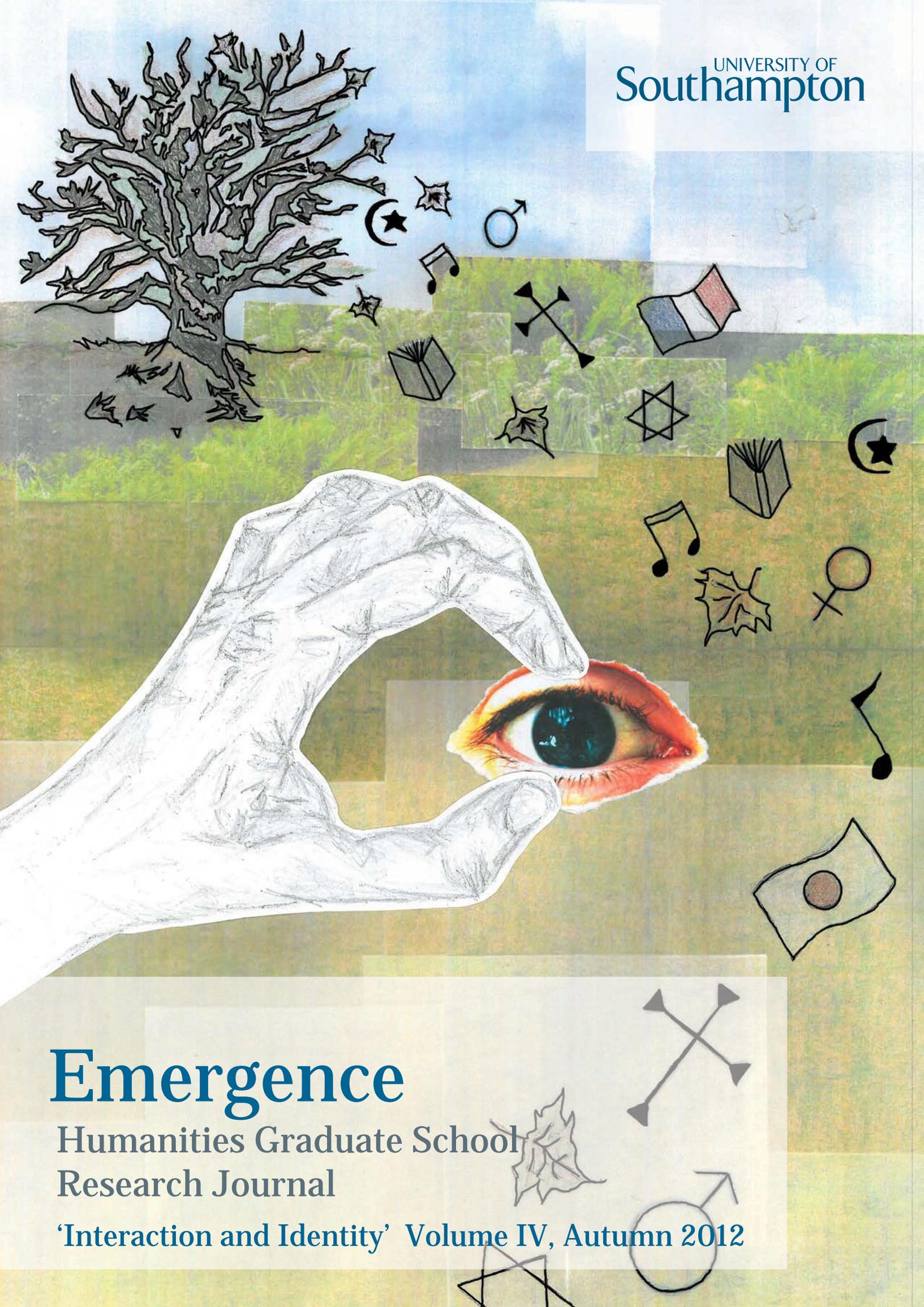


Emergence

Humanities Graduate School
Research Journal

'Interaction and Identity' Volume IV, Autumn 2012



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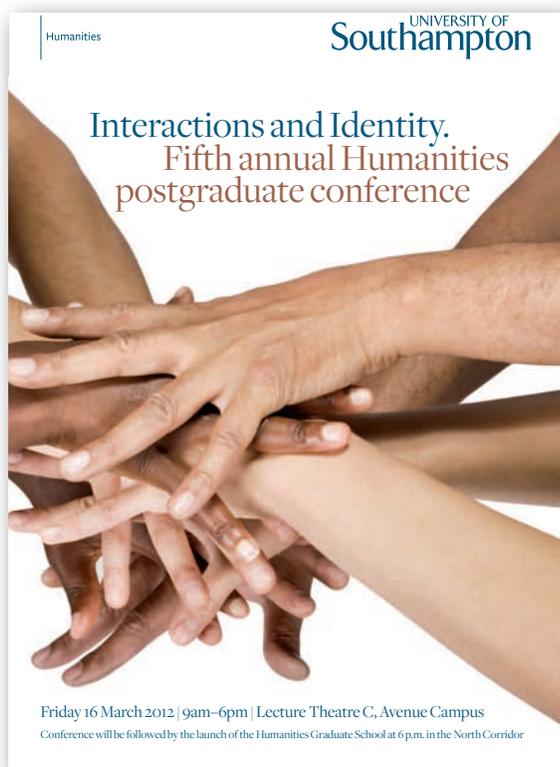
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Emergence Volume IV: Preface

Welcome to Volume IV of *Emergence*, the University of Southampton's Humanities Graduate School research journal. The primary function of the journal is to showcase a selection of papers which were given at this year's Humanities Postgraduate Annual Conference, titled 'Interactions and Identity'. This year's conference also had the honour of marking the official launch of the Humanities Graduate School and formal establishment of the Humanities Graduate School Student Network.



The theme of the 5th Annual Humanities Postgraduate Conference provided the presenters with an opportunity to examine how the concepts of Interactions and Identity intersected with their own research. This premise has produced a

diverse collection of articles, each of which deals with a unique facet of this expansive topic. Having had the pleasure of overseeing the editing of these papers, we can say for certain that the excellence of the conference is reflected in this edition of *Emergence*.

The impressive breadth of scope and vision displayed by all of these articles is astounding, as is the variety of research interests. Collecting them together in a single journal is a reminder of their shared objective of applying critical thought to texts, events and discourses in order to reveal meanings, beliefs and attitudes which would have otherwise remained unappreciated. We hope that the reader will find this edition of *Emergence* not only an introduction to the excellent research carried out at the University of Southampton, but also a demonstration of the potential of interdisciplinary co-operation. Indeed, this year's conference saw an increased number of papers from other institutions and we are privileged to present in this volume papers from Canterbury Christchurch University and the University of Kent.

We would like to thank everyone who has been involved in the writing and production of *Emergence*. This volume represents the combined efforts of eight contributors and a significant section of the Humanities Graduate School Student Network, all of whom have given up their time in order to bring this edition into being. We would also like to thank Professor Gamble for providing us with a foreword to this volume that succinctly identifies some of the issues raised by our topic. Many thanks should also be extended to Dan Varndell, Chris Penfold and James Osborne (previous editors of *Emergence*), both for establishing and developing the journal in the past, and also for their advice and encouragement in the present.

Peter Girdwood and Sarah Shawyer
Coordinating Editors, Emergence volume IV
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www.southampton.ac.uk/humanities/postgraduate/graduate_school.page for more information.

Foreword

Identity is a sticky subject. We attract, accumulate, discard and move-on, constantly shifting the perspective on who we think we are and how we came to be. Our lives are a product of development, part-driven by biology and part-negotiated by context. And this process of growth, our identity, is marked by the *bricolage* of buildings and landscapes we dwell in and the things we accumulate; photographs, letters, songs and rhymes. Growing and creating an identity depends on a degree of stickiness where meaning adheres around a person, object or place and where also, over time, the glue softens and older layers are shed.

Without stickiness there would be no memories and forgetting, no collective narratives or my own subject of archaeology with its interest in deep-history. Throughout most of human deep-history there were no arts and humanities, no literature or music and no spoken language. But long before there were words there were things. Tools were made from stone, wood, bone and fibre, and from these identities were fashioned and interactions forged. This has led to a two-and-a-half-million-year-long love affair with stuff. Humans have always responded to the aesthetics of stuff, the materials from which things are made and the complex, often composite forms, into which they are transformed by humans. The response is a sensory one of sight, smell, touch, taste and sound. From these are created the emotions that underpin all social behaviour and which determine if interaction will be positive or not. It is from this mix of emotions, materials and the imperative of growing something that stickiness comes.

Think of it this way. A museum is full of objects; paintings, books, prints, artefacts, coins, sculpture. They are there because of the activities of collectors and curators. They have literally stuck to these human agents as they grew their careers and reputations. When this process is

repeated by many collectors and becomes fixed in one institution then a museum is created. But this agency only recognises a one-way flow. To understand stickiness for the humanities the process also has to be reversed. Here stuff has agency and it would be as correct to say that objects collect people as much as the other way around. Extend the idea, and institutions and museums are sticky places attracting visitors and curators alike.

Stickiness is neither an inherent property of people nor things, however much it is needed to understand what happens when we cultivate identity. It is instead an outcome of interaction that brings things together, the stuff of *bricolage*, and makes meaning from such associations. And it is here that the humanities interest in interaction and identity, showcased so effectively at the conference from which these papers grew, comes to the fore. At the University of Southampton the Faculty of Humanities spans the stone age to the digital age and travels across diverse conceptual universes to explore the still unfulfilled potential of our imaginative capacity. This interdisciplinary endeavour is a very social activity since it establishes the connections for self-knowledge. This connection lies at the heart of all research as shown by the substantial case studies in the papers that follow. And without such a propensity for stickiness, as people and stuff interacted in deep-history, there could have been no knowledge to pass on that lasted longer than mumbling 'arts and humanities' before the wolves struck.

Professor Clive Gamble
Archaeology, University of Southampton

Humanities Graduate School Student Network

Open to all Humanities postgraduates, Gradnet is an organisation run by students, for students. Our members strive to create opportunities to socialise with colleagues, assist with career development, engage in academic debate and encourage networking. In order to achieve these aims, Gradnet has a lively social and cultural events calendar, holds thought-provoking seminars led by current students, organises a dynamic annual conference, and publishes this academic journal, *Emergence*.

Events held over the past year have included a Welcome Social, an American Thanksgiving, Chinese New Year celebrations, and frequent countryside walks. Topics of our recent seminars have included tips and suggestions on how to survive postgraduate life and organise a conference, current research issues, such as how the world is evolving around us with regards to multiculturalism, and practical tutorials on funding and organising research trips.

Our most recent annual conference, titled 'Interactions and Identity', was held on the 16th of March 2012. It showcased a wide range of stimulating research and vigorous discussion on the ways in which the two concepts are utilised, manipulated and addressed in today's society. Acknowledging that our understanding of who we are is linked to how we see our place in the world, the conference strove to explore how identity can be shaped by and in turn help to shape our interactions with those around us. Our

panels addressed subjects including gendered identity, interactions and nationality, socio-cultural identity, East meets West, complexity and adaptation, and the evolution of identity.

Our journal, *Emergence*, builds upon the achievements of this year's conference, investigating the themes that arose and were discussed. All of this year's articles in *Emergence* are drawn from papers and posters presented at this year's conference providing conference contributors with the opportunity to engage yet further with Gradnet and develop their skills as academic researchers.

Gradnet continues to flourish thanks to the diverse interests, skills and personalities of the postgraduates who participate in the seminars, events, conference, and journal. We invite you to join us in the coming academic year and enjoy all that Gradnet has to offer. If you would like to partake in any activities, or become a member of the committee and contribute your own ideas, look out for our emails, or visit our webpage, Facebook page, or follow us on Twitter (details of which can be found below). We look forward to meeting you in the coming year!

Those of us in Gradnet would like to thank one person in particular for helping to create and maintain our organisation. The tireless efforts and sound advice of Dr. Eleanor Quince, Director of Postgraduate Studies, has enabled Gradnet to become the thriving community it is today.

Katie Merriken
Chair of Gradnet Committee

Website: www.southampton.ac.uk/humanities/postgraduate/graduate_school.page
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