

Edinburgh Bloggers – Ali George

✖ One of our regular contributors, Ali George, writes so much that she can regularly be seen on buses writing huge swathes of her latest novel on her iPhone. We actually wonder when she finds time to sleep...

Who are you and what do you do?

My name is Ali George, and currently I am trying to develop a career as a freelance features journalist. To support this endeavour, I work for a temp agency. The last contract I had through them was a graphic design one, creating images for exam papers at the SQA.

What made you start writing a blog?

My first blog post was made on Livejournal on December 28 2001, and nobody is ever getting the URL because I was 16 and hormonal and it's all deeply embarrassing. The reason I started it, though, was because I wanted to be a journalist and I thought blogging would be a good way to get me writing regularly for an audience. Since then I've had a few different blogs dedicated to different things, but the underlying reason for all of them has definitely been a platform for getting my writing out there.

What purpose is your blog serving?

Well, I have three at the moment! One is a [personal one](#), which serves as a scrapbook of bits and pieces that interest me. One is a [portfolio](#) of 'proper' work, so I use it to link to articles I've written for The Edinburgh Reporter, Hecklerspray, The Guardian etc – although I have decided to dedicate it to the [Let's Get Lyrical](#) campaign until the end of February, so currently there are daily posts dissecting silly song lyrics. The last blog is a site to keep people up to date with a project I am doing this year, which involves

writing first drafts of [12 Books in 12 Months](#).

Why did you choose WordPress/Blogger or other platform?

I use blogger for my personal site, just because it's quite easy and intuitive. A lot of people whose blogs I follow (writers like [Nicola Morgan](#) and [Nick Cross](#), music bloggers like [Peenko](#) and [Ayetunes](#), and funny stuff including [How To Write Badly Well](#) and [Hyperbole and a Half](#)) use that platform, so by using the same site it's easier to keep track of them.

I use WordPress for the other two because when I researched blogging sites, that seemed to be the one professional journalists were using. I thought I'd better learn how it worked too.

Do your visitor numbers matter to you?

Only really for [12 Books in 12 months](#), because they let me know whether people are taking an interest in the project – although I think my [personal blog](#) might actually be the most interesting and certainly the most diverse of the three.

Would you tell us what they are?

So far in January [12 Books in 12 Months](#) has had 922 hits, which averages out at around 40 people looking at it per day. That feels like a good start, but hopefully I'll get even more as it progresses!

Confessions of a Jobless Graduate is updated less often, and averages maybe 8 hits a day. I am OK with that I think, because as I said before it's mainly there to showcase clippings of my published work.

My personal site, *A Daddy Long Leg is Not A Father*, fluctuates a bit depending on how often I update it, but over the past couple of months has been getting around 150 hits a week which is about 20 hits a day.

What do you think you could do to improve your blog?

I could probably stand to update *Confessions of a Jobless*

Graduate more often, but beyond that I'm not really sure. Come up with better tags, perhaps? I am always open to suggestions!

What plans do you have for the future of your blog?

12 Books in 12 Months is going to help form the basis of a thirteenth book in 2012, about the process of writing 12 books in 12 months.

As for the other two, I intend to network a bit more in the blogging community this year in a bid to get people to leave more comments. I read a tweet recently by someone who couldn't understand the point of blogging if you don't get hundreds of comments – she likened it to writing into an abyss. But it's so ingrained in me that the important thing is just to keep writing that I have never really seen it in such negative terms!

Still, feedback can be quite useful, and if the only way to get it is to comment on what other people have written then that's what I'm going to have to do. Beyond that, the only plan is to keep generating content, and hope people keep reading it!