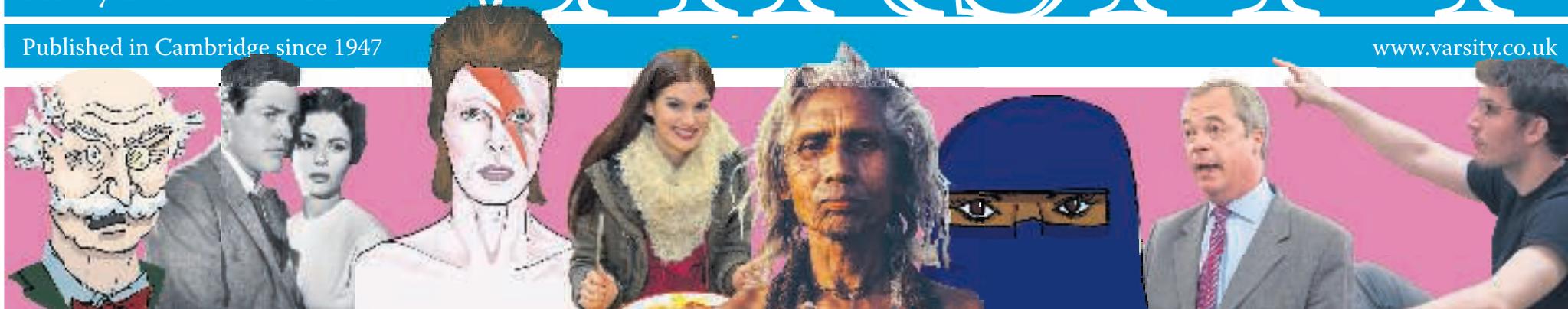


VARSITY

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Friday 17th October 2014

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Occupy: Cambridge student Ella Sadika has been photographing the Hong Kong protests. Her full portfolio can be found on ellasadika.com

Head of admissions: don't scrap AS

Sarah Sheard
Senior News Editor

The University's head of admissions, Mike Sewell, has made a plea for AS levels to remain.

Sewell expressed concern that getting rid of AS levels would leave thousands of "overambitious" sixth form students making ill-advised Oxbridge applications.

As part of former education secretary Michael Gove's reforms, the AS level will be separated from the A level from 2017, making it a standalone qualification.

This is likely to lead to fewer students sitting AS exams and will prevent universities from using it as part of admissions.

Sewell said AS exams acted as a "reality check" which spared unrealistic teenagers the "upsetting" experience of an Oxbridge rejection.

Without AS levels, Sewell warned that Russell Group universities could face even more applications from students who believe a string of top GCSEs make competitive candidates.

"There is a worry that without the AS-level reality check, they are at risk of making several unfortunate choices...with AS results, they can sit down with their teachers and make realistic choice," said Sewell.

The news comes as Cambridge raises its entrance requirements to A*A*A for almost half of its courses, including the sciences and maths.

This threshold is in response to mounting applications. Last summer, a record 34,000 students applied for just 6,400 places.

CUP refuse to publish Putin book

Cambridge University Press refused to publish 'Putin's Kleptocracy'

Partha Moman
News Correspondent

Cambridge University Press (CUP) has refused to publish a book entitled: Putin's Kleptocracy: who owns Russia?

The book, based on five years of original research, details the growth in authoritarianism and systematic corruption in Russia since the 1990s.

It accuses Vladimir Putin and his "cronies" of orchestrating this

process for their benefit. Its author, Karen Dawisha, has argued the book is particularly relevant at the moment, considering that Russia is currently the target of Western sanctions imposed in reaction to the Ukraine crisis.

CUP were unwilling to proceed beyond the proposal stage due to the fear that those implicated might sue the

publishing house for libel. CUP further claimed that they "were not convinced that there was a way to rewrite the book that would give them the necessary comfort" that they would avoid prosecution.

They asserted, however, that "the decision had nothing to do with the

CONTINUES ON PAGE 5

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The occasional power of protest

EDITORIAL

It is a truth universally acknowledged that where students go, protest follows. Or maybe it's the other way round. Regardless, Cambridge has not been short of either recently. First, it was the Fresher's Festival. Along with hundreds of other student societies, Cambridge Students for Life (CSFL) manned a small stall in the hope of recruiting overwhelmed freshers to join their... their what, exactly? Club? Discussion group? Whatever it is, The Women's Campaign, and many others, duly objected.

The ins and outs of whether or not CSFL is a positive or even acceptable organisation in our university has been much debated elsewhere in the student press, but one aspect warrants closer inspection: should CUSU have allowed CSFL a stall?

In his piece for Varsity, Hesham Mashhour echoed the sentiments of many others when he answered no. Abortion is an emotive, and for many people, triggering, issue. There is not space here to explain again the reasons why not all topics are fair game for "discussion". New (or any) students should have a right not to be confronted with graphic imagery and offers of "forgiveness" as they peruse the tea society and Korfbal stalls.

However, the question of CSFL's presence at the fair is in fact redundant: as CUSU President Helen Hoogewerf-McComb pointed out, CUSU by default hosts all groups that are approved by the University as a student society. This was not an active decision. Rather, CSFL, as with many other pro-life organisations around the country, slipped into the mainstream under a guise of debate.

Nigel Farage was similarly quiet this week. For a man who seems to thrive on saying things loudly, his planned appearance in Cambridge was remarkably low profile. However unlike CSFL, Farage's subtlety was not successful. Whether or not you agreed with them, the speed at which students and Cambridge residents alike organised protests was nothing if not impressive. In the midst of all this agitation, the event was mysteriously cancelled (see page 5). It is not clear whether this was on the impetus of Farage or Haslam – judging by the latter's belligerent defence of the invite, I would guess it was Farage who got cold feet.

Protesting is a noble student tradition; our freedom to object must be used. And as this week has shown, sometimes, just sometimes, it works.

NEWS

Students tackle Ebola

Student think-tank Polygeia explores how social media and gender affect Ebola's spread (page 6)



INTERVIEW

Alex Wickham

Wickham's first interview on the matter since exposing the sex scandal that rocked the Tory conference (page 12)



COMMENT

Beyond the burqa

Katie Hurst on how white male voices reduce Muslim women to a stereotype (page 16)



LIFESTYLE

Rise of a new feminine

Gayathiri Kamalakanthan on what the flatform means for women and traditional ideas of 'femininity' (page 23)



FASHION

Feeling fine

With a range of textures from soft lace to luxurious velvet, great clothes should make you feel good (page 24)



THEATRE

This is not enough

Isabel Adomakoh Young examines our drama scene's relationship with race (page 26)



Varsity News Meeting

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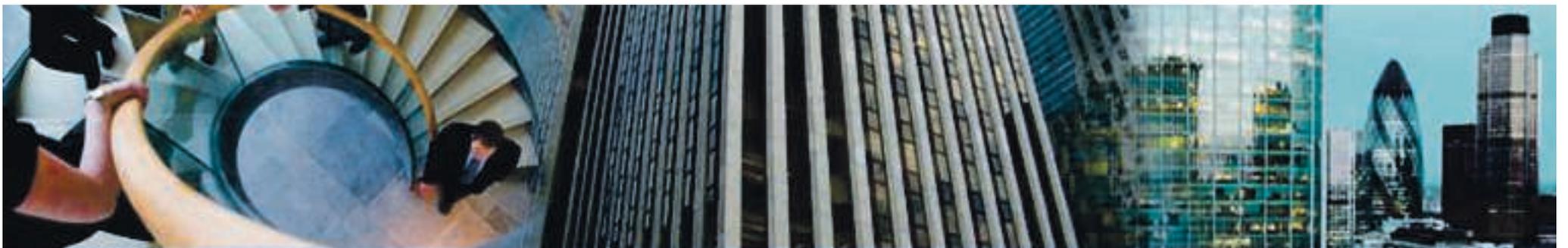
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Location: Doubletree Hilton, Granata Place, Cambridge CB2 1RU
- » **Application Deadline (Seniors, Full-Time Associate Position): Thursday, November 6, 2014**
- » **Application Deadline (Juniors, Summer Intern Associate Position): Friday, January 9, 2015**

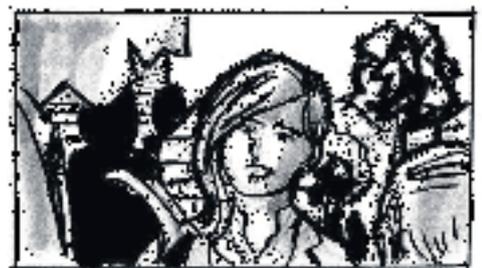
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Not seen and not heard

James Sutton speaks to the writers encouraging young people to engage with politics

Public engagement with politics is at an all-time low – not that this is the impression you got if you walked along the political societies' aisle at the Fresher's Fair, where the Conservatives vied for your attention alongside Communists. The trend of political disengagement is perhaps most striking, and concerning, when you look at the very youngest demographic of voters, with the 2010 general election seeing just 44 per cent of 18-24 year olds turn out to vote. The Hansard Society, the body which publishes an annual health check on the UK's democratic system, now estimates that only 24 per cent of that same age group are 'absolutely certain to vote' at the upcoming general election, whilst 17 per cent claim that they have no intention of voting at all.

However, with Labour pledging to give the vote to 16- and 17- year olds should they win the next general election (something the Liberal Democrats had promised before joining the coalition), and after 80 per cent of the eligible under-18s registered to vote in the Scottish independence referendum, it would appear that there is some impetus to get young people interested and involved in politics. Some, however, remain unconvinced, and the Hansard Society's director, Dr Ruth Fox, called the idea of lowering the voting age to 16 "bafflingly illogical" as "[y]oung people who already have the vote are increasingly unlikely to use it."

Young voters are left cold by the mainstream parties' hot air, and Cambridge, although the current government might not indicate it, is a very long way from Westminster. Although Cambridge is graced with student societies representing the Conservatives, Labour, the Lib Dems, the Greens and various other colours on the political spectrum, the charge of political apathy has been laid at the feet of Cambridge students, most notably in the case of the poor turnout in last year's CUSU election.

A group of Cantab film-makers and actors, all current or former students, are now embarking on a project to change all of this – producing a crowd-funded online T.V. series aimed at young people. Entitled *Ruling Class*, the series will follow the protagonist, Quentin, on the campaign trail in a private school where the position of headmaster has been abolished and total power rests with the head boy and girl elected by the student body. Although Quentin initially stands for election only to impress Emma, a candidate for the position of head girl, he is soon faced with fierce political competition from his opponent, Julian, and the school's board of governors. Quentin also has to balance his love for music with his campaign, and is increasingly forced to consider his political views. Following a successful online fundraising campaign, the *Ruling Class* team are nearing the end of filming as they seek to produce a one hour pilot episode, with the hope of extending the series to six full-length episodes.

Speaking to *Varsity* about the political aspect of the project, Mark Danciger, Matthew Lee and Nathan Miller, the team of writers behind *Ruling Class*, insist

that politics need not put off young people. Matthew describes how the young people with whom he has discussed *Ruling Class* "seem to find it funny" and enjoy the fact that "there are different groups and they get to align themselves with one, like music and fashion. It's part of the process of developing an identity."

The *Ruling Class* team describe the series as "School of Rock meets *The West Wing*", and are quick to name *The Thick of It*, *Spitting Image*, and *Yes, Prime Minister* as similar occasions where the boundary between politics and comedy have been blurred. Nathan explains that "Politics often consists of small situations rapidly spinning out of control, which is perfect for comedy [...] It's 'show business for ugly people' – which means that all the glamorous events – be it hustings or dinners, have a touch of the absurd to them."

That said, this is no targeted satirical attack. Mark, Matthew and Nathan are cautious about comparing *Ruling Class* to George Orwell's *Animal Farm*; their message is, according to Mark, "far more optimistic about politics than Orwell's", and "is more about calling young people to get engaged, whatever their political stance." Matthew, however, realises that they, like Orwell, have set about "bringing an adult world and issues into a domain that can be identified with by young people". Nathan describes how they have attempted to take "the exciting bits – scandals, competitiveness, betrayal – and put them in a relatable setting – school", in the hope that this will enable young people "to recognise how much of their day-to-day lives

is political".

It is this message of 'engagement over apathy' which runs through the heart of *Ruling Class*. Nathan adds that the main character, Quentin, "is constantly asked 'what do you stand for?' – even more crucial than his answer is the fact that he is bothering to answer the question at all!"

As noble and worthwhile as it is to encourage young people and potential first-time voters to consider 'what they stand for' and get involved in politics, this non-partisan push for political engagement may come across as a little open-ended. And while it is not acceptable to force political rhetoric down children's throats, surely those of us who have 'found politics' remember the first time a writer or politician said something that clicked with us and mattered. *Ruling Class* does not set out to emulate that, seeking instead simply to encourage young people, who have perhaps so far been unable to find a political stance, to be aware of the politics all around them. Think of it less as a call to arms, and more as an awakening.

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

quality of the research”.

Dawisha's response to CUP highlighted broader concerns with “the difficult situation” of the growing influence of Putin's oligarchy. She decried the fact that “even the most significant British institutions cower and engage in pre-emptive book-burnings as a result of fear of legal action”.

Both CUP and Dawisha pinpointed British libel laws as a major obstacle to the publication of Putin's Kleptocracy.



THEY WERE NOT CONVINCED
THERE WAS A WAY TO
REWRITE THE BOOK

In a similar incident in 2007, a Saudi Arabian businessman sued CUP over their book, *Alms for Jihad*, which accused him of funding terrorist networks. The resultant settlement led to CUP pulping its remaining stock of the book. This became a key case in spurring attempts to reform libel law, culminating in new legislation in January 2014.

Putin's *Kleptocracy* has now been published in the US by Simon and Schuster, with all the sources available online. These include some Russian journalists who “died for this story, and [whose] work has largely been scrubbed from the Internet”.

The book has been praised by reviewers for “penetrating into a deep moral darkness,” as well as its basis in “meticulously researched evidence”.

Farage declines to face protests

Protests planned against UKIP leader by CUSU Women's Campaign

Sarah Sheard
Senior News Editor

Nigel Farage, the leader of the UK Independence party (UKIP), has cancelled his talk in Cambridge, which was scheduled for today at the Department of Politics and International Studies (POLIS).

It is unclear whether the event was cancelled as a result of collective student outrage and organised protests.

The CUSU Women's Campaign had organized a mass protest to be held outside the Mill Lane Lecture Rooms at 6pm, when Farage was scheduled to speak.

Around 30 people attended an organising committee at King's College on Wednesday, including Dr John Regan of Clare Hall.

CUSU Women's Officer Amelia Horgan chaired the meeting, and said that the Women's Campaign were taking charge of the protest as it is the only CUSU ‘liberation campaign’ headed by a full time sabbatical officer.

A Facebook event was also been set up by non-Cambridge students. The event, “Tell Nigel Farage (UKIP) that he is NOT welcome in Cambridge!” encouraged people to “bring/make banners and placards if you can and also any noise making equipment



Nigel Farage will no longer be talking in Cambridge this evening

like drums, megaphones, whistles etc.” Over 200 people had clicked attending.



ENTIRE EVENT CANCELLED

Professor Jonathan Haslam invited Farage to speak at the POLIS “some months ago before he was so topical”.

He was initially unfazed by the idea of protesters, saying that “if students

disagree vehemently, then they should go out, cancel their holidays and canvass against UKIP in the marginal constituencies with some understanding of what draws the downtrodden to it as an alternative to the usual merry-go-round of the usual two parties.”

He emphasised that the idea of politicians visiting as “good for them and good for us”, emphasising that “the study of politics is not to be done solely from books”.

However, he emailed a Varsity journalist on Wednesday night with the message “entire event cancelled”, providing no other explanation.

Haslam is also understood to have invited Farage to dine at formal hall at his college, Corpus Christi, after the event, although this has also been cancelled.

The move outraged students as UKIP remain a deeply divisive.

Just a few days ago Farage angered HIV/AIDS campaigners by remarking that the UK Border Office should be able to “control the quantity and quality of people who come... people who do not have HIV”.

He went on to state that he would also extend the ban to “people with tuberculosis too”.

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Student think-tank tackles Ebola issues



Polygeia explores how social media and gender affect Ebola's spread

Jackson Caines

News Correspondent

As the worst Ebola outbreak in human history continues to ravage West Africa, a new student-run global health policy think-tank is at the forefront of exploring the unexpected implications of the disease.

Polygeia is a Cambridge-based organisation that aims to encourage policy research on global health issues. One such issue is social media. Alex Jones, a graduate medic, suggests that online platforms can be either a help or a hindrance in the fight against Ebola.

He notes in an article for Polygeia, *Information sharing in the Ebola Crisis – Lessons in Social Media*, that the sheer volume of information and conjecture available on the internet means information “can become obscured, inaccurate and lack credibility”.



A NIGERIAN PREACHER SUGGESTED ON FACEBOOK THAT JESUS WOULD STOP THE SPREAD OF THE VIRUS INTO NIGERIA

Jones also highlights how Facebook and Twitter can spread harmful inaccuracies. A Nigerian Pentecostal preacher, for example, “suggested on Facebook that Jesus would stop the spread of the virus into Nigeria”.

When used correctly, however, social media can provide an effective source of medical information, with respected bodies such as the World Health Organisation harnessing these networks to disseminate advice and combat myths.

Student researcher Cassandra Fairhead has also drawn attention to a relatively unreported aspect of the Ebola epidemic: the high mortality rate among women who contract the disease, who comprise 55-74 per cent of recent Ebola deaths. In her article, *Ebola: a disease that discriminates*, Fairhead suggests this is partly due to the prominence of women in health-care in the worst-affected countries, Sierra Leone and Liberia.

This is a sentiment echoed by Marpue Spear, the Executive Director of the Women's NGO Secretariat of Liberia. Speaking to *Foreign Policy* magazine, she said: “If a man is sick, the woman can easily bathe him but the man cannot do so...traditionally, women will take care of the men as compared to them taking care of the women.”

The current Ebola outbreak in West Africa has killed over 4,000 people, with isolated new cases being diagnosed in the US and Spain, and world transport hubs introducing screening measures against the disease. It emerged this week that a nurse in the United States was allowed to board a plane from Cleveland, Ohio to Dallas, Texas, despite showing early signs of the disease; she was later diagnosed with Ebola.

The UK is also preparing for an Ebola outbreak, as many Brits are involved in efforts to tackle the spread of the disease. Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt said yesterday: “I think we will see someone with ebola arriving in the UK, and the chief medical officer thinks it will be a handful of cases in the next three months.”

“We have to be prepared, we have very strict procedures. We have to make sure everyone knows about the right procedures.”

British army medics are due to arrive in Sierra Leone this month to help in the fight against the epidemic: a team of 91 doctors, nurses and infectious disease consultants will join the 40 soldiers who are already working there.

This is, however, not the deadliest epidemic of Ebola that the world has seen. Polygeia press officer and researcher Anastasia Bow-Betrand, a Wolfson student, notes that its mortality rate is 53.8 per cent; she points out that the deadliest outbreak was the 1976 epidemic, with a mortality rate of 88 per cent.

Polygeia, founded by medical students Hari Jeyabalen and Gabriel Lambert, aims “to give students the opportunity to contribute to global health policy”.

Its name derives from the Greek proverb “Poli Ygeia”, which roughly translates as a wish for good health.

Polygeia describe their society as being “driven by our wish to contribute to the establishment of equitable access of excellent health across the globe”.

Its activities include research, policy workshops, mentoring programmes and seminars. While Polygeia has the support of Cambridge academics, its researchers are all students or recent graduates, from first-year undergraduate level upwards. Many of the students involved are medics or scientists, but there is still a wide spread of disciplines in represented in the organisation.

Polygeia will hold its inaugural conference at St John's on November 15th. It will feature speakers and workshops addressing such themes as antimicrobial drugs, neglected tropical diseases and mental health.

The think tank hopes the conference “will set the scene for a wide-reaching Polygeia community, with university branches opening nationwide”. Tickets are available at www.polygeia.com.

EBOLA FACT FILE

- The World Health Organization (WHO) has confirmed 4493 deaths so far, with an estimated 8998 probable cases
- So far, there has been one case diagnosed in Spain and one confirmed death in United States
- The US Centre of Disease Control and Prevention predicts that there will be up to 550,000 cases in West Africa by January 2015 if the virus proceeds at current rate
- The World Bank has estimated an overall economic impact of up to \$3.8 billion

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'Lottery' system would improve access

A lottery system would help poorer children access better education

Kenza Bryan

News Correspondent

Collaborative research by the University of Cambridge, the University of Bristol and the Institute of Fiscal Studies has suggested that a lottery system of admissions could make the intake of Britain's leading schools and universities fairer.

The research was based on the Millennium Cohort Study, which follows the lives of 19,000 children born in the United Kingdom in between 2000 and 2001.

The findings highlight how greater opportunities are afforded to children from families living in the catchment areas for the best quality schools. As houses closer to good quality schools are more expensive, there is a systematic bias towards families with a higher income.

The study comes amid on-going debate about elitism at Britain's top universities. As low-income families are squeezed out of catchment areas, their children are left to poorer quality schools.

This is then reflected in the density of Oxbridge applicants from well-off areas with good schools. For example, in 2013 Surrey sent almost as many young people to study at Oxbridge as Wales and north-east England, with



THERE'S SUCH A GULF IN QUALITY BETWEEN 'POPULAR SCHOOLS' AND 'EVERYTHING ELSE'

figures of 868 applicants and 1,187 respectively.

The researchers argue that existing plans to target elitism, such as priority admissions to low-income families, are only a source of help to the poorest 15 per cent of families.

They suggest a number of alternatives, including a lottery system, the reservation of places for applicants living outside the school's catchment area, and a banding system that would take into account different abilities and backgrounds.

Lead researcher Professor Simon



Eton College

Burgess, of the University of Bristol's Centre for Marketing and Public Organisation (CMPO), has said that there is an intended "nirvana" of excellence in all schools, but suggests that government officials "should not ignore the question of how places in

the better-performing schools are allocated".

However, Jack Smith, a second year undergraduate at King's College, studying HSPS, described Burgess' "nirvana" as a matter of "deflection, pure and simple".

"With a lottery system they'd be treating a symptom rather than a cause," he said.

"The fact that there's such a gulf in quality between 'popular schools' and 'everything else' is the root of the problem."

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Drinking societies facing dissolution

St Catharine's, Emmanuel and Churchill clamp down on misbehaviour

Sarah Sheard

Senior News Editor

A college-wide crackdown seems to be in effect as St Catharine's, Emmanuel and Churchill have all taken steps to clamp down on misbehaviour in recent days.

Drinking societies have taken a big hit as the Catz Kittens, of St Catharine's, and the Emmanuel Lions have been officially disbanded and suspended respectively.

The Emmanuel Lions have been suspended from holding any social events, reportedly after an embarrassing email leak was published by the Tab.

The email, which laid out the initiation lists of freshers and a schedule of swaps for Michaelmas, was sent out by the presidents of the society. It noted that the list of swaps was liable to change as "more may be added subject to demand (i.e. female demand for Emmanuel penis)."

The Lions' presidents also declared themselves to be "very excited for the year to come" and encouraged everyone to "get involved, get keen and

smash it (/the girls)."

The Catz Kittens were apparently disbanded by St Catharine's after a disagreement with senior college figures over a Facebook event which invited the entire college to a night out at Cindie's, despite the Kittens being held to an agreement not to hold events inviting freshers.

St Catharine's has also cracked down on the wider student population by holding a meeting for students who performed poorly academically in the most recent Tripos examinations.



[BULLDOG EVENTS] SHOULD NOT BE KEPT SECRET UNLESS THEIR PURPOSE IS ILLEGITIMATE

According to reports, the senior tutor and dean of the college summoned a group of approximately 40 students in order to condemn their recent academic performance.

The JCR welfare team declined to comment when contacted by Varsity.

Even graduate students have been targeted in the college crackdown after



The Riot Club (2014), depicting an Oxford drinking society, brought this debate to the nation

the Churchill Bulldogs' flagship fresher event "Sinister Swap" was banned by college seniors. The Bulldogs are currently banned from holding events in college on "account of damage done to property at some of their past gatherings".

The swap involved various alumni of the college who scheduled trips up

from London in order to "shark" new freshers.

According to the Tab, female freshers received handwritten invitations to a secret event at Pitt Club, and were then subjected to a bra-unhooking competition and consumed drinks of an increasing strength, with several women being taken home in a semi-

conscious state by Bulldog members.

The senior tutor at Churchill College, Richard Partington, emphasised that there was no reason that Bulldog events should be kept secret "unless their purpose is illegitimate or unsavoury; consequently it should not ask students receiving invitations to its events to keep them secret".

Students release pro-Israel statement

Students release pro-Israel statement in response to academics' pro-Palestine petition

Till Schöfer

Deputy News Editor

A group of Cambridge students has published a statement condemning the use of anti-Israel rhetoric by university academics. The statement, with 61 signatories, is a direct reaction to a similar piece released late last month by a group of university academics.

On the 28th September, a variety of Cambridge scholars voiced their opposition to the recent actions and posture

of the Israeli state during the latest escalation of the conflict in Gaza.

The Palestine statement, published on blogspot.co.uk, called for "an end to the violence perpetrated by the state of Israel against Palestinians, an end to the siege of Gaza and to the occupation, and an end to the discriminatory and dehumanising treatment of Palestinian citizens within Israel."

The roughly 60 supporters of the new, pro-Israel statement have taken strong exception to the "misguided and myopic statement issued by Cambridge academics [and to] the discriminatory practices of our university lecturers".

According to these students, the singling-out of Israel is immoral, particularly considering that several global conflicts have produced much higher death tolls. The signatories further urge the pro-Palestine academics not to rely so heavily on figures concerning civilian deaths released by Hamas.

The statement goes on to underline the poor treatment of Palestinians in Lebanon, the civilian casualties in Syria and Iraq and the military asymmetry between China and Tibetan and Taiwanese separatists.

These conflicts, according to the Cambridge group, provide a global context in which the students "condemn these academics for singling out Israel, the policies of which are open to criticism like any government's, but which has been deemed by this group to be the only country in the world worth criticising."

The students, from a variety of colleges and disciplines, pointed to their objection to the pro-Palestine scholars on legal, philosophical and historical grounds, describing Gaza rocket attacks on Israel as war crimes, calling the failure to mention Hamas moral hypocrisy and pointing to the roots of the Gaza blockade.

The Cambridge University Israel Society commented on this independently issued statement as follows: "This eye-opening letter from the student body rightly highlights the lack of nuance from some Cambridge academics in their strikingly un-academic torrent of criticism levelled at Israel."

The Cambridge University Palestinian Society and the authors of the previous pro-Palestine statement could not be reached for comment.

The publication of the statement on blogspot.co.uk occurred a couple of days after the House of Commons voted to recognise Palestine as an independent nation state and a just be-



[THIS IS A] MISGUIDED AND MYOPIC STATEMENT ISSUED BY CAMBRIDGE ACADEMICS

fore the visit of the Israeli Ambassador Daniel Taub to the Cambridge Union Society.

Since 2011 Taub has held the position of Ambassador to the UK and has since been extensively involved in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process.

Taub has also served as the Principal Deputy Legal Advisor to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and as a legal advisor in Israeli missions to the United Nations.

Security is understood to be particularly tight for the ambassador's talk on Monday 20th October at the Cambridge Union Society, especially considering the global controversy generated by the most recent spate of fighting in the region.

During the most recent Hamas-IDF fighting, 2,100 people were killed in Gaza, including 500 children. On the Israeli side, casualties totaled 64 soldiers and 6 civilians.

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Questions over Chinese donations

Cambridge insists that donations won't influence policy

Till Schöfer

Deputy News Editor

The University of Cambridge has come under scrutiny this week after it was revealed that university representatives travelled to Beijing in 2009 to secure millions of pounds of donations from then-prime minister Wen Jiabao's daughter Wen Ruchun, who runs a charity and holds a senior position in the Chinese government.

The funds, totalling £3.7 million, were intended for the creation of a new post within the University, entitled Chair of Chinese Development Studies.

The inaugural appointee was Professor Peter Nolan, a former teacher of Wen Ruchun when she was a student in London.

Nolan spoke at the Cambridge Union on Monday. When asked about the implications of this donation, Nolan dismissed the concerns and told the questioner to "ask something serious".

Allegations of financial

links between Beijing and Cambridge were first launched in 2012 by the Telegraph. At the time the University denied "any link", thus dismissing the suspicions over Chinese government financing.

A Chinese businesswoman in Beijing has claimed that the Chong Hua Foundation, a charity registered in Bermuda, is run by Wen Ruchun.

Vivien Wang, who runs a chain of kindergarten schools, worked closely with the Wen family, which counts itself amongst China's richest. In a previously unpublished interview with a western journalist, she detailed the millions of pounds in shares that she donated to the charity, which made the grant to to the University.

According to the Telegraph, a Beijing source has also alleged that university officials visited the daughter of the ex-prime minister several times between 2009 and 2011 to discuss a donation via the Chong Hua Foundation.

A spokesman for the University of Cambridge has defended the donation with the following statement:

"The philanthropic donation

from the Chong Hua Education Foundation was fully verified and approved by the University of Cambridge Advisory Committee on Benefactions.

"No more details will be released as the donors, as is common practice, have requested complete anonymity.

"It is wholly wrong and indeed invidious to suggest that any such donation could have any influence at all on our admissions policy or our employment practice."

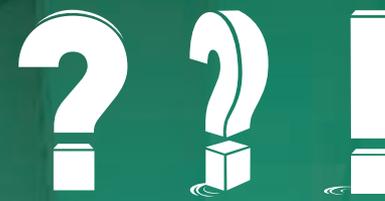
Bill Wang, an individual member of the Cambridge University China Development Society (CUCDS) said that the nature of the donations was "unclear".

However he went on to say: "Although there exist rumours that the money is used to influence the university's policies and the professors' teaching, little evidence has been offered to back the speculation on the impact of the donation on [the] hiring-and-firing policy of the university.

Wang also pointed out that, "The University of Cambridge, as an autonomous entity, has the right to make its own decisions regarding donation acceptance."

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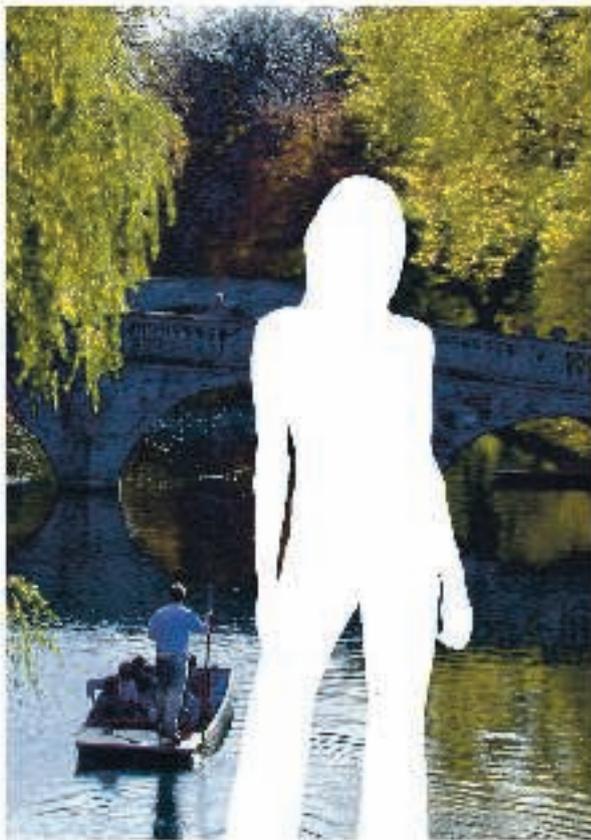
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NEWS IN

BRIEF



Queens' awarded living wage plaque

Queens' College Cambridge has become the first Oxbridge institution to be awarded a plaque recognising it as a living wage employer.

Ben Bayley, head of the Cambridge Living Wage Campaign and an undergraduate at Queens', was overjoyed with the award. "This is a very proud time to be a member of Queens' College," he said.

The living wage, currently £7.65 an hour, is the amount calculated by the Minimum Income Standard necessary to avoid effects of poverty, such as malnutrition.



Women's Campaign respond to "clash" reports

CUSU Women's Campaign has rejected accusations of a "clash" between them and the pro-life organization Cambridge Students for Life (CSFL) at the Freshers' Fair.

The Women's Campaign Officer Amelia Horgan said that the coverage of the disagreement between the two organisations was "misleading", insisting that many other groups also objected to CSFL. Horgan emphasised that it "wasn't in any way only the Women's Campaign" involved in warning other students about CSFL through flyers posted around the fair.



Addenbrooke's 'prepared' for Ebola

Local hospital Addenbrooke's has installed new equipment to decontaminate patients as part of their preparations in case of an Ebola outbreak. Signs at reception also encourage any patients who have visited Africa to tell staff.

Nevertheless, chief executive, Dr Keith McNeil, said there was little risk of Ebola affecting Cambridge. "We have to put perspective around this whole issue... [of] Ebola," he said. "It is a very small risk but we are absolutely prepared."

The virus has killed over 4,000 people on the African continent so far, with isolated cases appearing in the developed world.

Miss England sleeps rough for charity

Murray Edwards student and Miss England Carina Tyrrell raises awareness of homelessness

Emma Fletcher

News Correspondent

In the run-up to World Homeless Day, Carina Tyrrell, most recent winner of the Miss England title, spent a night sleeping rough on the streets of Cambridge.

The 24-year-old medical student, having completed her fifth year as an undergraduate at Murray Edwards, camped out under a bridge near Midsummer Common.

She joined the estimated 2,400 others who sleep rough every night nationwide, 40 of whom sleep on the streets of Cambridge.

The main purpose of the uncomfortable night was to raise awareness about the plight of the homeless in the UK.

Through her role as president of the Cambridge University Global Health society, Carina has been involved in working with the homeless for a number of years.

However, she says that she took to the streets in order to "experience another side of the story, and to better understand what it is like to be homeless".

As wind and rain crept in, and the temperatures dipped down to four degrees, Carina was unable to shake off the cold. "I could not stop shivering despite having many layers on", with "a sleeping bag, blanket and mat" all piled on to protect from the cold.

The Miss England title-holder was struck by how "vulnerable" she felt, and described herself as being "constantly on edge" throughout the entire experience.

She described the overall task as being "the longest night of my life. It was truly miserable".

The following morning, Carina woke up to a warm English breakfast from Wintercomfort, a charitable organization that supports the homeless in Cambridge, offering them a safe place, basic amenities such as showers, and a range of educational and recreational activities.

Carina also emphasised the "misunderstandings and stigma" that surround homelessness. "Many are homeless through unfortunate circumstances, and are not necessarily alcohol or drug dependent".

She expressed a wish for a better general understanding of homelessness in the UK: "I would like to urge people to reconsider what homelessness is and who the homeless are".

Despite a variety of homelessness shelters offering resources and emergency accommodation to those affected, homelessness remains an extremely significant and current problem in Cambridge.

A police dossier obtained by The Cambridge Student last year revealed some homeless people were removing

HELP FOR THE HOMELESS

If you are concerned for someone sleeping rough, or are sleeping rough yourself, you can contact Streetlink by phone on 0300 500 0914 or online at <http://www.streetlink.org.uk>



Miss England Carina Tyrrell enjoys breakfast at Wintercomfort

the lids from tombs at Mill Road cemetery in order to sleep in them.

Homeless people are statistically 13 times more likely to be the victims of violence than those who do not live on the streets, with young people being especially vulnerable to dangers such as pimps and drug dealers.

Carina plans to continue to put her

new Miss England title, which she won in June, to good use. In her own words, "the title of 'Miss' not only represents beauty, but also someone who is kind and charitable."

Miss England director, Angie Beasley, commented that Carina is the "perfect ambassador for Miss England in this day and age... she combines all

the qualities we represent and I am delighted to see her wearing the crown".

Carina will continue to support homelessness causes as she takes a year out of her medical studies to prepare for the Miss World competition in December, which will take place in London and currently has a top prize of \$100,000.



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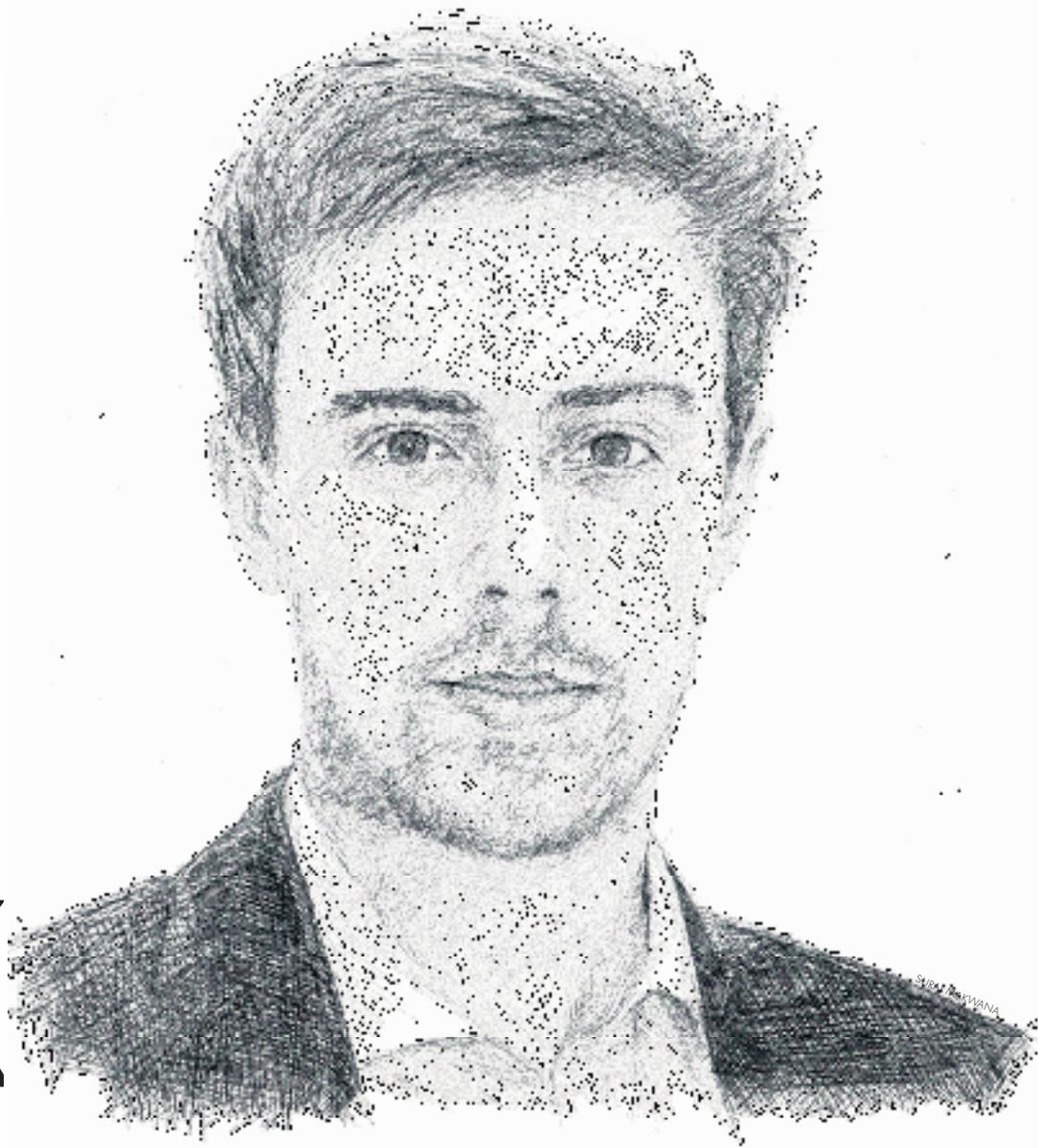


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The Interview: Alex Wickham

WHY I EXPOSED BROOKS NEWMARK



In his first interview on the matter, Alex Wickham tells **Elissa Foord** about exposing the sex scandal that rocked the Tory conference

“It’s been crazy.” In the past few weeks, Alex Wickham has exposed a parliamentary sex scandal, prompted the resignation of a Cabinet Minister, ramped up the pressure on David Cameron over women in politics, and found his sting under investigation by the Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO). “Crazy” might just cover it.

When Brooks Newmark, the now former Minister for Civil Society, sent a series of flirtatious messages and lewd images over various social media (including of himself clad in paisley pyjamas exposing his genitalia), his intended recipient was a Tory PR called Sophie Wittams. She was young, blonde, attractive and, unfortunately for Newmark, an invention.

The man with whom he was in fact corresponding was Alex Wickham, who created the character of Wittams.

As Newmark co-founded Women2Win, the campaign leading the drive to get more Conservative women into parliament, such exploitation of power is more than a little embarrassing for the Tories, and more than a little worrying for anyone who cares about gender equality in politics. But its revelation has also prompted an outcry from a different quarter: media standards. The words ‘entrapment’ and ‘fishing’ have been

bandied about. The machinery of the new media regulatory body, IPSO, has swung into action, calling Wickham’s investigation a “matter of urgent public concern.”

“Frustratingly, a lot of what has been written by journalists who’ve never broken a story in their lives, mainly at the Guardian, has been very uninformed,” Wickham laments. “They seem to think we just randomly tried to do in a load of Tory MPs, which is far from the truth. We had a very specific, explicit tip-off.”

The almost 100 other MPs that Sophie Wittams’ Twitter account followed, then, were a cover story and not targets? “Mr Newmark was the priority for the investigation,” he states firmly. The revelation of a second series of ‘sexts’ sent by Newmark, this time to a real woman, seems to have vindicated Wickham, at least in this regard.

Given that IPSO is so newly established, this case will be a landmark. It seems likely that IPSO will want to take a stand and give the press a taste of the discipline of this new, regulatory era. This is a chance for it to flex its muscles. But it must tread the ever-perilous line between regulation and censorship: “This is an important journalistic enquiry into the man who was in charge of getting women into the Conservative Party, and abusing this position,” Wickham insists.

His argument for public interest

is compelling. It is hard to view the alleged conduct of Newmark, who initiated the conversation with ‘Sophie’ himself and directly requested that she send him sexually explicit photographs, as anything but a gross abuse of his position. Wickham tells me that he’s received a lot of comments since the story broke from women who work in parliament “who’ve basically been saying, ‘thank you, well done,’



IT WASN’T MUCH OF A SURPRISE THAT HE FELL FOR THE STING

and that this is something that needed to happen.” He adds that “it’s not journalists who are the people that should be treated with suspicion; it’s the people with real power. It’s the politicians, it’s the ministers, it’s the people who are in charge of candidate selection processes for political parties, it’s the people who women, if they want to go into politics, have to go through, who abuse their position.”

This case is faintly reminiscent of another sex scandal involving men in positions of power, abusing that

power through involvement with the people to whom their positions granted them access. A case in which those affected could not speak out, and in which media standards were called into question, but for quite different reasons. The details differ greatly, and no question has here been raised of non-consensual, or paedophilic, relations. But I wonder how much the public interest would have been served, and how much damage to victims who could not protest themselves could have been averted, by an operation of similar methods directed at the now shamed BBC employees of the 1970s and 1980s.

But the critical question is, do valid ends justify any means? Not according to past media regulation. IPSO’s policy is that subterfuge must be used only as a last resort. “With Brooks Newmark we used subterfuge to prove that he was abusing his position, and there was no other way of doing it.

“We couldn’t have got a young woman who wanted to be involved in Conservative politics to go on the record and talk about it, because if you’re a young woman in your twenties who wants to be an MP the worst thing you can do is kick up a big fuss about your party in the press. If you do that, then your career’s over.” “I’d like IPSO to come up with an alternative suggestion of what we could have done to prove this man’s wrongdoing.”

Another difficult aspect of the investigation is that the, in some cases explicit, photos of ‘Sophie’ that Wickham sent to Newmark were of women who were completely unaware that they were being used in this way. “I was very disappointed when those photographs were published...We did everything we could to prevent their identities from coming out, and those photos from coming out – deleting the twitter account, and stuff like that. If I were to do it again, sure, perhaps I would get the photos to have been posed, but I would say that the Sunday Mirror and myself never published the photos.”

Wickham is part of the four-man editorial team behind the Guido Fawkes Blog. ‘Guido’ has become a force to be reckoned with in British politics, and introduces himself as “the only man to enter parliament with honest intention. The intention being to blow it up with gunpowder.” Wickham explains his motivations to me: “There’s lots of what politicians do that we’d consider a resigning issue and a political scandal, and lots of that wouldn’t get looked at by the police, or their own parties, they’d always be covered up.”

Sophie Wittams may have been fictional, but the women in politics who are subjected to such treatment are very real. Whether or not IPSO will condemn or condone this exposure of their treatment remains to be seen.

Underheard at Cambridge

Resident news hound Peter Lloyd-Williams sniffs out the tales no other rag will publish

Student destroys future career with ill-advised Varsity editorial

A Cambridge student has seen his future political career left in ruins thanks to a recently published Varsity editorial.

The student, Michael Brownley of Jesus College, published the seemingly uncontroversial comment piece last week.

"I had no idea that, in 20 to 30 years, the opinions I expressed in the article would become anathema to most of the UK population," he said in an interview to be published in the Varsity interview section.

"When I wrote the article, my opinions were in line with what a lot of my fellow Cambridge students thought. But, thanks to permanent on-line file storage, all of my future employers and potential partners have been able to access all of the opinions an older me probably wouldn't have expressed.

"Ultimately, it can only be right that I am permanently held accountable for the views which I once expressed, and have never endorsed since.

"I must thank my political enemies for bringing to the public's attention statements which were uncontroversial at the time, statements which I have disavowed and statements which I now actively oppose. It is clear that past me has rendered present me wholly unsuitable to hold public office."

Tom Freeman, Brownley's editor at the time,

expressed his disappointment at the turn of events.

"It's just such a shame that an opinion which is uncontroversial now, but will later become controversial, has damaged the reputation of someone who wasn't judged for his opinions at the time, but later came to be in a position where he could be judged by modern standards on opinions which no longer reflect him or society."

"Wait, did I get that right?"

Frank Underwood, who helped bring Brownley's unpalatable former opinions to light, has welcomed the news.

"This will help our ongoing efforts to clean up politics," he is reported to have cackled.

DoS regrets spontaneous Cindies

Christopher Black, a director of studies in Natural Sciences at St. Catharine's College, has expressed regret at his decision to go on a "spontaneous Cindies" this past Wednesday.

"Ohhhhh, God," he was reported to be moaning on the way to lecture part 1A at 9 a.m.

"Please, God, just kill me now. This hangover is literally the worst thing I have ever experienced in my life."

Dr Black was intending to "just go to pres", but was reported to have had a change of heart after rapidly consuming multiple shots at an unofficial drinking based event in St. Catharine's

College.

He later reportedly consumed in excess of 15 Jägerbombs, while telling passersby that "I don't feel like I'm spending any money when I pay by card."

It has also been reported that, as he left Cindies, Dr Black declared that he was going for a "TC", although witnesses have reported that the eventual exhibition may have been involuntary and in the gutter.

It is not known how many of Dr. Black's former partners received voicemails. Early estimates put the number between "embarrassing" and "positively catastrophic".

Dr Black's family have requested that he be treated sensitively and in absolute silence at the present time. Donations of bacon butties and juice will be accepted if sent with the correct postage.



Tab relocates offices to Mordor

It has been reported that the popular for profit blog The Tab is relocating its offices to Mordor.

Editor at large, the dark lord Sauron, has reportedly been persuaded to relocate by the "favourable ethical climate" of the blackened hellscape of Mordor and its more lenient labour laws.

In a circular sent to Tab staff, the Dark Lord spoke of "one student paper to rule them all," and the need to dominate and destroy Cambridge through scandalous news stories published about private individuals.

He also promised free condoms to all who sign up and pledge to join him behind the Black Gate.

Commentators have described the move as "bizarre" and The Tab as driven primarily "by the corrupting desire for power."

No orc underlings were available for comment.

MILLIE BRIERLEY

On political correctness, and why it should be renamed

Have you heard the joke about the Jew, the lesbian and the Indian? You know, the one where everyone gets along, and no-one makes fun of people for their culture/beliefs/genetic makeup? No? Me neither.

It is a funny thing to note that the kind of freedom of speech most staunchly defended is often the kind which might use a person's skin colour as the butt of the joke, before calling their mum fat and their sister a whore. But it is just a joke, you see. It is not real. If you think somebody means something just because they say it, then you are a silly person. Lighten up! It is only casual racism/sexism/whichever kind of discrimination has taken your interlocutor's fancy. People are dying! Polar bears are dying! Please find more important things to worry about than feelings.

Political correctness gets a bad rep, all things considered. It is that pesky little ideal which kills the music and turns up the lights during the party so as to be in bed for nine. It laughs (humourlessly) in the face of comedy and hates Jeremy Clarkson (although you can hardly blame it for that one).

But all this hardly seems fair. If you ask me, political correctness has had a pretty rough deal. Whoever invented the term was clearly not its friend. I can just imagine the 'thought-shower' process now: "How can we ensure that this never becomes popular?" "Incorporate the word 'politics', of course! Everybody hates politics!" Poor political correctness never stood a chance.

Now, before any wisecracks go all clever and Greek on me, yes, I know – the word 'politics' really just means 'civic'

its roots, and 'civic correctness' does not sound half as bad (even if vaguely reminiscent of the kind of car you might drive if you really do care about the aforementioned polar bears). But find me one person for whom 'politics' is not inextricably linked with awkward pints, evasive answers and duff promises, and the ouzo is on me. Call someone a 'politician', if they are not one, and you are liable to get a smack; if you are 'politicking', you are hardly likely to be baking fairy cakes and giving out free chocolates. Much to the dismay of Cameron, Clegg and Miliband (but also, let's face it, in no small part because of them), the notion of politics leaves a decidedly bitter aftertaste.

And that is what is so wrong with political correctness: it is not the thing itself – it is the name. So I have a radical suggestion: why don't we change it? Just call it something different. It is, I highly suspect, simply a question of PR, as so many things are: political correctness needs to sack its current PR bod and get in a new one, and I am only too happy to be of assistance. I cannot help but wonder, if we were to start calling political correctness something like 'moral correctness', or simply 'decent human interaction', whether people might not feel rather more positively towards it – like it was the minimal standard for

communication, rather than an optional extra.

If you are struggling to imagine this, allow me to help you out. People would still be funny, but they would bear in mind the feelings of all those they make jokes about, simply because that is the decent thing to do. They would still voice their opinions, but they would do so in a way that was considerate to all those implicated – again, because that is decent. Forgive me, but I do not think this is any kind of blue-sky utopia that I am imagining here – it is simply a world in which people respect other people. I am even going to go out on a limb and suggest that that sounds – I don't know – nice?

I tend to get a lot of stick for my love of all things PC. I am generally the person wincing, while others are busy laughing up their colons. You probably have one in your friendship group, too. They probably annoy the hell out of you. Or maybe you are that person. I am, somewhat reluctantly, going to pass up this opportunity to assure you that I can be fun too – just watch me alphabetising and you will be in no doubt – but I am going to make one final plea on behalf of Decent Human Interaction (née Political Correctness). It just wants to get to know you. Maybe even be your friend. But only if you want to. It's decent like that.



Comment



Eddie Tindall

Rather than being a bubble, Cambridge bursts stereotypes and offers wonderful opportunities for identity and self-expression

Coming out: trans in Cambridge

I am a Cambridge alumnus, artist, designer, and openly trans person. My transition was from a female identity to a male one, and I went through it during my time at Cambridge. Even before I changed my name on deed-poll, an indicator of the support I was to receive from the university was when the faculty registered me immediately under my new name – at their own suggestion. I could not fault their approach. Cambridge was the first environment where I could have a conversation with a tutor in which gender was relevant, where I could mention being trans as normally as you would mention the weather.

With the help of Cambridge University and my friends, I had to negotiate my way through my own sense of identity and expression. I am sure that is common for everyone, whether they're trans or not. For me it was about challenging stereotypical conceptions of 'masculinity' and 'femininity', because at the beginning of coming out I felt I needed to conform to certain ideas of manliness in order to be 'read' correctly – but this compromised how I truly wanted to be. Many people, regardless of gender, don't subscribe to stereotypes, and nor should they be expected to. I like

having long hair, as many men do. As an artist and performer, I have also always been comfortable with using makeup (though usually to transform into some beast or animal). I became, with flowing locks and eyeliner, a Leonine pinup for a CUSU LGBT campaign as a transmasculine, genderqueer person. I felt it was important to lend a face to the community that had supported me, in order to encourage others.

Indeed, what I was not expecting when I arrived at the university was so many different outlets and people to reach out to. Outside work, the Cambridge University Light Entertainment Society (CULES) – with famous, inspiring alumni such as Douglas Adams – was escapist, inclusive, and gave me the freedom to rebuild my confidence with acting and performance. It also linked me to like-minded people in similar societies in universities across the country, making me feel part of something broader. I was also a BBC extra, and through this, I felt inspired to pursue a passion for acting that had been difficult to negotiate pre-transition. Another similar social space was RocSoc: a diverse group of people where anyone of any identity was welcome and safe to be

themselves. In addition to quality music, there was frequently cake, and always humour and warmth.

I also took up a sport. Rowing combined fitness, the outdoors, and proving, despite everything, that I could do something that presented a challenge. The same rules applied to me as to everyone: you get the place if you are good enough. With committed training I achieved Blades with the college's third men's boat. I then coxed the female team (gender of a cox is irrelevant, as long as you can steer, coach and motivate) and won the senior Fairbairn Cup with the first boat. The place of trans people in sport is greatly debated, and I have personally seen a lot of unfair prejudice in the wider world, but, for me, sport remains a great thing to do to gain confidence and fitness. I would say to any trans person: don't be discouraged, and do what you can, when you can. For good measure, I also joined the less-physically-demanding Tiddlywinks society. A sport of skill and dexterity (which often eluded me), I earned my 'Quarter-Blue' by beating Oxford. I figured if you are going to 'do' Cambridge, you might as well do it properly!

For Cambridge students, the lamp

in the middle of Parker's Piece is affectionately termed 'The Reality Checkpoint' – the divide between the Cambridge bubble and the world of the real. But, for me, I experienced and learned things that were far more 'real' about people and identity in the bubble than outside of it. Homerton was my college of choice for its environment and community: from the Porters to the Principal. The staff were kind, supportive, and you felt that they knew you and cared for you personally. Although I have since graduated, I returned not long ago and organised one of the regular town café meets for trans people along with their friends and family. I instantly found myself surrounded by a group of lovely people, old and new. There are worse places to come out as trans than Cambridge, and I do not think I would have come so far, so fast, without it.

Eddie was part of an interaction with The Cambridge Student reporting team and editors, organised through the project All about Trans, which involved positively changing how the media understands and portrays trans people. You can read about the day and outcomes written by Eddie at <http://www.allabouttrans.org.uk/>.



Ludo Sappa-Cohen

Banning offensive language is nothing more than a temporary solution to a deeper problem

F*** swear words: On free speech

A yawn makes its way around the hall on a chilly spring afternoon at my Sixth Form as the physical presence in the room provides a deceptive cover for its almost non-existent mental counterpart.

"If you want to get high, you just do it, right?"

The question produces pockets of giggles around the hall, if only for its sheer openness. Yet, its importance lies in the simplicity of its logic; no one holds their hand up at a party to protest cannabis being smoked on the grounds that it's illegal.

And this is the same line of reasoning that leads me to conclude that the decision to ban LSE Rugby Club on Monday was wrong. Yes, that's right – I don't think that it was right to ban the club which brought shame on the institution through allegedly homophobic, sexist and racist slurs.

My argument, obviously, isn't based on the morality of the issue; I shouldn't have to explain why homophobia is an ignorant and extremely harmful form of bullying which has absolutely no place in modern society. But will punishing anyone who expresses those views really extinguish the problem?

Such a solution isn't restricted to the LSE – a few days ago, an email from the Senior Tutor at my college popped up in which he recites a

resolution that was passed: "Racist, homophobic or heterosexist language... are already matters on which the College would take disciplinary action via the Dean. To this list it now formally adds language or terminology that is clearly misogynistic or sexist."

Yet, this seems to tackle the symptom, rather than the core problem itself. Just as the speaker in Sixth Form implied, whether it's illegal or not, those people (and I hope they are in the minority) are still going to hold those unattractive views. So, the key is to challenge the fundamentals of those attitudes – to expose them to ridicule and humiliation, and make people realise how daft the logic behind them really is. You can bet your bottom dollar that not many people, and certainly no-one at the University of Cambridge, wants to be laughed at, not with, for their views.

Instead, by banning such language, we give the misogynists power and imbue their words with too much respect. My argument, as counter-intuitive as it may seem, is that banning hateful speech is not a natural extension of these policies. In fact, it has the opposite effect from that which they are supposed to achieve. Rather, we must tackle to root of the problem.

Certainly, the idea of fighting hateful language through educational

schemes has been thought of already. Of course it has: go into most schools or universities in the country and you will struggle to find one that does not post leaflets, hold group sessions and generally articulate a strong anti-hate message.

And it's not just the ineffective nature of censorship that worries me. Even if the policy were to completely halt the expression of such views, publicly or otherwise, would the re-



FEAR OF PUNISHMENT DOES NOT EQUATE TO MORALLY GOOD ACTIONS

sult be desirable? Fear of punishment does not equate to morally good actions – the crime is not being committed because it's morally wrong, but because it's a crime. There's no progress in that.

What we are fundamentally doing is sowing the seeds of the war against our own freedom of speech: we don't like what you're saying, so we'll not allow you to say it. It may be surprising to many that when infamous Holocaust denier, David Irving, was facing a jail sentence in Vienna, many

journalists from over the world spoke out in his defence; not because they believed an inch of the drivel he exposed, but because they feared it would be a slippery slope. What next from here? Would criticism of religion start to lose the room it has to breathe, as is the case throughout the Middle East? It is not a far-fetched notion, given the lack of real support from many in senior positions during the Rushdie affair.

In the end, the choice is clear. We can carry on along our path of banning such comments, and deceive ourselves into believing that, just because these things are not being shouted in town halls or in the street anymore, the problem has gone. Or, we can move on, and focus our efforts on showing those vile ideas up for what they really are. Only then can we make progress.

Have any views on this week's comment pieces? Tweet us @VarsityUK, or write in to letters@varsity.co.uk

This House would abolish private education

The comprehensive victory for the Nays at last year's Union debate on the motion "This House would send its children to private school" (320 to 246) suggested that a clear majority of Cambridge students recognise the traditional, archaic nature of private education and its embodiment of elitism, hereditary privilege and sickening injustice. Strong points were made by those speaking in favour, but the broad idea of paying for better schooling, and commodifying knowledge, is not one which makes for fair education or a

subsequently fair society.

A debate on grammar schools, by contrast, would most likely illicit a more tightly-contested result given that they don't stir such passionate resentment over the influence of parental wealth or the damaging divisions that fragment society. They fit in with the dominant meritocratic ideology of modern capitalist society, allowing the brightest students to be pushed and challenged at competitive, stimulating schools that they have reached by virtue of their own talent and hard work. The fact that 33.7 per cent of all state school students admitted to Cambridge in 2012 were from grammars is evidence of their ability to produce academically excellent individuals within the public sector.

But grammar schools entail strict and unjust divisions of their own, the very reason a law was passed in the 1970s preventing new ones from being established. By deciding at the tender age of eleven whether a child should enter a grammar or comprehensive school, the most critical educational judgement of that individual's life is being made well before anyone could be certain about their academic potential or developmental trajectory. A brutal judgement like this effectively siphons off those deemed less capable to the academic wastebin, consigning young lads to mediocrity before their voices have even broken. The message sent out is that intelligence is permanent and

unchanging. That your fate is sealed and potential limited.

Such an early judgement endangers cementing these underlying social and economic inequalities rather than challenging them. Some argue by contrast that grammars give working-class children an opportunity for a first-class education that cannot be gained anywhere else, but this is only the case for the few bright poster child geniuses whose natural ability manages to shine through despite environmental disadvantages.

This is not to say that all or even most educational inequalities would vanish if private and grammar schools were dismantled, or that comprehensives offer the solutions to all current problems. Sociological research has consistently shown that the educational attainment gap between working and middle-class children increases even when they attend the same school – teachers subconsciously harbour bias in favour of students with more pronounced accents and assume they are smarter. It is depressing to note that on average only 64 students who received free school meals are admitted to each Russell Group university every year, despite 18 per cent of all students at state schools being eligible for them. This suggests that the problems are more

deep-rooted and cannot be tackled through educational reform alone.

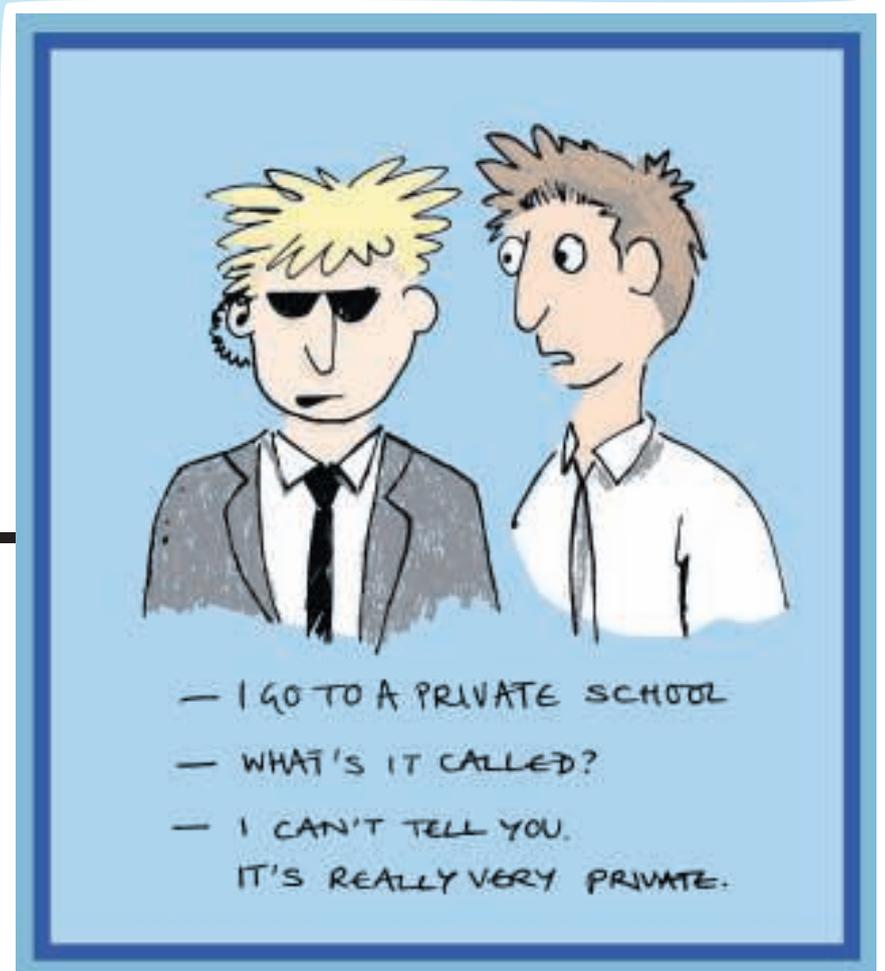
Of course we want schools to push the brightest students and assist them in reaching their potential. Of course we want top universities like Cambridge to be flooded with as many applications as possible from the academically gifted. And of course we don't want to sacrifice aspiration and high performance for an equality of mediocrity in which everybody has the opportunity to access uninspiring education. Though grammars are currently doing a better job of getting the most out of the brightest students, it is a false dichotomy to suggest that the only choices available are between highly selective schooling and excellence on the one hand, and substandard equality on the other.

In Finland all students go through

nine years of common compulsory education before choosing to continue down an academic or vocational track at the age of sixteen, with excellent institutions established for each. The country consistently ranks at the top of global and European education indexes, including the UN Educational Index, managing to combine a system which promotes equality of opportunity with high levels of school autonomy, producing outstanding results in the process. The Finnish model cannot simply be plucked and installed in the UK at the click of a finger. But by at least starting to question the educational system as it exists today, and pinpointing the factors that lead to rigid inequalities and injustices, the process of reform can begin, and the building of a system that allows all to flourish can start.



AYE: Sam Dalton



Are private schools unfair? Yes. Are they elitist? Yes. Does an 'old boys' network of private school alumni unjustly dominate politics, the judiciary and the media? Yes.

But, would abolishing private schools solve the problem?

In so far as there wouldn't be any 'private schools' for the elite alumni to come from, then yes. But we all know it wouldn't be long before the Range-Rover driving yummy mummies of Surrey upped sticks, moved to the catchment areas of top state schools and employed private tutors for darling Victoria or

Percival. Those children originally in the catchment area, without private tutors or pushy parents, wouldn't stand a chance.

Rather than pushing for the abolition of private education, we need to improve inequalities among state schools and rethink our impression of the private sector.

Improving the inequality of state education becomes even more necessary when we consider the principal accusation put against private education: that it is downright unfair that some children are given what are perceived to be greater advantages than other children, purely because their parents were able to, and chose to, spend money on their education. To respond by saying 'life's unfair' would be insensitive, but when pupils at 261 state schools registered average GCSE grades no higher than a C last summer, while their leading counterparts averaged an A*, it seems to be true. While imbalances like this exist in the state sector and directly disadvantage those who don't send or who, perhaps more importantly, are unable to send their children to private schools, abolishing the private sector, which doesn't contribute to the disparity in state education, is far from a priority.

Yet when we look at the inequality that private schools do promulgate, particularly academically, it is important that we refrain from indulging our media-driven estimation of these schools and their students. Looking at the private schools that boast of sending armies of eighteen year olds off to Oxbridge each year, you have every right to rail against that perceived injustice.

Or you can encourage more sixth form colleges – like Hill's Road College here in Cambridge which was recently ranked third on a Sunday Times list of schools with the highest levels of Oxbridge entry after Westminster and Eton – to try and improve and do the same.

The same can be said of facilities. Of course, at some private schools, brand spanking new laboratories, sports pitches, theatres and music centres are the norm, but, more often than not, private schools have facilities that are indistinguishable from those of high-ranking state schools. Subsequently, the same option presents itself. You can attack the schools that do have world-class facilities. Or, you can celebrate how schools (both independent and state) fortunate enough to have swanky state of the art equipment rarely miss the opportunity to benefit the wider community by making it available to the public. Better still, you can aim to improve the facilities at state-schools lower down the rankings not yet equipped with the latest computers, science equipment and sports gear, rather than abolish the schools that do have these amenities.

Nevertheless, there is one thing we must address. That, despite the success stories, Oxbridge entrants and excellent facilities state schools have to offer, the gap between state and private education continues to exist and it narrows and widens depending on where you look. This, in itself, is surely an argument for the

abolition of private education.

Only it isn't. Yes, that gap is unfair, but it is far less unfair than the wide gap in education provisions faced by children from the same economic backgrounds but who happen to live in different catchment areas and attend different schools. Abolishing private schools is futile to argue for on the basis of egalitarianism, when such disparities exist in the state sector.

It is not, however, futile to offer opportunities to the children able to benefit from a private education. That benefit may be a result of one of the scholarships that enable thousands of children from less advantaged backgrounds to attend some of the country's most elite schools. It may be as a result of parents' hard work and sacrifice for their child's education. It may simply be as a result of a family's inherited wealth. It shouldn't matter.

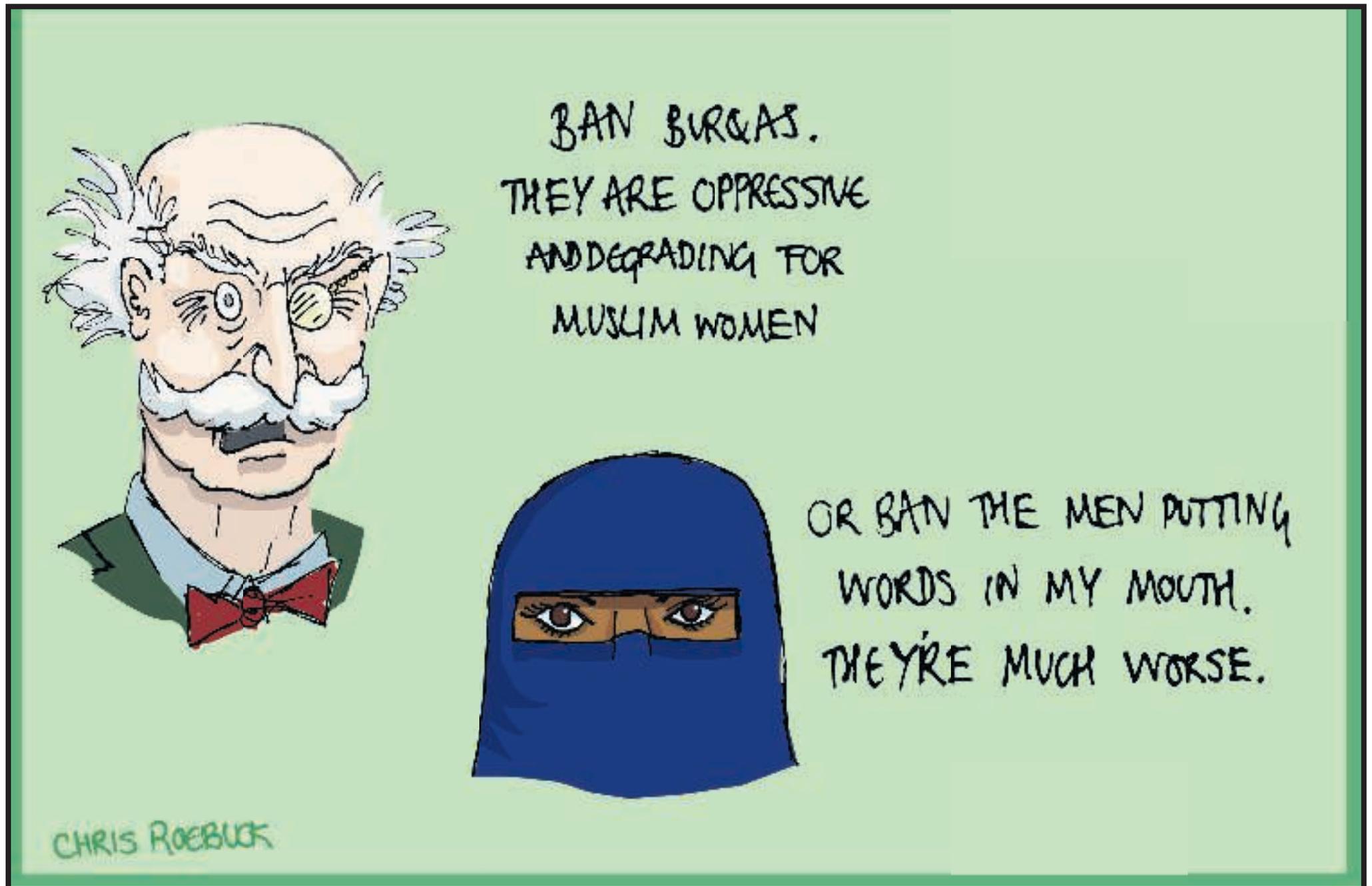
Like good state schools, most good private schools specialize in offering children the opportunity to flourish, whether it's on the stage,

in the exam hall or on the sports pitch. They offer opportunities of emotional development through involvement with charities or positions of responsibility and abolishing private schools would eliminate these opportunities for everyone, apart from those lucky enough to attend top state schools where they are also on offer. Educational inequality would continue to exist regardless and to deny one child the opportunity of private education simply because another does not receive it is little better than denying UK children education completely, in order to level the playing field with the 72 million children around the world who get no education at all through no fault of their own.

We can offer some children a private education. Sometimes, that education is better than state education. The only act that would be truly unfair would be denying them the chance to take it and failing to act upon the more serious inequalities that exist among our state schools.



NAY: Morwenna Jones



Debate beyond the burqa



Katie Hurst

In the debate about oppression, sometimes the silent voices have the most to say

The burqa has, for many years, been a hotly debated and often controversial topic, rarely out of the media for longer than a week or two. In the news recently, a 16 year old girl had been told that her place at Camden School for Girls sixth form depended on her not wearing a niqab, the full-face veil. Each news story like this spawns countless more articles discussing the pros and cons of banning the burqa, each one eager to express their own opinion.

Yet why do so few of these articles seem to be coming from those whom the burqa most immediately concerns – Muslim women?

I do not intend to add my opinion to the many others out there discussing the burqa. In fact, I do not think – as a non-Muslim – that my opinion really needs to be heard. I find it very hard to form any opinion without really knowing what Muslim women think of the burqa, and I think you should too. Some articles have argued that the hijab is degrading and restricting to the wearer, whilst others claim that it is liberating. Some articles even have the reporter “going undercover”, wearing the veil for a day, as if this qualifies them to give a definitive judgement on the burqa. The views of Muslim women are the most important, yet they are also the views most often overlooked.

The voices behind these articles

are commonly white males. They are often quick to reach a definitive conclusion falling into one of two camps: women either should wear the burqa or they shouldn't. But surely it is not a man's place to tell a woman what she should or shouldn't wear? This is little different to slut shaming: women shouldn't wear revealing clothes, women shouldn't wear the hijab. Societal expectations of women are frustratingly contradictory, often constraining women to a fine line of modesty they must carefully tread. Where in this are the opportunities for individuality and self-expression?

Ultimately, a journalist telling Muslim women that they shouldn't wear the hijab is little different to a Muslim man telling his wife that she has to wear one. The voice of Muslim women simply seems to be ignored by almost everyone who wades into the debate. Halimah, a medical student who wears a hijab, agrees. “Those actually concerned – the women wearing the niqab [or burqa] – often aren't included in the debate,” she argues. “If people want to discuss the issue, then niqabi women should definitely be on the panel!”

I have only ever seen one article amongst the hundreds discussing the hijab in which Muslim women were actually interviewed in any kind of depth and allowed to express their own views and beliefs. This appears to

be symptomatic of a deeper problem.

In these articles, Muslim women do not have a voice. They have been reduced to the burqa itself, a silent object devoid of emotion or opinions. All too often Muslim women are not given the chance to hold an opinion about anything, and this problem stretches far beyond the burqa debate. Another Muslim student tells me: “I do think that the media gives a one-sided view on anything Islamic; it would be good to read articles from Muslim women, especially on subjects - like this one - which affect them directly. Men of any colour or race aren't women!”

This dominance of white male voices reduces Muslim women to a stereotype - meek and subservient - that is just as damaging as the stereotype of the male Muslim as an Islamic radical. The silence of Muslim women in western society feeds Islamophobia. It is also, purposefully or otherwise, misogynistic, as Muslim women are denied the chance to have a choice, let alone to defend it. It is crucial that they are given a greater voice – in media and politics as well as society – in order for others to begin to understand and accept their diverse culture, and respect their individual choices.

Only then, perhaps, can we begin to see the burqa debate as a far smaller issue than we have made it.

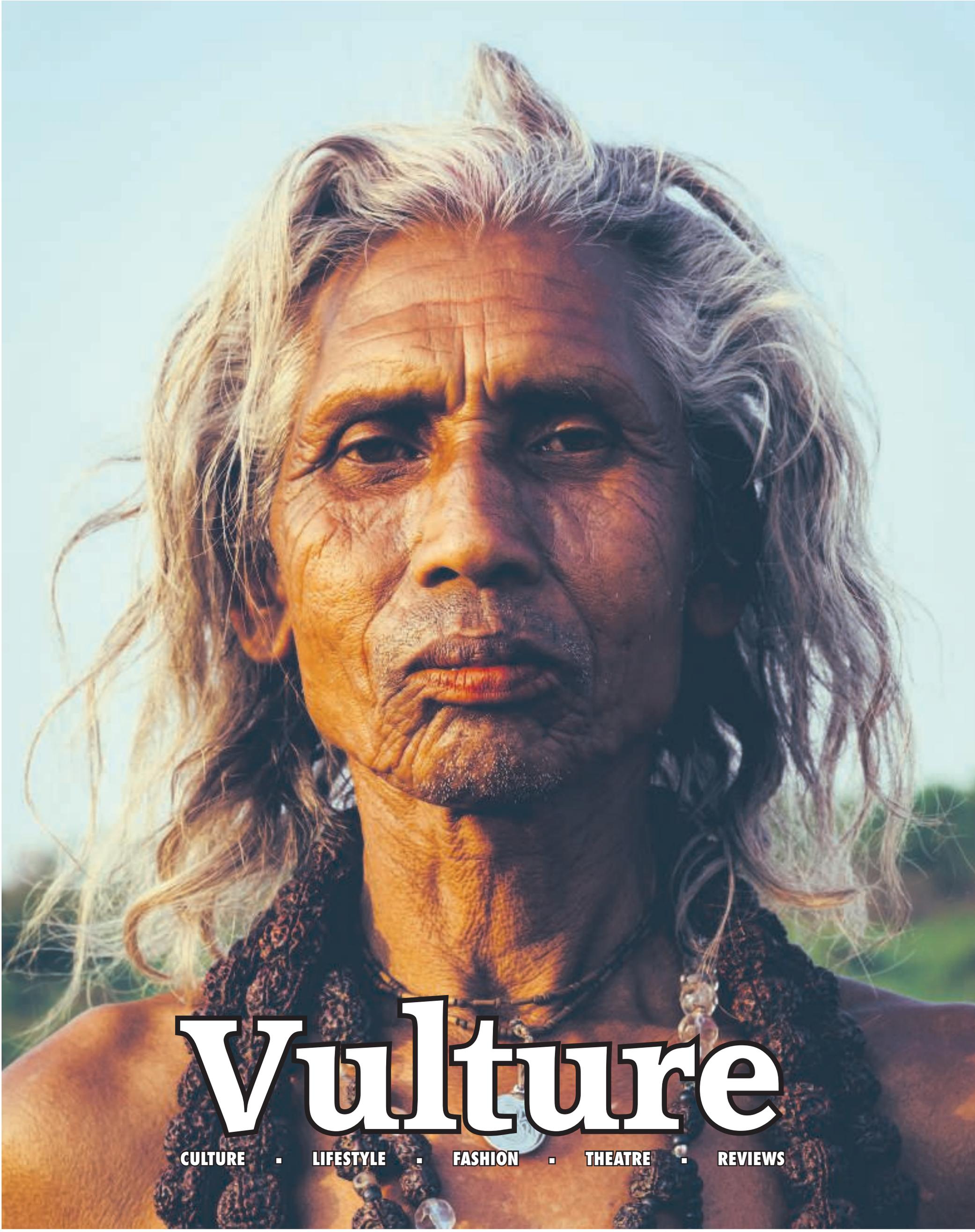
BURQA LEGISLATION IN OTHER COUNTRIES

On September 14th 2010, the French Senate approved banning burqas in public. They stated that “Given the damage it produces on those rules which allow the life in community, ensure the dignity of the person and equality between sexes, this practice, even if it is voluntary, cannot be tolerated in any public place”.

A 1975 Italian anti-terrorism law makes it illegal to wear any dress that hides the face. In May 2010, it was reported that a Tunisian woman was fined €500 under this legislation.

A 2011 YouGov poll indicated that 66 per cent of British people supported banning the burqa in all public places.

Not just a mark of Islam, a few years ago in Israel, a group of Haredi (ultra-Orthodox) Jewish women began wearing covering veils. Since its adoption by Bruria Keren, an estimated 600 Jewish women have taken to wearing the veil in the country.



vulture

CULTURE ▪ LIFESTYLE ▪ FASHION ▪ THEATRE ▪ REVIEWS

Cambridge Creatives

Lavinia Puccetti sits down with the Chair and directors of Cambridge Creatives, Rebekah-Miron Clayton, Jack Collier and Eliska Haskova, as well as some of the creative's themselves, to discuss creation and Cambridge

Is there space for creativity at Cambridge? Creativity could be seen as that distant sphere which exists beyond the weekly essay. But with that sphere being so small in Cambridge, the desire of students for an artistic outlet poses a problem at our university.

In 2013 Jack Collier and Eliska Haskova responded to this by founding the Cambridge Creatives, "a magazine, a network, and partly a challenge to you" in answer to this quest for "non-academic" creativity in Cambridge. Following their exhibition on 15th October, I talk with some of the contributors and directors to find out what Cambridge Creatives (CC) is all about.

Rebekah-Miron Clayton begins by telling me that "CC is an online platform that connects creative people across the University. It's a place where they can experiment, and see other Creatives' work." Hopefully, this mix of unbiased publishing and creative networks will lead to new ways of thinking about what 'art' actually is and how different genres of creativity interact.

I ask if they think academia tends to suffocate independent creative and practical work. "Obviously at a university like Cambridge where academia is such a demanding focal point, it would seem that creativity in all its forms would be somewhat stifled," replies Clayton. "This was even the case with Ted Hughes, who began studying English at Pembroke only to find his writing... [stifled] by the 'terrible, suffocating, maternal octopus' of literary tradition.

However I believe that it is due to the type of passionate and inspired individuals the university attracts that the level of creative talent we have is booming and needs a platform such as CC."

I note that the CC initiative intends to help make "the first steps towards careers in the arts easier" and so I ask if many of the Creatives will embrace their creativity and turn it into a life-project, in light of the fact that a number of commissions have already been made through the site.

Clayton says she can't be sure how many will choose to turn their work into a career. But she assures me that, "through Cambridge Creatives, art is nurtured and developed and as a result people who may never have felt the confidence to publish may well take their first step on that ladder with CC." Certainly, I have found that CC is all about changing attitudes and perceptions of art and engaging in what art can be.

Yet this does not mean to say that CC considers itself anything like an artistic movement. "It could be described as an artistic movement within the university due to its core principles of creativity without restriction of judgement or boundaries," Clayton explains. "However an 'artistic movement' sounds a little bit high-brow

for CC.

"We don't see ourselves as an exclusive club. There isn't a single Picasso amongst us. Rather, we're a facilitator for others. What CC wants to do is break boundaries, so that the Picassos can flourish, and they flourish no better than when networking, meeting and beholding other Picassos."

Her words draw me to the question I have been waiting to ask: what does it mean to be creative?

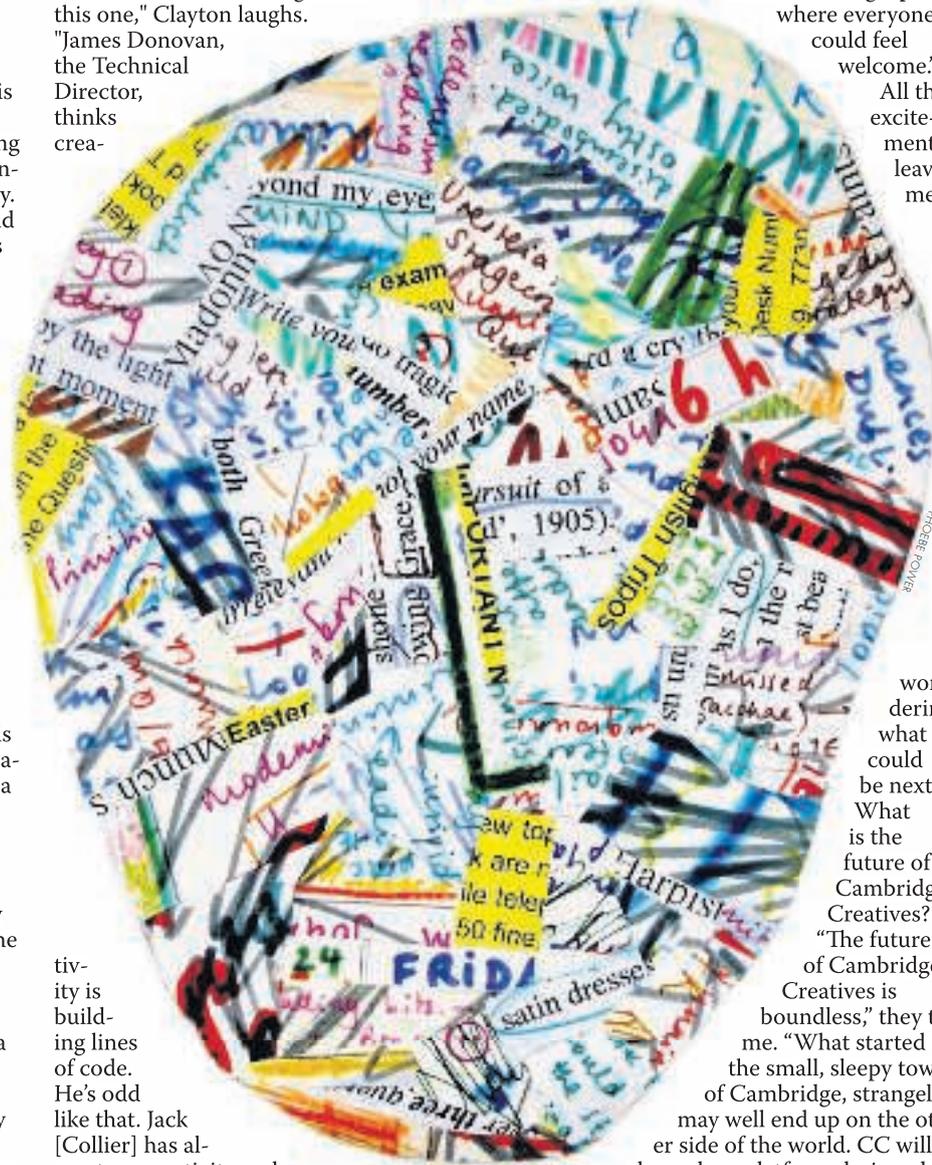
"The directors all disagree on this one," Clayton laughs.

"James Donovan, the Technical Director, thinks crea-

the efforts of others."

Before our time is up we turn to discussing the Cambridge Creatives exhibition that took place on Wednesday to discover where the genesis for the idea came from. David Godwin says they "wanted to create an event which celebrated CC's previous year and promoted our message. There was no specific theme to the exhibition. Instead, we want to show a range of work from different mediums and levels of experience, offering a place where everyone could feel welcome."

All this excitement leaves me



tivity is building lines of code. He's odd like that. Jack [Collier] has almost no creativity and so the pursuit of anything slightly off-beat is, to him, wondrous. Eliska is fairly atypical and is quite creative. She's a photographer though, so really just focuses on using light in different ways."

For Clayton however, it means, "using a creative medium to tap into human thought and consciousness.

"It is to release and share a part of who you are and how you view the world, into a form of expression of any kind. Creativity is to communicate and find your own truth in

learned about the structure and ethos of CC, I wanted to know more. So I decided to speak with one of their artists, John Fahy. Fahy is a Cambridge Creative, a photographer and a PhD student in Social Anthropology at King's.

I find the diversity of Cambridge Creatives – and of creativity itself – reflected in his photography. These pictures take the viewer far away from Cambridge, they crystallise and conflate dreamlike ideas reminiscent of exploration with portraits of individuals.

While I sit by the fireplace in his room to begin the interview I see a keyboard, his photo-equipment and an endless sequence of books about India, almost as many as the hundreds of photos he took during his fifteen months of fieldwork research. The room is in fact more an artistic studio rather than a student room and Fahy is clearly somebody who has not given up creativity for academia.

My discussion with the directors of Cambridge Creatives has left me thinking about 'inspiration' and the modes in which it operates, particularly in Cambridge. Are these the same for all types of creatives? Do they think creation happens in the mind of a painter the same way it happens in the mind of a photographer, for example?

Fahy tells me, "I would guess that the processes, the pace and the rhythm are very different. Of course photography includes going out into the world, immersing yourself, and coming back with a bunch of photos to choose from and edit appropriately.

"They both share considerations of composition, colour, and so on. I am not sure to what extent creativity happens in the mind though? I know from playing music and certainly from photography, that while you consciously guide yourself into situations or through familiar chords, it's often the unplanned moment that defines the creative act."

Fahy also writes a blog. I ask him whether photography can be seen as a self-sufficient art or if it requires the explanation of the photographer. After reflection he admits, "there are those who think that captions, blogs or anything along those lines betray the purity of the photograph, and that any communication between the photographer and the audience should be restricted to the frame of the photo." But he adds assuredly, "I have never heard any good reason for this though."

We finish the interview and I get up to leave. It is at this moment that Fahy stands up, quickly grabbing his camera and pointing it out of the window facing King's College Chapel like a rifle. He takes a photograph of a small sign that reads 'mind your head' placed above King's front gate.

A passer-by would not see it. "A sign for people 15 feet tall!" he says ironically. It seems that Creativity can really be found in anywhere in Cambridge.

STAR MAN



Having just lit the candle in my pocket-shrine following David Bowie's producer spilling the beans about the new album, *Nothing Has Changed*, and tour, I figured what better way to celebrate than to host an exclusive (read: solitary) retrospective of Bowie's forays into film.

If you missed out on having Bowie's ethereal form in tights emblazoned on your retinas at a tender age (as the Goblin King in Jim Henson's musical fantasy *Labyrinth*), you are in for a treat my friend. While you may not necessarily associate his name with the medium, David Bowie translates extremely well into film. Somehow he manages to give credibility and even a sense of moment to the most absurd roles, with each character feeling like another one of his carefully formed stage personalities. *Labyrinth*, for example, should really be a bit of a zit on the face of cinema given the flat storyline, prevalence of mullets and, well, muppets. Yet David Bowie manages to give it depth (despite prancing around his lair in a billowing shirt). He is perfectly cast as the villainous baby snatcher whom one simultaneously fears and fancies; his characterisation creating a tension which prompts a deeper commentary on the conflict between adolescent sexual awakening and childhood roles within the family unit.

Another similarly ridiculous yet memorable performance (and one of my personal favourite 'Bowie on screen' moments) is his weird cameo in David Lynch's nightmare of a *Twin Peaks* epi-

sode, *Fire Walk With Me*. In this film length episode, Bowie plays a long lost FBI agent complete with a white 1980s suit, tropical shirt and best of all, an odd Southern accent. Not one to do a small cameo with reservation and grace, Bowie lets loose a chilling scream before he mysteriously disappears for the rest of the film. Perhaps this is not his most important performance, but the quality of his southern drawl, if nothing else, makes it worth a mention.

In contrast, Bowie's strongest film performance must be in Nicolas Roeg's *The Man Who Fell to Earth*. Here he plays, appropriately, an alien who, crash-landing on Earth, finds himself in the dusty, quietly threatening, New Mexico desert. There he meets the lonely Mary-Lou who acts as his guide to a world where the only available activities seem to be getting drunk, having dazed

sex and attending church – all the while surrounded by flickering television screens. Through Bowie's eyes the mundane takes on an uneasy novelty as we are forced to confront our world through the eyes of an extra-terrestrial being, or indeed, as a cocaine and heroin addicted outsider (as Bowie was at the time).

Less famous, yet the film in which Bowie conveys the most piercing insight into the parallel world of drug addiction, is undoubtedly *Wir Kinder vom Bahnhof Zoo* (*We Children from Bahnhof Zoo*) set in 1970s West Berlin. In this film Bowie plays himself, providing both a dazzling source of relief from the grim plot and a malevolent magnetism. In the climactic concert scene we see Bowie, incarnated as the Thin White Duke, emerge from a cloud of smoke as a radiant demagogue. While we watch him

serenade the drugged up children of Berlin we become acutely aware of the fact that he represents their salvation and their downfall. When he sings, seemingly directly, to the gamine 13 year old protagonist, Christiane, we get a sense of the importance and intimacy of the relationship between many young people and their music. As Christiane searches for pills to pop, it seems that Bowie is singing to himself, embodied in his painfully young audience. His music offers sanctuary and understanding and yet in following him, it is suggested, one is led to very dark places.

Given the link made by the film between Bowie's 'scene' and drug addiction, it is perhaps surprising that the singer was so keen to contribute a soundtrack and performance to Uli Edel's work. However, we remember that Berlin was Bowie's chosen stage in the 70s, when he was at the peak of his addiction, living in a decrepit West Berlin apartment with Iggy Pop; and it was Berlin where he struggled to end his addiction. Perhaps it is therefore understandable that he wanted to express the dark, absorbing, earthly, world of *Wir Kinder vom Bahnhof Zoo* as a contrast to the ethereal glitter with which he is most commonly associated.

So whether you are a Bowie acolyte trying to find a way to fill your days before the anticipated album release, or someone who just likes watching niche films, give David Bowie, the actor from Mars, a try – he'll take you to some far-out places.

Nancy Hine

GLASS ANIMALS

Olivia Brogan delves into a band with an unusual sound and a dizzying career trajectory



Glass Animals is a band that revels in a sense of *The Other*. Under their wide-eyed blur of trippy, childish innocence, lie sinews of whispered vocals, disco-lite droplets and howling synths. Sensitively blending feathery trip hop, electronica, krautrock and R&B influenced bass lines, they have been described as “G-funk made by choirboys.”

The shadowy, dreamlike atmosphere of their sound partly reflects how it was brought forth; in the middle of the night in a small, student room in Elephant and Castle when Dave Bayley, wired from late lab nights at medical school, began suffering from insomnia and turned to writing music. Bayley tentatively showed the bare bones of his tracks to three friends he'd grown up with from home, who helped him flesh out the songs for release on Myspace. Within only a few days they had been contacted by managers, artists, promoters and shortly after news of their intriguing first EP, *Leaflings*, they pricked the ears of British power-house producer Paul Epworth. He attended their first London gig and soon after Glass Animals became the inaugural act to sign to his new label Wolf Tone. With an amazingly fast rise in prominence, the band now find themselves standing, sort of accidentally, in the midst of the Music Industry.

They have a reeling list of influences which wanders from the likes of Radiohead and Animal Collective to Dr Dre, and even strays into the literary world of *The Island of Doctor Moreau*, *Heart of Darkness* and J.R.

Tolkien and Lewis Carroll's fantasy lands. The album was also named after William Steig's children's book *The Zabajaba Jungle*, and the songs are like familiar tales, replete with personified animals and “peanut butter vibes”. Their sound also never quite escapes the influence of the ‘cave’ in the midst of the Oxfordshire woods, in which they rehearse. Its tonality seeps into their album, full of percussion critters and even rabbits nibbling on microphone covers; “you get this really weird sound like someone's tapping on your ear drum, it's such a bizarre sound.”

The band have a refreshingly playful approach to their songs and the bizarre sounds they create: “Joe, our drummer, filled a pot up half with water and wiggled it over his head and as he hit it with a stick it made different pitches as the water moved around. We also included samples of Drew eating an apple, someone throwing a crisp packet at a wall – all sorts of stuff.” This even includes a range of children's instruments; in ‘Pools’, ‘boomwhackers’ (which are essentially big, multicoloured plastic tubes) provide a lively balearic hook that runs throughout. Bayley somewhat humbly puts this innovation down to the band's lack of experience: “The first couple of EPs were made on a kind of relic of a laptop with garage band and a ten dollar microphone and all of a sudden we had these new things that we had never seen before and it was like being in a playground ... we were just wandering around, twisting knobs.”

Beneath this childlike persona however, runs a darker sense of retrospection which stops it from

becoming trite or gimmicky. The music appears more like a backwards, guilty glance on innocence and the lyrics, which also include lines like “my naked fool, fresh out of an icky gooey womb / A woozy you, dopes upon a silky smooth perfume,” lend themselves more to Freud than Milne.

Key to the attraction of their first album, *Zaba*, released this June, is the way in which it functions as a continuous whole. Played from beginning to end, tracks are intentionally melded together as the album forms a humid landscape of sound. Bayley explains he wanted it to work like *Dark Side of the Moon*; “you can listen to it from start to finish and you can feel like you've gone to space for the entire of it” or Merriweather Post Pavillion “which takes you off into this weird electronic forest... That was the goal with this record at least – to take you away from reality.” With the striking aesthetics of their record covers (which Bayley made himself on only a fiver) and the work they have done with Raphael Bonilla Junior in compulsively disturbing music videos, it's hard not to feel engulfed in the dark world Glass Animals have created.

Having just announced a series of big shows across the UK in March 2015, Glass Animals are set to polish off their roller coaster year with several more singles, alongside some of Bayley's remixes (for those of you who were a fan of his pre-Glass Animals DJ-ing). And with the singer getting even less sleep now than he did at medical school, they hold the promise of being rawer and more bizarre than ever before.

Twitch: The online giant you've never heard of

Patrick Killoran looks at how Amazon is taking over the gaming industry

In 2007 Justin Kan created the video streaming site justin.tv, which then featured a whole range of media content. Now, in 2014, the only surviving portion of the site is the gaming section that has been packaged into its own website dubbed twitch.tv. Twitch has boomed over the past year, attracting the attention of online giant Amazon, which made Twitch its largest acquisition ever for the impressive sum of \$970 million. This sum is comparable to Google's purchase of YouTube for \$1.65 billion, and highlights what could be a worrying trend for those seeking platforms outside of mainstream culture where people can share content and conversation in an environment unsullied by barrages of ads.

Twitch's rapid emergence correlated with a rapid rise in the popularity of spectator gaming, a booming cultural phenomenon in the 9-18 age bracket, the commercial opportunities of which can no longer pass unnoticed by big businesses. Amazon evaluated Twitch at this price based on the website's performance in the past year. Forbes reported that Twitch, at the end of 2013, had 45 million unique monthly visitors, a total of 106 minutes of video watched every day and a large selection of broadcasters made up of casual gamers, professional gamers and publishers. This makes Twitch the fourth busiest website in terms of traffic at peak times in the USA, according to technradar.

What does this change of hands mean for the unique platform that Twitch provides and the gaming culture that goes with it? The countercultural, advert free vibe and the opportunity to have a career as a shackle free broadcaster lead many of Twitch's users to stop participating in mainstream TV/internet media. This will surely disappear as Amazon injects more unavoidable advertising and restricting regulations on upload content to generate more profit, and to avoid lawsuits.

Amazon could also take the decision to use personal Meta data (collected from your browsing history on Twitch and other Amazon services) to target users with tailored advertisements; a process that has been controversial in the past, especially with the subversive, technologically switched on demographic that makes up Twitch's audience.

Hope for gamers comes in the form of CEO Emmett Shear's comments to Amazon's press release team: "Being part of Amazon will let us do even more for our community. We will be able to create tools and services faster than we could have independently". He also wrote in a blog post: "We're keeping almost everything the same: our office, our employees, our brand, and most importantly our independence". It seems, for the moment at least, the executives at Twitch are committed to their current community. One other possible benefit for content creators is the potential for them to become spon-

sored by the site, much like YouTube's partnership scheme. This would allow them to generate more revenue (more than the current setup that relies on donations and subscription fees from users), in turn creating innovation and quality in their work.

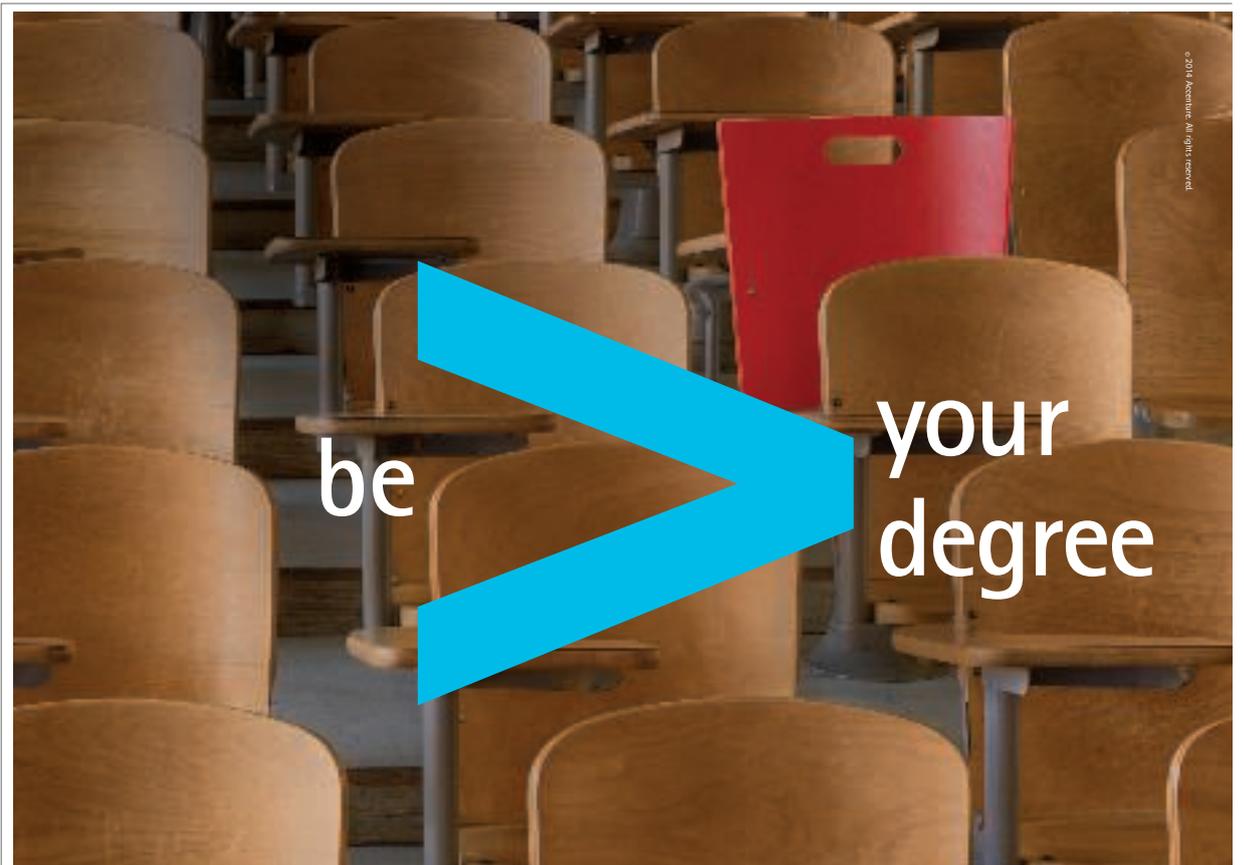
The inevitably depressing conclusion is that Twitch will follow the same path as YouTube and Instagram, and be consumed into the services of a corporation (Google was actually the

front-runner for most of the time Twitch was negotiating its sale). It will surely be transformed to generate more profit and appeal to the wider public by shifting the emphasis away from gaming, perhaps leaving its original audience behind in search of more lucrative business.

However, it's not all doom and gloom. Many agree that this is far from bad news for gamers. Amazon may invest in building Twitch up as a more

pro-gamer competitor to YouTube, a site that has fostered a more popular, watered down gaming culture, and at the same time provide more income for more of the creative people behind Twitch's content.

And, if we're being optimistic, this sale will lead to an elevated status for gaming culture, making companies more likely to listen to the desires of gamers and allowing the culture to become increasingly participant guided.



POET'S CORNER

Quaint chimes echo far,
Beckoning blind horizons.
Small solace, if that.

Thin sounds echo round,
Lowly and ephemeral.
Wary, I blink twice.~

Feathered breasts, now soft
And faceless in the half light.
Look on, slow moonlight.

Bird-like sounds wake me
But I'm blinded by the light.
My foot's in the door.

◆
Jess Franklin

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Restaurant Review: Branching Out

Katie Cornish goes in search of something a little bit different in Cambridge



It can be easy to fall into a rut with our dining habits and to frequent the same restaurants serving the same cuisine. Cambridge is home to some unique, international-style restaurants, two of which I visited this week.

Charlie Chan, Regent Street

I've heard mixed reviews about this Chinese restaurant. On the one hand, it has a typical menu of somewhat westernised Chinese food. However, despite this, the restaurant is always packed with groups of local Chinese people, digging into a huge variety of dishes. So what's the secret? Two words: Dim Sum!

Dim Sum is a style of Cantonese food, typically served in small pieces, with large quantities of steaming hot tea. I have tried Dim Sum on several occasions, and can safely say that Charlie Chan serves one of the best. If you fancy Chinese food with a difference, I'd highly recommend this restaurant and the following dishes in particular. First, steamed Char Siu Pork Buns (or Ho Wong Cha siu bao) – fluffy white buns filled with barbecue-flavoured pork. Next, try the Wafer Paper Wrapped Prawns (or Way fa zi bau ha) – this dish features succulent, whole prawns wrapped in thin rice paper and fried until crisp. Finally, round your meal off with Stuffed Pancakes with Red Bean (or Dau saa Zin Yun ben), which involves a red bean paste surrounded by a gelatinous rice flour case and sprinkled with sesame seeds – definitely an unusual taste sensation.

Polonia Club, Chesterton Road

If I had to describe Polonia Club in three words, they would be vodka, vodka, vodka. Proudly boasting a range of thirty-six different types of Polish vodka, ranging from £2 to £2.80 per 25ml, this is an excellent location for a lively Friday night dinner or a celebration with a large group of friends.

Polonia Club is slightly out of town on Chesterton Road, and it would be easy to miss if you weren't looking out for it, but it really deserves more recognition. Stepping into what looks like an ordinary house is like stepping through the cupboard into Narnia – specifically a Narnia with less snow and more vodka.

On Friday and Saturday nights in particular, Polonia can be very noisy with a lively pub atmosphere. The food menu is made up almost entirely of authentic Polish dishes, such as beetroot soup, eight types of Pierogi, and five varieties of potato pancake. A three-course meal with an alcoholic drink will set you back around £15-18, but it is the electric atmosphere of this place that really makes it stand out. My particular recommendations are the Russian Pierogi and the Polish Martini (from what I can remember – it is a vodka bar after all).

A Beginner's Guide to Exercise

Manveer Badesha reminds us that winter is for exercising, not hibernating

Michaelmas term is a time for new beginnings. If you've never set foot in a gym before (or came out in hives last time you were there) and are confused by all the different types of exercises, here are a few tips to simplify the ordeal.

First of all, set your goal, whether it's losing that pesky five pounds, building your muscle mass, or simply getting in shape.

Then pick the exercises that will help you to achieve your goals and stick with them, even through the inevitable post-exercise aches and pains.

If your goal is to burn fat, then you need to do exercises that will engage your whole cardiovascular system. You have two options: low intensity exercise for a longer period of time or high intensity interval training (HIIT). It just depends on how much time you have and how motivated you are to get into shape.

If you like to run outdoors or on a treadmill, choose between a 30-60 minute run or interval sprints where you sprint for 30 seconds and jog for 60 seconds repeatedly.

Do this ten times and your body will be burning fat like crazy in just fifteen minutes.

If you are looking to build solid muscle – it's time to hit the weights. Any type of cardio will hinder your muscle building, so just stick to exercises which encourage hypertrophy rather than endurance. This is where most gym guides will provide you with reams of complicated information about specific sets, reps, drop

sets and more.

Forget these: you can gain muscle by doing simple compound exercises. If you are in your room, push-ups, squats, lunges and bench dips are excellent no-gym muscle builders. Do as many reps as you can in one minute, then try to increase the reps every time.

If you have access to a gym, then squats, pull ups, rowing, bench pressing and deadlifts are the only exercises you really need to get ripped.

If you are a beginner, always ask an instructor or experienced lifter on how to perform these exercises correctly, or you could really injure yourself (no-one will be looking at your abs if you're in a neck-brace). Aim for twelve reps and once you reach this, increase the weight.

If you want to burn fat and build some muscle, mix it up. On one day, lift weights and do some cardio on the next.

However, if you are short of time I would opt for weight lifting; more muscle not only means you look better, it also means you will burn more calories when you are not doing anything at all.

Most importantly, don't give up. You won't see changes in a week, maybe not even in two. Be patient, be dedicated and be motivated to achieve the health and fitness you've always wanted.



Feminine

Gayathiri Kamalakanthan analyses what the flatform means for women

When I typed 'define feminine' into Google, the first answer it gave me was "having qualities or an appearance traditionally associated with women, especially delicacy and prettiness." This is absurd. For me, feminism, and indeed being feminine (with regard to fashion) is about enjoying what I wear. It's not about what other people will find most sexy; it's about what's right for me. Forget what is trending or what's deemed 'in' this season: one designer simply cannot speak on behalf of all women. It's this individuality that we need to respect and celebrate. With this in mind, it is time to acknowledge fashion's nod to femininity.

If you've been paying any attention to London Fashion Week (or even to high-street shop windows), you'll know one thing: the time has come when heels, in the eyes of fashion royalty such as Chanel and J. JS Lee, are no longer a woman's staple shoe. With the rise of 'normcore' – that is, the idea of one's style being so normal and restrained that it represents normal gone hard core – it's no surprise that the way the fashion world views femininity is evolving.

Even Victoria Beckham, the Queen of Heels herself, has ditched her five-inch stilettos in favour of the flatform (flat platform shoes). Her new Autumn/Winter collection boasted more practical, anti-injury inducing footwear – and

thank God for that.

Regardless of the fact that wearing heels for at least eight hours every working day (only to swap them for taller and more spindly ones on a night out) can cause major long-term foot problems, the heel has also perpetuated a rigid, one-sided and hyper-sexualised image of what 'womanhood' is about.

Don't get me wrong – I love a good heel, it makes me feel empowered and sophisticated. However, so does a brightly coloured trainer. And I shouldn't feel like any less of a strong, young woman if I'm not wearing heels. From an early age girls are subjected to the idea that unless they are teetering around in Cinderella-esque, ultra-dainty shoes, they aren't fulfilling their roles as beautiful, 'proper' women.

But what is a Proper Woman? Twenty years ago, she may have been the LBD-donning, stiletto-wearing siren, but now, things have changed. Personally, I feel as womanly as ever wearing my deep blue and magenta Nike trainers, high-waisted jeans and baggy T-shirt. I feel confident, feminine and, most importantly, like myself. And that's exactly what feminism is about, right? The whole point is not being defined by someone else's definition of what being feminine means. And it's about time the fashion world stumbled off its high heels and onto a more humble, all-embracing flatform.



Introducing: foodPark

Daisy Hessenberger visits the new street food collective that's feeding the masses

Cambridge has been a slow starter to the independent food scene, but in the last year many independents have gone mobile. Heidi White, a Cambridge alumna who studied Land Economy, has "an obsession with street food". As well as being author of The Moving Foodie blog and co-organiser of the Eat Cambridge festival of food and drink, Heidi put her degree to good use when she recognised the potential of some empty space next to the train station, and thus foodPark, Cambridge's first street food collective, was born. The only criterion for traders is simple: they have to be Cambridgeshire-based.

Some of the vendors I had sampled before and would highly recommend, such as Steak & Honour and Fired Up (pizza). Others I had the pleasure of trying for the first time, such as #Eatirie, whose generous-sized portions came within my £5 budget. While the BBQ Jerk chicken might have been tricky to eat perched on the wall without cutlery, this was more than compensated for by the tender meat which fell off the bone.

I could wax lyrical about Guerrilla Kitchen – oh, those steamed buns! So large, so light, so fluffy. For £6.50 you get two decent-sized buns stuffed with high quality ingredients. I was suspicious of the 'Big Licker' bun, having never tasted tongue and not being a great lover of beetroot, but again the flavours were balanced perfectly. And tongue turned out to be delicious, tasting somewhat like ham but richer.

The Calcuttan kati rolls of Inder's Kitchen were buttery, delicious and satisfyingly filling, especially when accompanied by a mango lassi. Brazing Saddles' tacos were little pieces of art in a box – an explosion of both taste and colour. The vegetable component of my pulled pork taco was so colourful and crunchy that it convinced me it was a healthy meal. Unfortunately, the juiciness did make the taco somewhat soggy towards the end.

The opening of foodPark means that lunch in Cambridge just got much more exciting. Gone are the days when a Boots meal-deal or a sandwich from Pret were your only options. Now, on Thursdays and Fridays, you can head to Station Road for some tasty street food. While it might be a little out of the way of lectures, the food is definitely worth the extra distance. It's also worth the slight extra cost for the quality of food on offer. Sadly, some of the prices break my sub-£5 rule for lunch, making a visit to foodPark a treat rather than an addition to my weekly lunchtime schedule. However, after talking to some of the vendors, it seems a student meal-deal could be on the horizon.

As of the beginning of this month, foodPark is also operating in the West Cambridge Site on Wednesdays – perfect for hungry scientists. I can only hope that foodPark expands to more days, traders, and locations, and that its price-range becomes more student-friendly, as it offers some much-needed variety to the Cambridge lunch scene.

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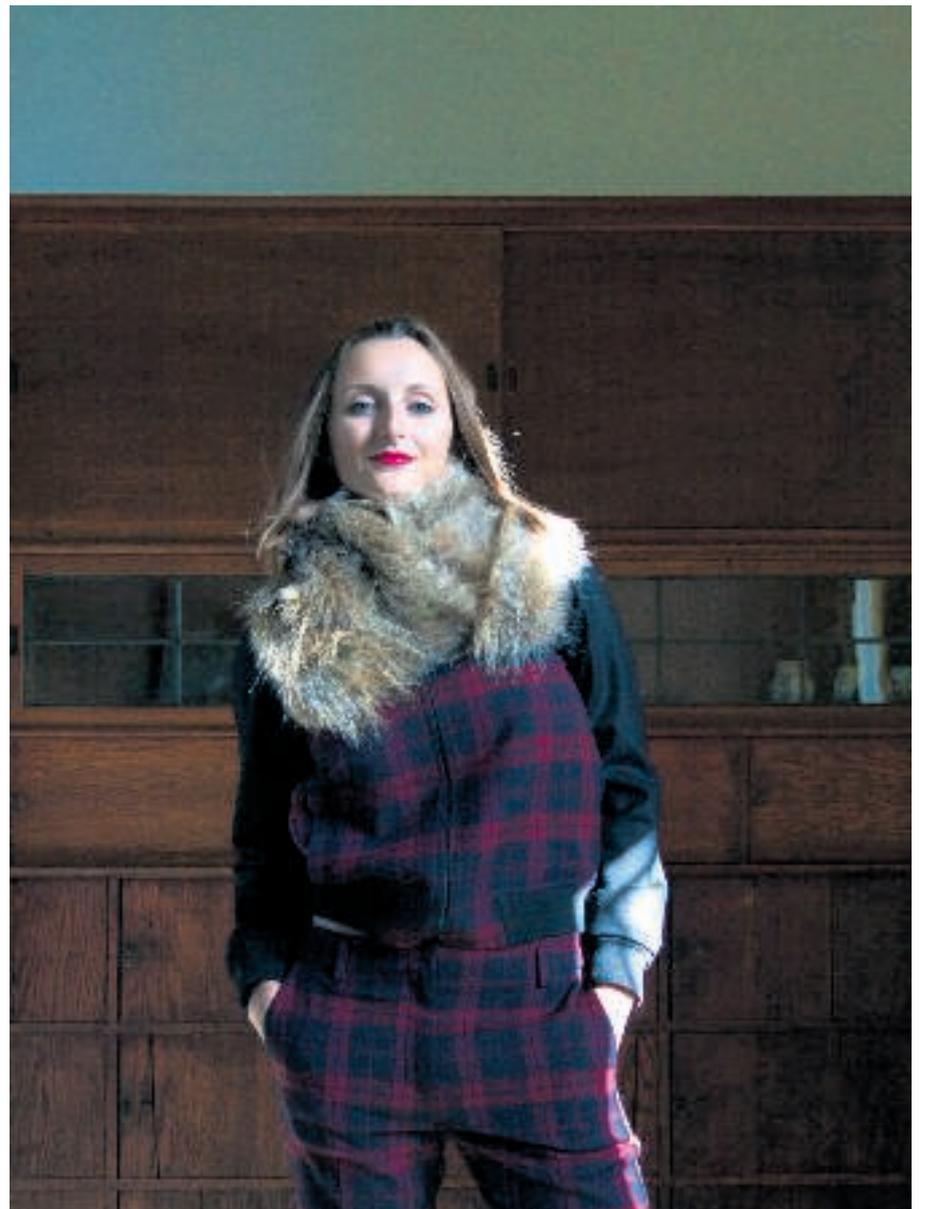
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This is not enough

Isabel Adomakoh Young examines our drama scene's relationship with race



It's easy to look at the Cambridge drama scene (and it is a scene) and draw negative conclusions about its relationship with race. How many lead roles at the main theatres have lately gone to people of colour? Were any of those people not Joey Akubeze? What proportion of any given chorus line, tech team, or railing-full of posters features even one non-white face? It is for this reason that lots of people, not least of all me, will be very happy to see *Sophiatown* listed as the ADC's Week 3

mainshow this term. Not only does it feature dominant and interesting black characters, but it actively addresses – albeit in a foreign and historical setting – some of the issues surrounding shared and conflicting histories, multiculturalism and prejudice. The director, third-year Anthropologist Justina Kehinde Ogunseitan, made waves, and history, in 2012 with her production of *for colored girls who have considered suicide / when the rainbow is enuf*. Not only did she achieve the impossible, selling out the Fitzpatrick Hall (having been

refused an ADC slot), but she put an entirely black student cast, which I was lucky enough to be a part of, on a Cambridge stage for the first time in the University's 800-year history. Now, all-black shows needn't be an aim necessarily, but that fact does say a lot about the scene.

In this issue, I see a microcosm of something much bigger: university admissions. After all, how many BME people, particularly of African or Caribbean descent, can be seen anywhere in Cambridge? The University's website asserts, and I believe it, that "we welcome applications from students of the highest intellectual potential, irrespective of social, racial, religious and financial considerations". The Admissions department announced in 2013 that "the collegiate University invests over £2.5 million each year on engaging with UK state school students and their teachers. In 2011/12, contact was made with over 140,000 state sector students at over 2,800 different events". Obviously, we can't conflate state school education and race, but thanks to a broad and complex socioeconomic history that there isn't space to go into, in this case the two are linked.

And the facts, whether about drama or the University, can be over-simplified: in Cambridge's 2013 application cycle, 18 per cent of non-white applicants were awarded offers, compared with 29 per cent of white applicants. At face value (so to speak), that sounds a lot like the ADC termcard, but when we think about the broader context, things arise that skew the obvious conclusion; nationally in the 2009 A Level results, 29,000+ white students achieved AAA or higher, compared with 452 black students. Moreover, a spokeswoman for Oxford pointed out in the last uproar about admissions, "nearly half of black applicants are applying for...the three toughest subjects to get places in". Theatre's lack of BME students is only a little behind the University's, and both are being improved on – but perhaps not quickly enough.

I think few people, though, would argue that they've actually been refused racially unspecified roles on the grounds of colour. There may be a small problem with directors complacently envisioning their characters as white and thus being shaken when people of colour audition, but I would hope and expect that they overcome any surprise before it comes to casting decisions. And none of this is to say that there haven't been some great diverse shows put on by Cambridge students: I fondly remember Tatiana Noukong's *Joyful Joyful* at the ADC last year, for instance. Part concert, part theatre, it combined music, movement and poetry to express the history and feeling behind gospel music. It seems that there is at least one

notably black show a year these days. In fact, in my time doing drama here, I have been approached many times by directors looking specifically for black/mixed race actors, only one of whom was black herself. My experience suggests that the specifically coloured roles are there, but a lack of keen actors has meant that a few people have become the obvious choices and have dominated what is already a small sector. Sadly, too, a lot of those roles were topically black – their race was an issue within the play, rather than just happening to be so. I was to be a chorus member enhancing the legitimacy of a Deep South setting, say, or a black prisoner making illicit friends with a white. On the other hand, I wasn't sure whether to be glad or worried when I was pursued for a non-specified race role because they 'thought it would be nice' to have a coloured person in their project. Good intentions, of course, but weird thinking... no-one wants to be the token any more than they want to be left out, which leaves well-meaning directors in something of a conundrum.

It's a shame that as well as a lack of actors, there is a lack of non-canonical theatre; especially given how Euro- or western-centric many of our academic courses already are. Even the new writing is the same, though that's hardly surprising given that many of us are Brits yet to travel much of the world – but imagine how exciting a new-write by an African student set in their hometown might be. And it seems that those who do know about existing theatre from further afield aren't too keen to put it on. I can only guess at the reasons for a lack of enthusiasm: some, by no means all, BME students may come from traditional backgrounds where they are discouraged from big-commitment extra-curricular activities that could jeopardise their studies. Some may see the current dearth and assume that it's deliberate, that they are not welcome. Some may have come from schools which were not able to run inspiring drama departments.

It would only take a little more openness to draw out that potential talent, and it's the big scary theatres and committees, rather than the intimidated/alienated students, that must enact that. Although, of course, they can't put on diverse plays unless they receive strong applications, they can make it clear that they are open to, or if they're brave enough, actively seeking, plays from more various backgrounds, and actors to match.

The ADC may not have £2.5 million to throw at the race disparity, but continuing and improving its bill of culturally various productions will make more people feel welcome and will ultimately benefit the entire drama community.

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Aoife Kennan talks to Cantab Robert Icke about Cambridge drama cliques and lazy directing, as his hit London production of 1984 comes to the Arts Theatre

DIRECTING? IT'S A PIECE OF CAKE [KIND OF]



"This is my sixth year out in freedom."

It's hard to believe that the person on the other end of the phone was, not so long ago, in the same position as me: a Cambridge undergraduate with grand ambitions. Robert Icke may only have graduated in 2008 from reading English at King's, but in those six years he has achieved some incredible feats. From 2010 to 2013 he was Associate Director of Headlong, and is now the Associate Director of the Almeida Theatre, alongside Artistic Director, Rupert Goold. His already critically acclaimed production of George Orwell's 1984 is now on a UK tour, coming to the Cambridge Arts Theatre from the 21st to 25th October.

I ask him if it feels strange to bring a professional project back to his old university town. "It feels like coming home... Cambridge doesn't really change very much."

Icke admits that, like many theatre-keen undergraduates, the initial draw of a Cambridge degree lay in the reputation of the student drama scene, and its notable alumni. However, unlike many a seasoned ADC-dweller, for Icke, the reality of the Cambridge drama scene left him disappointed.

"I thought there was a lot of cliquy-ness, and I thought the work was rubbish. I think my expectations, perhaps completely unrealistically, were that I would get in Cambridge and the theatre world would be so brilliant that I'd learn loads and loads and loads and come out of it a fully formed director...and actually, for me, I'd already kind of done the directing before I got to Cambridge – I'd done it at home."

Talking of home, we find common ground over both growing up in the North East – with

Icke alleging that his own Stockton-On-Tees trumps my Newcastle in the 'who can be the least posh?' stakes. In a move to enhance his local youth theatre scene, before coming to Cambridge, Icke set up the Arden Theatre Company, presiding as Artistic Director from 2002 to 2008. He tackled his disillusionment with Cambridge theatre in a similar manner, setting up his own Swan Theatre Company, producing work at the ADC and the Arts Theatre. He confesses that as his Cambridge directing expectations dampened, he found himself on the edge of dropping out.

"But then the work got really interesting. Cambridge English is really good preparation for being a director – you're given the confidence to read texts in your own way and to have a relationship to texts that is potentially iconoclastic and disrespectful. You're able to say, 'You know what? Everything else that everybody thinks about this text is all wrong.'" This academic stimulus in Icke's creative work continues into the present: "What I really got out of Cambridge theatre was not so much the theatre scene itself, but rather the privilege of interacting with hugely smart people who really know what they're on about".

Icke is certainly now one of the people who knows what they are on about, but he still turns to former mentors for guidance. "At the moment I'm preparing a Greek tragedy for next year. One of the things I did was to get back in touch with Simon Goldhill, who taught me at King's, who is obviously just a genius on all things Greek and Classical. If you can get closer to understanding great writers, what their aims and their structures are, then you're closer to being able to replicate that in your own practice."

I mention the talk from the out-going Artistic Director of the National Theatre, Nicholas Hytner, at the Cambridge Union last term; in particular his observation that directors fresh out of university often begin by "putting an essay on to the stage" before they accumulate more credits and practical experience. Icke refutes this immediately.

"The assumption underneath that statement is that the 'essay' is only part of a play: the play is the cake and what you're doing is cutting a slice out of it. I've always been interested in trying to do the whole play – I'm interested in the whole

structure. What I'm not interested in are the lazy assumptions that theatre history has made about that play for the last hundred years.

"You have to believe fundamentally that there is a reason that makes it worth spending the money on doing this play right now, and that you have something to say. If you think it only says one thing – like, 'Isn't totalitarianism bad?' – then why don't you just write a leaflet, and hand it out?"

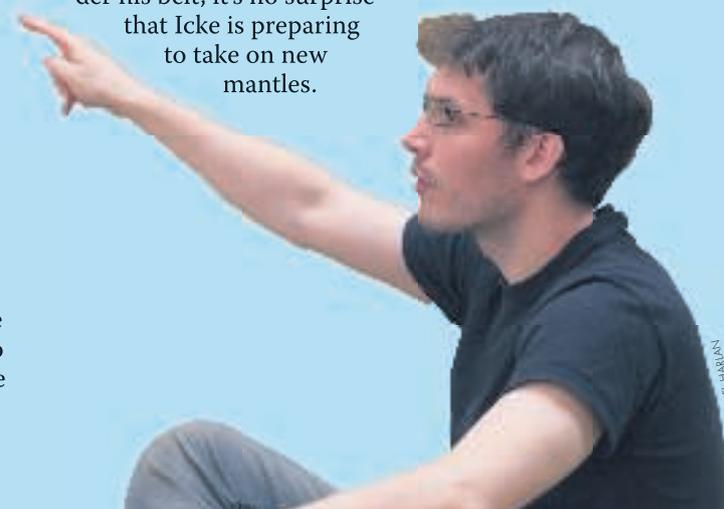
So what does his production of 1984 have to say that's new? Icke concedes that there has been a lot of "lazy thinking" around Orwell's best-known book. "You know, 'It's really bleak, it's dystopian, it's fundamentally anti-fascism, or whatever.' Actually, when we worked on it, one of the things we found was this appendix that completes it. It quietly reframes the whole of the novel."

"One of the themes of the novel is that you can't trust language... It makes you question, 'What is this thing I'm holding in my hands, and what do I know about its reality?' It performs a brilliant mind-fuck: a circular dance that leaves you feeling like you've just been punched in the stomach... Simple productions with blue prison overalls and 'Oh, isn't it all really bleak?' are missing the point."

I ask if directing a play that he himself has co-adapted has changed his perception of the rehearsal process. Is it productive to contain writer and director in one room, in one person?

"One of the things that is happening more in theatre now is that the idea of just being a writer, or a director with a capital D, is sort of eroding. It goes back to the practice of Shakespeare, or of the Greeks: they didn't have split roles."

With years of directing experience already under his belt, it's no surprise that Icke is preparing to take on new mantles.



WHAT WE'RE LISTENING TO



Petros Fessas

BOOMERANG CLARE MAGUIRE

Clare's career might not have gotten off to a great start. After surfacing in 2010 with the outstanding 'Ain't Nobody', she released the overproduced debut album *Light after Dark*, a record that didn't flatter her vocal skills. Following her departure from Universal, she has been active on social media, uploading several originals and covers. The latest of these releases is outstanding: her usually sweetly melancholic voice here oozes anger and rides over raw unedited production to create a modern-sounding soul punch.

SUCCUBUS DEMOB HAPPY

Demob Happy are a promising up-and-coming Brighton-based band whose new single 'Succubus' will be out on 17 November on their own label. With relentless bass and dual guitars, the cut is instantly infectious. The Queens of the Stone Age-esque tune serves a restless three and a half minutes of sweat drenched garage riffs that accompany lyrics of soul-sucking obsession.

SUPERNATURAL ALUNAGEORGE

How do you follow the ultimate career peak of playing Caius May Ball? AlunaGeorge have worked it out, if their new offering 'Supernatural' is anything to go by. Riding the wave of last year's 'Body Music' and the Disclosure collaboration 'White Noise', the duo haven't abandoned their familiar ground of electro-RnB but still manage to create a fresh-sounding taster cut. Aluna's distinctive child-like vocals lend the record a great dose of effortless cool, as does the extremely dance-ready bass line.

SIVU SOMETHING ON HIGH



Slavery to love, others, and self; the fragility of life and art, and strong bonds fraying out like old ropes and veins. Sivu's debut album *Something On High* takes on all of this and sets it against a cosmological backdrop found in the imagery that dominates his lyrics – crafting them as constellations.

Against "that big black nothing", the sky as termed in 'Feel Something', Sivu hauntingly asks "what's left?" and quite possibly goes on to provide us with some answers. Sivu, an agnostic with what must be a very open mind seems to look to the sky and stars more than the heavens, to form this spiritual and divine album for a world where God probably is dead.

Forgive the hagiography, but one knows one has encountered a sensitive, daring artist (who knows a lot about life) when the first track of a debut album features the line "Between the arrows and its mark feel the cannonball coming to smash all our dreams and art", presented via a vulnerable and distinctive falsetto.

Sivu is a singer-songwriter who has burst onto the scene and sounds like a solo Wild Beasts. He's influenced by Sinatra, is managed by ATC (Nick Cave) and is about to be signed to a major label to work on an album with Alt-J's producer Charlie Andrew. He is also based just outside of Cambridge. More importantly, his work is poetry, or poetic, at least.

The second track of the album, 'Rumination', at 1.07 minutes works well standing alone but works better if viewed as a preamble to the next track, 'Bodies'. Initially delicate strings sing in notes, recalling a Parisian street with an Italian flavour of operatic sorrow that

reaches crescendo. The crescendo soon sweeps down like an arrow shot from on high as piercing, elongated strikings increase, symptomatic of the psychological compulsions 'Ruminations' seems to refer to. Guitar strings twanged like cheese-wire slice and dice with traffic noises, voices, the sounds of urbanity and, finally, 'African style' drums and hallowed, hollow chants, which then bursts into the opening of 'Bodies'.

'Bodies' sets Sivu as the latest Goyte (there have been a fair few): his spoken word is vulnerable, a falsetto flair both serene and melodious, set against off-kilter percussion. On the other hand, Sivu's awareness of the material or immaterial production of music, as well as concerns with space and time, absence and presence, reflects the concerns of artists like Bjork and Radiohead, whose oeuvres have also often contained the cryptic and the cosmic, sounded out by resurgent synths and factory beats. Sivu said of Beck and Bjork that they "flip

songwriting on its head" and Sivu certainly does something acrobatic with his own words.

The quietly optimistic track 'Better Man Than Me' has lines like "You can end this anytime you want to/Jump out of the window/Feel your body break on the ground/Or you can come a little closer...". It was also recorded inside an MRI scanner. There's certainly a neurological complexity to it, but the piece more greatly resembles a most delicate hypnotism that lingers with you long after the track fades out.

If Sivu cuts out some of the deliberately futuristic sounds and voice renderings that disrupt, albeit in a minor manner, his beautifully crafted universe, then I think he'd find that he's already there, set for the present and the future, crafting music for today and tomorrow that, perhaps for a time, will be called timeless. His sound is progressive, his experimentation works and this is an inspiring debut and introspective, idiosyncratic take on pop.

Sky Holmes



INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS



Older horror and science fiction movies don't always get the respect they deserve nowadays – an otherwise superb blend of ideas, characters and drama gets treated almost as comedy because the primitive monster effects are surpassed by modern Halloween costumes.

Despite this, contemporary moviegoers might be more familiar with classic sci-fi than they realise, with the prevalence of referencing and homage in so much of today's pop culture. Now you have the chance to catch a piece of cinematic history on the big screen as the 1956 classic *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* is being rereleased at the end of this month. You may not be as shocked by the twists as the original audience was, but you may just be surprised by just how well it holds up over half a century later.

The protagonist of *Invasion of*

the *Body Snatchers* is Doctor Miles Bennell (Kevin McCarthy), a man with the kind of firm chin and stern haircut that made America a global superpower. Returning to his practice in the small California town of Santa Mira after a trip away, he is perplexed by several patients who are all suffering from the shared delusion that their loved ones have been replaced by perfect (if emotionless) duplicates. Bennell doesn't think too much of it at first, preferring to spend his free time reconnecting with an old flame, Becky Driscoll (Dana Wynters). However, when his friend Jack finds an almost fully-formed facsimile of himself on his pool table, Bennell is motivated to uncover the truth behind these mysterious going ons. What follows is a descent into paranoia and otherworldly terror as he and Becky become the targets of a sinister conspiracy that seems unstoppable.

Admittedly, I've kept that summary relatively vague to maintain the surprise for any readers who aren't aware of the story. However, the film's central concept (alien

duplicates infiltrating society) has been well-used since the film's debut in 1956, and it is recognised as one of the true classics of the sci-fi and horror genres – it's responsible for introducing the term "pod people" to the popular lexicon.

It has been remade three times since it was first released (skip the 2007 version with Nicole Kidman) and has inspired countless other works, including last year's excellent alien invasion comedy *The World's End*.

As for the film itself? It's a solid piece of storytelling in a trim 80 minutes. The acting may be a little unsubtle at times, but the central cast exude charm, competence and glamour as befits a film from Hollywood's Golden Age. The crude special effects are mostly obscured by coy camerawork, leaving the atmosphere to be generated by the actors' reactions and the melodramatic score. My only notable criticism is of some ill-fitting story elements, the least of which is a clumsy scene tacked on at the behest of the studio to make the ending less

bleak. The bigger problem was one of the final twists, which completely undermined the otherwise well-executed premise with some inconsistent internal logic, simply to justify the protagonist's rather sudden (but entertainingly hammy) mental breakdown.

It's not a flawless film, but it's nice to see a compelling idea taken to its logical conclusion. The creators of the film denied they were intending to satirise any particular issue, but audiences have viewed it as an allegory for everything from the insidious menace of communism to the totalitarian conformity of McCarthyism.

The Cold War paranoia might not be as relevant today, but the message about the gradual bleeding of humanity still resonates. In short, *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* is well worth your time if you've got even a passing interest in vintage cult horror or science fiction. Just keep an extra close eye on your nearest and dearest afterwards – are you really sure you can trust them?

Ollie Bartlett

WITTGENSTEIN JR

LARS IYER



Any Cambridge student reading Lars Iyer's latest novel, *Wittgenstein Jr.*, will not fail to recognise some of their own experiences in this book. It follows the lives of a group of undergraduates studying philosophy at Cambridge, detailing their struggles to fulfil the impossibly high expectations of work and the excessive drinking and debauchery that goes alongside it.

We meet the "rah boys in gilets and flip-flops" alongside the "rugby types, as big as fridges" and the "yummy not-yet-mummies in fur-lined Barbour", providing an A-Z of Cambridge stereotypes.

Full of fun references to Cambridge favourites like Cindies and the Maypole, this novel also examines mental illness and the pressures of work for both students and academics alike.

Iyer's undergraduates idolise their teacher, nicknaming him Wittgenstein

Jr., in a dynamic that will be familiar to anyone who has ever spent a supervision desperately trying to write down every word of genius coming out of their supervisor's mouth.

Iyer perfectly depicts the feeling of inferiority amongst students in the presence of their supervisor: "who does he think we are, that we could follow him? Who does he take us to be?" However, the trajectory of the novel follows Wittgenstein Jr's gradual demise as he retreats into a world of seemingly bleak and hopeless philosophical questioning.

The structure of the novel is particularly interesting, with short chapters and a play-like format making for a fast-paced novel which seems to reflect the hectic pace of Cambridge life.

It manages to provoke deep thought in the reader whilst retaining a level of humour, embodying some of the paradoxes that the characters themselves have to confront.

Wittgenstein Jr. is definitely recommended reading for any Cambridge student; the book is being launched at Heffers on 30th October, so head there for a chance to grab a copy and meet the author.

Lily Hollins

THE YEAR I MET YOU

CECILIA AHERN



Despite the romance-design of its cover, Ahern's latest novel is actually a story concerned with friendship, or, more broadly, relationships.

The 'You' in the title refers to Matt Marshall, a right-wing radio DJ, while the 'I' is his neighbour, Jasmine Butler, the book's narrator. The two become friends over the course of a year which sees Jasmine on "gardening leave", a year of payrolled idleness following dismissal from her job in a start-up company.

Gardening, indeed, is the central conceit of the book: riven by her old boss's heated suggestion to "finish something you've started for once" and by her intense boredom, Jasmine resolves to restore beauty to the garden. The privacy, self-sufficiency and replenished sensitivity this provides neatly parallels her changing relationship with Matt, her family, and a new love interest.

Ahern invokes this Edenic association of gardening with knowledge right from the start, when, in her grandfather's garden after his funeral, Jasmine gains a 'knowledge of death', which is for her the point where life really "began".

It also has roots in Jasmine's Irishness (the book is set in North Dublin), with the narrator recalling Healey; "Maybe it's the genes I inherited from my Granddad, or maybe it's the fact that I'm Irish, have sprung from the land and this compulsion to dig, and the digging itself, breathes life back into me."

The book unfortunately does not handle this fundamental metaphor with the subtlety or delicacy it



deserves. Ahern often bluntly expositions the parallels between Jasmine and her garden — "My garden is the mirror of me" — and the narrative in general is dulled and dragged by her readiness to explain it.

The novel strives to be well-written, readable fiction, but, with a story largely uneventful and unsuspensful, it begs for wittier, more compelling and more original characters than it delivers. The prose, furthermore, is often too weak to support.

The first section, entitled 'Winter' — the book is four sections corresponding to the seasons — is the weakest and, frustratingly, the longest, which in one way is appropriate, but is mostly just boring and likely to deter readers. Once one reaches the 'Spring' section, 145 pages in out of a total 323, the novel does pick up in pace and interest. And, just as Jasmine's garden starts to show life, so does the narrative. It still lags noticeably, however, and I suspect that only fans of Ahern's earlier work will be inclined to stick with it to the end.

Ciaran Chillingworth

BOOKS TO READ THIS TERM

Finding the time to read for pleasure in Cambridge can seem like a mammoth task. However, a really good book can be the perfect antidote to any course-related stress. So here are **Lily Hollins'** hand-picked selection of the best books for...

1 Making you laugh: The Hundred Year Old Man Who

Climbed Out of the Window and Disappeared. This word-of-mouth novel from author Jonas Jonasson centres on a centenarian who escapes from his retirement home and embarks upon a hilarious adventure. Throughout, there are flashbacks to his earlier life and it is revealed he has unwittingly played a part in some of

the biggest events of the 20th century.

2 Bursting out of the Cambridge bubble: And the Mountains Echoed. Following the success of *The Kite Runner* and *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, Khaled Hosseini's third novel tells the story of a young brother and sister devastatingly separated due to their family's poverty. Expansive and moving, this book promises to take you far outside the Cambridge bubble, confronting you with the reality and hardships of life.

3 Lasting you the whole term: *The Goldfinch*. At 864 pages, Donna Tartt's newest novel is not a quick read. Ten years in the making, the intensity of this book pulls you deep inside its pages and into the world of Theo, a 13-year-old boy whose life is forever altered by the sudden death of his mother. He soon becomes deeply fixated upon her favourite painting, *The Goldfinch*, developing an intense obsession which will lead him into a

dark and troubling underworld.

4 Making you think: *The Arab Uprisings*. Jeremy Bowen's first-hand account of his time spent as a journalist in the Middle East during the 2011 Arab Spring is a lively take on a complex subject matter.

5 Thrilling: *Sister*. If you enjoyed *Gone Girl*, *Sister* is the book for you. Rosamund Lupton tells the story of a woman investigating the disappearance of her sister in a tale that is sure to shock and surer to please.

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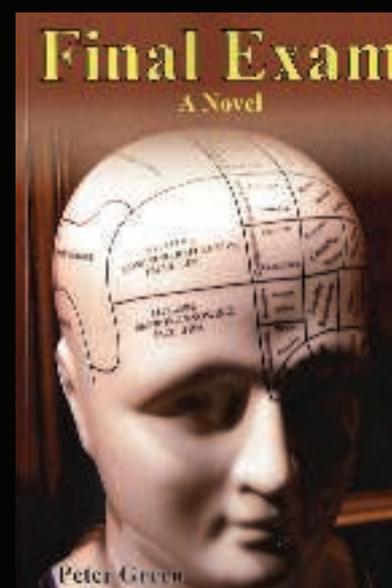
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Steven Gerrard's Forlorn Gaze

England's shame

Why do English Premier League teams continually underperform in Europe?

Daniel Hanna
Sport Correspondent

With a record £835m spent in the latest summer transfer window and a TV deal worth an estimated £1.8bn a year, you might expect the Premier League to be the dominant force in European club football. Although if you do, you probably also think 'Ronaldo' most commonly refers to a pre-eminent Brazilian superstar of average life expectancy.

However there was a time, the majority of the time, when English clubs were able to justify their billing as powerhouses of Europe: only one Champions League final between the years of 2005 and 2012 did not feature at least one Premier League side. But a recent slide in form from our nation's finest (and by 'finest' I mean imports), has led many (and by 'many' I mean Roy Keane), to question the supposed quality of the Premier League. Keane suggested that the British public have been "brainwashed" by the "best brand in the world" into believing in the greatness of the Premier League. Indeed, this may or may not be true. One of the two.

Of course others have rejected this view and suggest instead that the root of the Premier League's continental problems lies elsewhere. José Mourinho, the fountain of wise words that he is, has argued that TV scheduling is to blame. Whilst other European teams often have matches scheduled on a Friday prior to a continental fixture, English teams are regularly left waiting to play their domestic game until Saturday evening or, even Sunday, in some cases.

Mourinho, who has also worked in Portugal, Spain and Italy, notes that "there is something in this country that goes outside my understanding". And whilst I'm undecided as to whether that actually makes any sense, he may well have a point.

In the same vein, the sheer intensity of the Premier League's Christmas period (five games in fifteen days for some) has no doubt disadvantaged Premier League players against their well-rested European counterparts,

who in stark contrast will have enjoyed a winter break of around two weeks.

So it is hardly surprising that, come the end of the season, England's Premier League-based players (and Owen Hargreaves) have always seemed to struggle so much for fitness at major international tournaments. This is particularly true when coupled with the fact that the Premier League is widely considered, amongst English pundits serving an English audience, to be the most physically demanding league of them all.

Another school of thought concedes that, although the Premier League's top sides may not be at the level of those playing in Spain or Germany, this in fact points to the strength in the depth of English clubs. It is argued that the relatively even distribution of revenue amongst Premier League clubs compared with other top European leagues - where deals are negotiated with clubs on an individual basis - has resulted in more formidable 'lesser sides'.

It is certainly true that top Premier League teams are not afforded the luxury of being able to rest players against such sides, as is the often the case in other leagues. Unless, of course, the year is 2008 and your next fixture is against Derby County.

A crisis, this is certainly not: a successful season this year, and concerns will no doubt subside. Should standards continue to fall, however, and with an OFCOM probe threatening to end an era of prosperity (it definitely won't), the feeling may be that the tide is just beginning to turn against the Premier League.



"IF SIZE MATTERED, THE ELEPHANT WOULD BE KING OF THE JUNGLE"
- Rickson Gracie



Running fresh

Short and Mooney triumph in season opener

George Ramsay
Deputy Sports Editor

Saturday October 11th marked the first race of the season for the Hare & Hounds, Cambridge University's running club. The Freshers' Fun Run, - a 2.7k loop of the West Cambridge site for women and 5k for the men - is a notoriously fast and flat course which has become increasingly popular amongst seasoned runners and first-time racers alike.

In the men's race, Alex Short was victorious for the third consecutive occasion, a remarkable run of success. Yet the victory was by no means comfortable, as Short found himself locked in a tightly fought contest with ex-captain Matt Leach and club newcomer Alex Milne, who finished second and third respectively. Short's impressive clocking of 14:46, a fraction outside his time from last year, sees him approach the coming season in fine form.

Liz Mooney came through to win an extremely close women's race. The Newnham second year found herself locked in a close battle with Ladies Captain Katy Hedgethorpe, with both finishing just outside the 9 minute mark.

Both seemed in great shape for the

start of the season, and undoubtedly will be challenging for Blues status come December. In third place was Sarah Lovewell, who finished close behind Mooney and Hedgethorpe, pushing them all the way.

Credit should also go to the best placed Freshers' in each race: in the men's, Milne led the new boys home, followed by David Buglass and Kai Hugtenburg, the latter of whom shows excellent promise after putting in a heavy shift of running on the club's pre-season training camp. Meanwhile in the women's race, the top three debutant places went to Tas Pope, Emily Ruane and Charlotte McGarry respectively.

The Freshers' Fun Run is also a part of the college league competition, giving most runners in the race the chance to battle for college glory.

In the men's, Robinson took victory ahead of Trinity, and after narrowly missing out in last year's competition, they start as hot favourites to take the title from Christ's.

A few technical difficulties have led to speculation over the winning college from the women's race, but current sources suggest that traditional Homerton dominance has been overturned by Newnham.

The race provided an excellent footing for many new faces to get involved with CUH&H, and next week-end the action gets muddier when the club hosts the Fen Ditton Dash in preparation for the fast-approaching cross-country season.

Niche sport of the week: mixed lacrosse

Varsity investigates the ins and outs of this peculiar sport

Louis Williams
Sports Editor

I doubt that many, if any, of you fresh-faced freshers arriving this term have ever played lacrosse in your time at school; – unless you went to boarding school around Guildford, of course. Some of you, mainly Americans, will have encountered burly men's lacrosse, a mixture between American football and some form of weapon wielding team martial arts with a hockey-like ball thrown into the mix. However, almost none of you will have ever encountered mixed lacrosse.

Mixed lacrosse follows broadly the same rules as female lacrosse with teams of 12 on either side (one being a padded goalie) contesting to deliver the ball into the back of the net. It is a fast-paced and uproarious game. Unlike the men's game, it is dependent much more on technical ability and speed and less on strength, and it has higher stamina requirements than the women's game.

The two core differences between the BUCS mixed league and the women's league are firstly the requirement that half the team is male and half female on the pitch (okay, maybe that was a little obvious), and secondly that each player may only hold onto the ball for up to five seconds at a time. This time limit makes the game quicker and more energy-sapping than either the men's or women's games.

The question on many of your minds' now will be simple: is it for you? The university mixed team, although more casual than the high achieving women's team, are no minnows in the lacrosse leagues, having steam-rolled



The University Mixed Lacrosse team

the southern league with an unbeaten season and an emphatic varsity win leaving us at the top of the table. The training schedule of three sessions, a match and morning fitness is not an easy ask, but is not as tough a commitment as the women's game or some other university sports. It is accessible for athletic guys, particularly hockey

players, with experienced stick skills and high stamina, as they will adapt to cradling balls far better.

Girls usually require prior experience due to the strong competition for places and anyone considering the sport should perhaps give college level mixed lacrosse a go before trying for university level. Nevertheless, all are

welcome to turn up at training to try out for a few sessions.

Many of you reading this will have never played a mixed sport competitively and will be wondering how team dynamics can work. In truth, it's different, but it's refreshing, and team matches are not devoid of dirty pints and innuendo-ridden speeches. I urge

any budding sportsperson to give it a try.

Mixed lacrosse forces you to really engage with large physical differences within one team with the natural differences in physique between the ladies and men being far greater than, say, those between forwards and backs in rugby.

Wounded veterans race for awareness

Handbikes and adapted cycles propel wounded veterans to a memorable start to the year

George Ramsay
Deputy Sports Editor

As we remember 100 years since the start of World War One, this year's BLESMA ride follows the launch of the Invictus Games over the summer, which saw 400 injured ex-servicemen from 13 nations compete in a range of sports.

The Games, spearheaded by Prince Harry, aimed to promote spirit in the face of adversity, as well as helping veteran soldiers realise their potential after facing debilitating injuries.

Overall, the event was a huge success, inspired by a string of sporting fixtures of a similar ilk; amongst the most famous of recent years are the Help for Heroes rugby and football matches, which raise money to support services for veterans.

This October, awareness for wounded veterans took to the streets of Cambridge in the form of the BLESMA cycle. In its fourth year of running, 30 riders set off from Woburn Abbey, mounted on hand bikes and adapted



The BLESMA Team

cycles.

The route comprised a five day tour around the UK covering over 125 miles, taking in a variety of picturesque sights on the way, including Ely, Oxford, Stowe and Cambridge itself.

The race was completed at the Tower of London, where the exhausted

riders were greeted by the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester at the finish line. BLESMA is a UK-based charity that provides physical and mental rehabilitation for men and women who have either lost limbs or become severely injured during service.

Many of the riders competing have

overcome life-changing injuries in order to take part in the race, and it thus marked an important milestone in their journey to recovery.

The event is run in conjunction with the Wounded Warrior Project, a charity based in the US that similarly offers support and relief for injured soldiers.

This partnership was a rousing success, creating a lively and banterous Anglo-American spirit.

This was all the more important given the conditions which the cyclists encountered, with rain forecast on most days. The ride to Cambridge was particularly testing, with icy rain en route to Queens' Backs.

"It's been a long day" said Bryony Stevens, the BLESMA media and communications officer who helped to co-ordinate the event, "we have rain forecast throughout the week and a lot of the riders are struggling from the cold too."

Yet despite the inclement conditions, the riders appeared in high spirits when they rolled into Cambridge, and there was certainly an up-beat vibe in the air as they packed up their bikes into the back of the team coach after a hard day on the road and began to tuck into some well-deserved post-ride fuel.

It is precisely this type of enthusiasm and spiritedness that BLESMA, and indeed many other like-minded charities, thrive upon.

As the UK continues to advance its much-needed support for wounded military veterans, the lives of ex-servicemen are seeing drastic improvements, giving them much needed confidence following debilitating injuries incurred through active service.

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