavations, I've been creating a database of diagrams and maps from Soviet-era archaeology books about the city, and geo-referencing these directly onto modern satellite imagery using open-source software called QGIS."

Overlaying the images has allowed Anmona to make use of her photo editing skills, but there are other challenges that are proving more difficult: "The hardest part is understanding the Cyrillic;

I can now identify some key words like 'horizon' or 'excavation', but it would be a lot easier if I knew more Russian!"

Anmona will present her findings alongside the other students on the programme at a showcase event in October, but how has she found the experience so far? "I'm really enjoying the computational side of it; my degree so far has mostly been spent reading, taking notes and writing essays, but the opportunity to work with diagrams, geospatial software and material culture has been really exciting – it adds another dimension to my understanding of the period and is something I'm hoping to do more of as I move into my third year. Another important part of the project is the chance to talk to Katie about the academic process, the hurdles she's faced as a researcher, and whether it might be a possible future for me as well."





# THE YEAR AHEAD...

*Alongside Clare and Churchill, King's was the first of the all-male Cambridge Colleges to admit women as students in 1972. Over the course of the 50th anniversary year, the College will be holding a series of events to both celebrate the women of King's who make up our remarkable community, and to address the inequalities that still remain.*

Events get under way when the inaugural cohort of female students return to the College for their 50th anniversary reunion on 23 September. A special programme has been put together for the day, including a piano recital from Susan Tomes (KC 1972); a tour of the College art with Sophie Pickford (KC 1997) focusing on works by and of women; and an 'in conversation' session with eminent anthropologist Professor Dame Caroline Humphrey (KC 1978), who will be reflecting on her extraordinary career.

In Michaelmas Term, the College will host the first of a series of events with alumnae guest speakers, with *Panorama* editor Rachel Jupp (KC 1996) being joined by journalist Eleni Courea (KC 2013) to discuss a life in politics, on 13 October. In

the same month, the Law Society Dinner makes a welcome return after a hiatus of five years, with a panel event on human rights law and a talk from barrister Charlotte Proudman (KC 2013). Literary delights follow later in the term, with award-winning novelist, essayist and playwright Zadie Smith (KC 1994) reading from her work on 3 November. Three weeks later, on 24 November, poet Hollie McNish (KC 2001) will be performing live in 'The Bunker' (or the Cellar Bar as it was known to some of our alumni), chatting about her work and reading from her latest collection *Slug... and other things I've been told to hate*. In Lent Term, we'll be welcoming sportswriter and Women in Football co-founder Anna Kessel (KC 1997), as well as architect Alison Killing (KC 1999) to discuss her fascinating work in revealing a

network of Chinese detention camps, for which she was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in 2021.

The culmination of anniversary events will take place on 24 June 2023, with the *Festival of Women at King's*, featuring a wide array of talks and workshops, and a host of literary, artistic and musical events too. More details about the Festival – and all the upcoming events to mark the anniversary year – will soon be shared with members, but for now do please **save the date!**



## Save the Date

### 2022

#### 23 September

50th Anniversary Reunion

#### 24 September

35th, 40th & 45th Anniversary Reunion

#### 29 October

Law Society Dinner

#### 26 November

1441 Foundation Dinner

#### 27 November

Procession for Advent

### 2023

#### 4 March

Henry VI Circle Lunch

#### 8 March

Women's Dinner

#### 18 March

Foundation Lunch

#### 25 March

20th, 25th & 30th Anniversary Reunion

#### 10 June

10th Anniversary Reunion

#### 24 June

50 Years of Women at King's Festival

#### 12 August

50th Anniversary Reunion

#### 16 September

35th, 40th & 45th Anniversary Reunion

#### 23 September

1441 Foundation Dinner

## Get in Touch

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For up-to-date information about events:  
[www.kings.cam.ac.uk/events/calendar](http://www.kings.cam.ac.uk/events/calendar)

