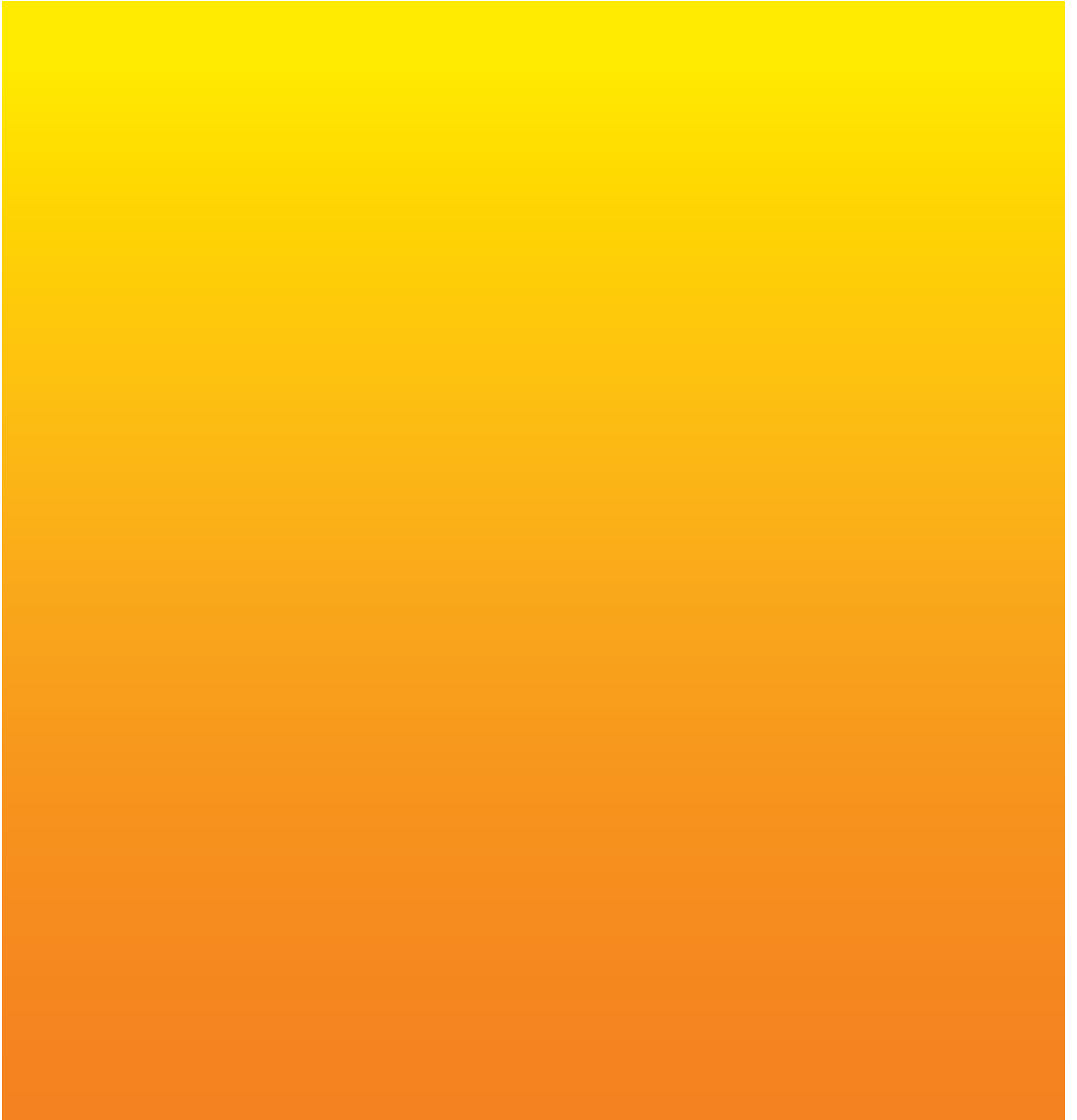


VARSITY

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May Week Issue

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May Week & journalism: both just products?

Like many traditions of Cambridge, May Week is sold as an ideal. An ideal of what hard work and determination can give us: champagne-soaked decadence at the best party in the world.

This ideal, however, is as wrong as the month May Week claims to be in. The limbo between the end of exams and the start of celebrations sees students swing between their beds and their college bars: where they will drink the life out of themselves all in the name of tradition. It's what you do, right? Needlessly and heedlessly get into a wild state of Dionysian abandon – just because? It has its place, perhaps, as the presidents of drinking societies might tell you. But really, May Week is a simple idea behind May Ball tickets. And it's something that countless covers of past May Week issues of Varsity and every other student newspaper have told us.

The idea behind this May Ball issue was something different. Acknowledging the heritage of May Week and Varsity, by using an old Varsity heading font, but giving the mood of May Week, rather than the ideal. The colour oscillates from

yellow to red like the sun, rising in the east and setting in the west, never quite sure where it stands, or what it should be.

Journalism is similarly packaged as a glittering surface of superficially alluring headlines, promising empty notions of fun and sensation. Clickbait reels readers in with lurid headlines offering fun procrastination, but the articles offer nothing but vacuous fluff.

We've seen the Tab try things like 'Procrasturbation' and 'If you're not at Oxbridge you're wasting your time.' Similarly, TCS has tried to offer lists of 'Things to do in 3 hours instead of an exam', in a truly BuzzFeed vein. And it strikes me that this is what the future of student journalism faces: the risk of provocation and pastiche. As the Guardian columnist-cum-BuzzFeed editor, Bim Adewunmi, told Varsity earlier this term: people aren't afraid to be published online anymore. And as journalism accordingly shifts online, the number of likes a piece receives determines how 'good' it is. Just as the number of clicks determines what newspapers should be churning

out. The old breed of broadsheet journalism, some claim, is careering towards obliteration.

As Peter Stothard, editor of the TLS and former Times editor, tells us in the interview in this issue: "It's dangerous to abandon the whole of the heritage", and the Times has proved that there is still a market for broadsheet journalism unrelentant on clickbait. Despite Wikipedia founder Jimmy Wales declaring its paywall, "a foolish experiment", it has moved the paper back to profit.

So both May Week and journalism can be re-deemed, taken away from the superficial packaging of their commodification and imbued with the authenticity they deserve. We simply need to remember not to expect perfection, and instead just enjoy the music, the fireworks, the drinks and good company. A similar authenticity can be found in journalism through simple means. Broadsheets such as the Times and the Wall Street Journal have flourished by putting high-quality journalism behind online paywalls. For May Week and journalism alike, substance triumphs over style at their peril.

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A day with Daniel Zeichner MP: thoughts on a bittersweet victory

Joe Robinson

Senior News Correspondent

Daniel Zeichner MP may not look like a marathon runner, but as he crossed the finish line on the morning of 8th May one could be forgiven for noting a certain athletic relief among the celebrations.

The 58-year-old, who was a middle-distance runner in his youth, has proved his political stamina in 36 years in the Labour Party. 2015 was his fifth attempt to enter Parliament, having come a close third in the 2010 election and only narrowly secured reselection for the Cambridge constituency.

Despite polls indicating a strong hold for the incumbent, Julian Huppert was narrowly defeated by Zeichner. The new MP's 599-vote majority is now the 18th narrowest in the country, amid a sea of Conservative victories across England in the most crushing defeat for Labour in decades.

As local and student activists sang the Red Flag outside the Guildhall on that fateful night, Zeichner was faced with the prospect of a House of Commons where not only would the Conservatives have their first majority in 23 years, but that David Cameron's majority was so slim as to require his



Daniel Zeichner on the campaign trail

reliance on rambunctious and often unruly Tory backbenchers – just as John Major did before him.

Reflecting on that evening as I talked to him in the House of Commons,

Zeichner has mixed emotions. “It was obviously terrifically exciting, and quite tense, for quite a lot of the night”, he says, adding that it was a “wonderful moment for me and for

the Labour Party in Cambridge”. He is quick to praise the work of Cambridge Universities Labour Club (CULC), credited in many quarters as having played a crucial role in Zeichner's narrow victory.

“

I THINK THE INPUT FROM STUDENT CAMPAIGNERS WAS PARTICULARLY SIGNIFICANT

“I think the input from student campaigners was particularly significant”, he says. It seems that any pride at defying the political odds in Cambridge is tarnished by national disappointment: though “delighted that people supported us”, he (understatedly) calls the national result “very disappointing”.

Labour gained overall English votes compared to 2010, but Labour still lost seats, while its vote and seat share collapsed in Scotland. Current polls and research suggest that, without a significant recovery in Scotland, Labour needs a swing in excess of that which it received in 1997 if it is to win an outright majority in 2020.

Zeichner's response to the national result, like many Labour figures, was one of shock and disbelief. The result in the East of England, which included a number of Labour-Tory marginals the party was forecast to win, “wasn't what we were expecting, it wasn't what we were hearing”, and tells me he has lined up meetings with colleagues over the weekend to talk about the party's failure to live up to expectations.

Having previously worked as a political officer for the trade union UNISON, Zeichner was ambivalent about the atmosphere and culture of the Palace of Westminster. He described the swearing-in process as a “very odd thing”, and said that the initial experience of Westminster “can be a bit overwhelming in some ways”.

While he was quick to acknowledge that “the wider world loves it”, Zeichner characterised the atmosphere of the House of Commons as one which could isolate new MPs.; in this respect, he mirrors his predecessor, who complained of endemic bullying in the Commons.

“My own feeling is that it can distract you from the core business that you should be here for, which is representing people and trying to do something about the challenges facing people's lives”.

Continued on page 4

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Sandi Toksvig celebrates 'Women of the Year' awards at Newnham

Rebecca Moore & Hannah Graham

News Correspondents

On Saturday, Newnham College played host to the 60th anniversary celebrations of the Women of the Year foundation. Founded in 1955 to celebrate and further women's achievements in all fields, Women of the Year has for 60 years organised grants and support for charities working with women, as well as an annual lunch and lecture to which influential and successful women from all areas of professional life are invited.

“

WOMEN OF THE YEAR HAS RECOGNISED THE INCREDIBLE WORK OF HUGE NUMBERS OF WOMEN, FROM SINGERS TO SHEPHERDESSES

Previous 'Women of the Year' include human rights lawyers, philanthropists, Olympic and Paralympic medallists, anti-FGM campaigners and inventors.

The afternoon began with a speech given by Principal of Newnham College Dame Carol Black, discussing the ongoing work of the foundation in



Toksvig (right) joined guests to celebrate the 'Women of the Year' awards

women's education

Women of the Year president, comedian, politician and Cambridge alumna Sandi Toksvig addressed the audience of Newnham alumni and former women of the year, reflecting on over twenty years of involvement with the organisation.

She told the distinguished crowd that over this time, Women of the Year has recognised the incredible work of huge numbers of women, from singers

to shepherdesses.

The focus of the event was a keynote speech by economist Alison Wolf, Professor of Public Sector Management at King's College London. The speech, based on her book 'The XX Factor', explored the intersection between gender and class.

Wolf argued that the fault lines of the gender divide could no longer be drawn between men and women. Instead, the real division lay between middle class

and working class women.

Wolf claimed that "the impact of this seismic shift" means "inequality among women is growing faster than among men". She went on to explain that we are experiencing "the end of sisterhood", as women have far less in common in virtue of being women than was once the case.

Most of Wolf's research was focused on the difference between women who had graduated from university, and

those who had not. She discovered that graduates had a much lower rate of fertility, and those graduates who did decide to have children had them much later.

Wolf attributed this phenomenon to an "outsourcing of carework", especially middle-class, white Western women, who relied on what Wolf called the "global care chain"; this concept, pioneered by Professor Arlie

“

THE REAL DIVISION LAY BETWEEN MIDDLE CLASS AND WORKING CLASS WOMEN

Hochschild at UC Berkeley, is used to illustrate the crucial role of migrant women workers in the care sector in wealthy countries.

Speaking to Varsity after the talk, Journalist and Broadcaster Julie Etchingham, a graduate of English from Newnham, commended Women of the Year's work in celebrating the achievements of women from across the spectrum of class.

Etchingham explained that whilst high profile and celebrity women do receive awards, much of the most important work of Women of the Year involves recognising the vital work done by extraordinary women who rarely receive public praise.

Continued from page 3

On analysing the causes of Labour's defeat, Zeichner warned against reaching conclusions too quickly, arguing that it is "too early to come up with clear answers". He claims there is a "danger in assuming that just because Labour didn't win, that Labour's analysis of what's wrong with the country is therefore somehow invalid."

“

OUR ANALYSIS ABOUT A LOW-WAGE, LOW-PRODUCTIVITY, TOO-BIG-A-GAP-BETWEEN-THE-TOP-AND-BOTTOM WORLD IS RIGHT

the right answers" in terms of Labour's policy offering.

Instead of laying much of the blame at the feet of policy, he pinpoints Labour's failure to connect with voters and win their trust: "We really need to go back particularly to some parts of the electorate and work hard to persuade them that they can trust us, because clearly they didn't".

Weighing in on the upcoming Labour leadership election, he quips that the most important quality of the next Labour leader is to "be popular", but says he does not blame the widely mocked performance of the former leader Ed Miliband for Labour's loss in May.

Instead, he praises the Labour leader's performance during the campaign. "He came on very well during the election", asserts Zeichner.

Reserved for Zeichner's ire is reserved for the press. Attacks on the Labour leader varied: for some stories, Miliband was a ruthless, fratricidal egomaniac with a string of celebrity lovers; in others, he was a bumbling, stumbling, mumbling incompetent. Like Neil Kinnock and Gordon Brown before him, says Zeichner, Miliband was "subjected to a huge and unwarranted attack, particularly from parts of the print media" despite – or perhaps because of – his stronger, more confident performance in the final few weeks of the campaign.

He concluded that because Labour leaders are "always going to get that", it would be necessary for Labour to pick "somebody who is even more bullet-proof" as its next leader.

On the current contenders, who include Andy Burnham, Yvette Cooper, Liz Kendall and latecomer Jeremy Corbyn, Zeichner said that "all the leadership candidates have got

differing qualities, and the campaign over the next few weeks and months, I think, will probably reveal who's best placed to take it on."

Despite calls from some leftist students for Zeichner to nominate Corbyn, he backed Shadow Home

“

MILIBAND WAS SUBJECTED TO A HUGE AND UNWARRANTED ATTACK, PARTICULARLY FROM PARTS OF THE PRINT MEDIA

Secretary Yvette Cooper, the MP for Normanton, Pontefract and Castleford and wife of the former shadow Chancellor Ed Balls.

No favourite has yet emerged in the contest, which is to be held under the new leadership election rules championed by the departed Ed Miliband. Despite owing his election to union votes, his dilution of their electoral influence is perhaps his most important legacy as Labour leader.

So far, Labour's icy relationship with business, its neglect of so-called 'aspirational' voters and its utter failure to convince on issues of economic competence and immigration have presented the main debate.

Yet the next five years will be a marathon, not a sprint. If Labour is to hold Cambridge at the next election, maintain its council control and finally achieve a majority again, Zeichner will need to bring that endurance and commitment to bear once more.

Cambridge Lego professor to be the first in the country

Cambridge University is planning to recruit a professor of Lego, after a donation from the company.

The successful candidate will be the head of a new research department within the Faculty of Education.

The general board has recommended the Lego professorship to start in October 2015 after £4m was donated by the Lego Foundation towards the project.

The professor will be the director of the Research Centre on Play in Education, Development and Learning

– the board are looking for a candidate whose work falls "within the general field of the title of the office".

A Cambridge University spokesperson said more details will be provided after the proposal has been presented to Regent House in October. However Vice-chancellor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz says he has "accepted with gratitude" a benefaction of £1.5m from the Lego Foundation, payable over three years.

As one student told Varsity: "Everything is awesome, especially this!"

John's finds Magna Carta copy

A previously unnoticed copy of Magna Carta has been uncovered by a Cambridge college.

The copy, owned by and discovered within St John's College, was found during research marking the 800th anniversary of the document, sealed by King John at Runnymede in modern-day Surrey in 1215 to placate barons dissatisfied with his rule.

The copy, which dates to the 14th century, was uncovered by researchers working on behalf of the National Magna Carta Project (NMCP), and is thought to have been commissioned by Edward I.

Judging by previous auctions, the manuscript could be worth tens of thousands of pounds and was probably hitherto unknown to historians. Its significance was only realised when the head of the NMCP, Professor Nicholas Vincent of the University of East Anglia, contacted the college to ask

about documents he believed might contain clauses from the charter. This particular copy is in scroll form, used to circulate parts of the documents throughout medieval England.

St John's has released images of the copy ahead of the Magna Carta anniversary on June 15. The college archivist, Tracy Deakin, said: "A couple of generations back, archivists did a very different type of job and would not have been able to command the same kind of accessible detail about everything in their archive in the way we can now". As such, she said, it is not uncommon for historical documents to resurface from archives.

Events took place over the weekend in Runnymede to celebrate the anniversary of Magna Carta. Her Majesty the Queen unveiled a plaque to commemorate the ancient document, sometimes seen as the first restriction on English kingship.



He defends Labour's overall approach. "Our analysis about a low-wage, low-productivity, too-big-a-gap-between-the-top-and-bottom world is right", arguing that "we had the some of

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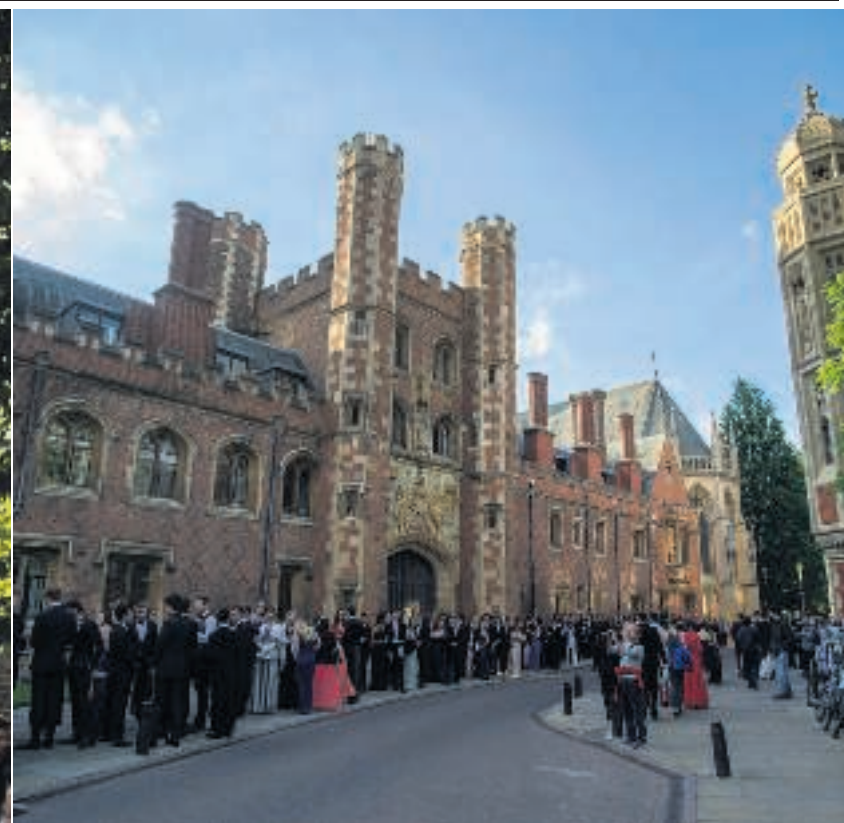
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Emmanuel

Emmanuel's 'Naturalis Historiæ' was an enchanting and faultlessly tasteful may ball. Entering at North court, we wandered through an underground tunnel lined with multicolored origami to arrive at the heart of the ball. A moving dinosaur and its trainer welcomed us before we set out on a quest across the grounds of Emma to sample as much as we could of the food, drink, music and entertainments that made up the night's impressive programme.

The food was plentiful, and interesting too; there was a marked departure from the stock food vendors that you find at most balls. As well as the donut, candyfloss, pizza and cheese stalls that dotted the courts and halls, there were some unfamiliar choices: paella, Millie's Cookies and Bad Brownies, mac and cheese. A particular highlight was Baba G's, which served delicious Indian-style wraps and pachos (poppadum nachos). There was a massive amount of choice in drinks; from port, liqueurs and wines to rum and shot bars. The craft ale stall was a nice addition, and the espresso bar, which buzzed all night at its hideaway in the Fellow's Garden, was a welcome and necessary presence at around 4am. My one qualm was that water was not readily available throughout the night.

The ents

followed a similar pattern: all of the usual favourites with a few flourishes. The open-air cinema, which stood in front of a large shisha area, was a nice idea and added another dimension of colour and interest to the Chapman's Garden area. The GIF-maker photo booth was extremely popular, and UV Ping-Pong was an interesting addition (though this certainly isn't a spectator sport; watching drunk people play table-tennis in the dark is, I discovered, quite frustrating). Crazy golf and 'Airdressing' (elaborate balloon headdresses) were among the other attractions. The comedy and spoken word performances were a fun respite from the rest of the ball; it was a good idea to host these in an isolated room in the Upper Hall, where they were not subject to the noisy disruptions that plague spoken acts at other may balls.

The music was diverse and kept momentum across four stages throughout the night. Pendulum drew a predictably large crowd. The two-channel silent disco was popular as ever and struck a good balance between pop, Hip-Hop and other super-danceable music. The tent that stood in the Fellow's Garden and was given over to jazz and folk acts, including Churchill Jazz and Laurie Lewis and the Fat Cats, was a particular highlight.

All in all, a lot of fun.

Martha Elwell

Murray Edwards Garden Party

I once overheard a Cambridge DoS describe Murray Edwards College as 'a prison of their own making'. Never has this been more true than at this year's Garden Party. That Medwards Dome, ring-fenced by impenetrable white railings, is indeed difficult to get into or out of at the best of times. Yet this year the organisers apparently 'forgot' to order fencing, and so, on the morning of the party, they allegedly dropped £8,000 on some makeshift garden fencing. The idea that eight grand's worth of gate crashers would have sussed it is entirely absurd. One gate crasher who did manage to break in was heard saying "I broke in but now I'm trying to break out."

There is an inexplicable cult appeal to Murray Edwards College. Every Saturday students from all the hill colleges flock like rats to the hallowed Medwards brunch, where the waffles and hash browns are not in any way discernible from those proffered at Fitz, Churchill or Lucy Cav. And yet the halls in those colleges are desolate come brunch time, while Medwards is heaving, the queue snaking through the college, everyone chasing something – only they're not quite sure what. The story of Medwards brunch and Medwards Garden Party is much the same: both are nothing more or less than an orgy of queuing. Queuing for what? One NatSci used a very niche but spectacularly apt metaphor to describe the affair: "it's like an ant death circle," he said "when ants get confused by each other's pheromones and start marching in a circle, and more and more join until they're trapped in a spiral of death, and none of them know what they're looking for or why they're milling around in circles, and so they all begin to die of exhaustion."

You couldn't win – if you queued,

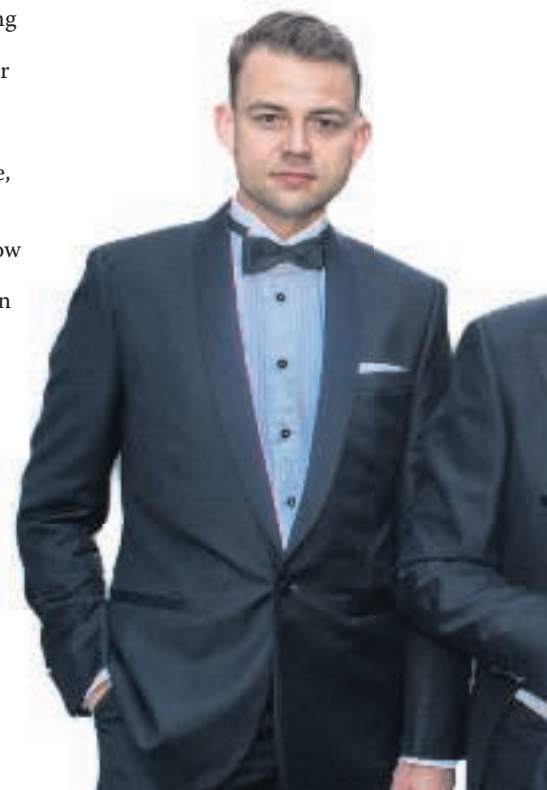
your very soul was sucked away by brutal unending torture of queuing for an hour for a slice of pizza; if you didn't, you began to slowly waste away through lack of nourishment. A garden party is not a fun place to be if you're famished. The only sensible solution was to drink: mercifully, the bar was the only place free of the dreaded queue, and so you could down flat, warm, overly strong G&Ts and watered down beers to your heart's content.

It would have been nice to have some comic relief, and though the Medwards organisers did invite a number of comedians and give them free tickets, they neglected to erect a comedy tent, so the comedians were left to mill around haplessly, telling jokes to who-ever cared to listen.

Relief at last came in the form of Xavier Hetherington's Disco Biscuits, who played a brilliant, crowd-pleasing set with all the classics and allowed everyone to dance away their misery under a leaden sky, fuelled mainly by flat Pimms with no fruit, or a lick of someone else's ice cream.

It is safe to say that the cult of Medwards may truly be at an end, and Dome is definitely not where the heart is.

Isobel Cockerell





Clare

Set on the river, Clare is a college that easily lends itself to creating a magical atmosphere, and its 'Imaginarium' themed ball on Monday night beautifully exploited this to its full potential. Boasting an enormous variety of entertainments, from liqueur and chocolate tastings, to the classic silent disco and dodgems, alongside a 'live owl experience', burlesque performance involving snakes, and laser quest, Clare delivered; tarot card and palm readings proved extremely popular and provided a novel allusion to the theme, my only criticism being they simply couldn't cater to demand. Cupcakes, macaroni and cheese, falafel, and intriguing poppadum nachos

('pachos') were of great quality, but evaporated a little early – however, the gorgeous cocktails were still flowing at 3am and tasted just as good as at 9pm. Headline act Professor Green, delivering a brilliantly aggressive and intense performance, seemed tickled pink to be there, and was received with enormous enthusiasm. In contrast, Fitz Swing Band provided a glamorous soundtrack to guests' arrival, and chauffeured punting throughout the night further enhanced the desired decadence.

As party girl Jordan Baker wanly observed in Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, 'I like large parties, they're so intimate'; at Clare, whilst only contrived references were made to the theme in décor (a hanging assembly of bowler hats in homage to surrealist Rene Magritte inevitably being depleted throughout the night as revelers supplemented their attire), the comparatively small Old Court and illuminated pockets of gardens enabled an event with impressive scope to retain the air of an exclusive private party often lost at larger colleges. A stellar night.

Phoebe Stone

Trinity

Obviously I wasn't expecting less, but the Trinity May Ball really was one of the most spectacular nights I've ever experienced. There was some initial panic over the power cut and various rumours that the champagne and oysters were warming up, but these fears were quelled by, well, the copious amounts of perfectly chilled oysters and champagne laid out near the main stage.

I didn't stop eating for about the first two hours, and then I didn't stop dancing/drinking for the remaining seven, except for a couple of breaks in the surprisingly clean portaloos, a round of Dodgems and a heavenly twenty minutes in the hair and makeup room, where I got to kick off my (gold) shoes and have my face and head stroked which was SO NICE. Massive credit has to go to the Bonbonbonbons who, aside from all being very good looking, kept a crowd going in the Jazz Tent for their entire splendid set and made me forgo waffles for

the chance to boogie to their covers of Chuck Berry and the Jackson Five.

There was a point in the evening when I found myself on a lawn clutching a glass of champers watching a fireworks show with people clad in princess ball gowns and I thought to myself, this is sort of the peak of all things magnificent. Somehow the atmosphere had me bouncing up and down like an electrocuted ferret to songs I didn't even know, and placated me when the brisk morning air threatened to get the better of me. I was warmed and soothed by four cheese toasties and a 5am dark and stormy, which are both fairly good ways to be warmed and soothed. And then I took my shoes off before I crawled into bed at six, and that was even more wonderful.

Noa Lessof-Gendler



Campaign against public display of results

Liliya Aleksandrova
News Correspondent

To date, more than 1,200 students from the University of Cambridge have signed a petition organised by the student campaign group 'Our Grade, Our Choice'. The petition's aim is "to allow students [...] to decide whether or not they appear on public university class lists".

A recent update on the campaign's Facebook page has shown that JCRs, namely Murray Edwards, have ended the public display of exam results within the college. The post praised the college, saying: "In response to this campaign our [Murray Edwards] Senior Tutor initiated (!) discussion with the JCR about the Class Lists that are usually put up near our plodge and have agreed not to publish them this year - a step in the right direction!"

Under the current system, results are posted in a number of ways: online, outside the Senate House, and in

the respective departments. Reasons for the initiative listed by the group include: that the current system pro-

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MURRAY EDWARDS HAVE ENDED THE PUBLIC DISPLAY OF EXAM RESULTS WITHIN THE COLLEGE

notes a culture of grade shaming; that the publication of grades may cause mental health episodes; that it ignores the right of privacy; and that it presents the results without any context. The public listing of grades also allows for photographs to be taken, which can then be posted on social media, leaving affected students with no way to control the process.

It is possible for a student to request for the class mark to not be shown

outside the Senate House and in the relevant department, but that requires a form to be filled. The Guidance Note on Withholding Names from Class Lists states that the application, which needs to be submitted by the student's Tutor to the Secretary of the Applications Committee, "will only be considered where there are exceptional circumstances and for good cause, such as where there is demonstrable medical (e.g. from a GP or Counsellor) and or/other appropriate supporting evidence that publication would be likely seriously to endanger a student's health or mental well-being".

The campaign, on the other hand, stresses that students with mental health issues may find the whole process overwhelming, and that it could trigger an episode even if their grades are not actually published.

Testimonials posted by the campaign organisers on its Facebook page recount mental health episodes connected to the public posting of grades.

One of them states: 'In my Part II year I suffered greatly with depression.

[...]I went on for a long period having to handle regular questioning from people who couldn't understand why I had 'failed' (despite getting honours). I had to explain about my depression to get people to stop being so nosy on an incredibly personal issue.'

The campaign has been gathering support in the media and has received attention from many national publications, ranging from the Guardian to Seventeen.

Helen Hoogewerf-McComb, CUSU president, added to the debate saying: "While the university does have a right to publish examination results without gaining students' prior consent, it also has a duty to provide an appropriate mechanism for students to opt out, particularly where publication may cause distress or harm."

Mary Beard, a professor of Classics at the University of Cambridge, has commented in her TLS blog 'A Don's Life': "[...] universities are not supposed to be places (surely?) where you always feel comfortable, or safe, or unthreatened. They are supposed to be places where you feel there is

someone to discuss, to debate and support when you do feel that."

Until 2010, results were displayed publicly before the students received them privately. This changed to the current system following a campaign by CUSU, and ended a 300-year-old tradition. Meanwhile, the University of Oxford has kept exam results private since October 2009 after 40% of students had opted out of the practice, using the Data Protection Act.

On 30 May, 'Our Grade, Our Choice' forwarded the petition, as well as comments, testimonials, and an accompanying letter to the University. A university spokesperson confirmed on Monday that the petition will be confirmed on 1 July by the "General Board's Education Committee".

"For the present time, the University's position is that Class Lists will be published in accordance with the University's Statutes and Ordinances".

"there are procedures whereby student can apply through their colleges, for their names to be withheld from Class Lists".

Formal dress code no longer gendered

Helen Cahill
News Correspondent

In a first for the university, St. Catharine's has scrapped the gendered dress code of its formal dinners, freeing trans students from the institution's out-dated and oppressive rules governing dining dress.

"This makes Catz formals a place to express yourself in a new spectrum of ways", said Charlie Northrop, who spearheaded the campaign, in an email to the student body. "Men can wear dresses, women can wear suits, and non-binary people are free to define the outfits that feel most appropriate to them in a formal setting."

Charlie began transitioning this year, and as the Formal Hall officer for the MCR, she was thrilled that the Dean suggested the wording of the dress code should be changed when she emailed to ask about it.

She says she was overwhelmed by the positive response from students on telling them the news, and feels 'encouraged and proud' that the students and fellows of St. Catharine's were so enthusiastic about creating more inclusive environment for trans students.

Great care was taken to ensure the correct wording of the new dress code, says Ellie Chan, the college's MCR President. In a typically academic fashion, there were lengthy discussions over the definition of a suit, and the fellows instigated a spirited debate over the differences between men and women's formal shirts.

The dress code campaign was a committee-wide effort, and the combined work of the St. Catherine's MCR and JCR is inspiring other colleges to adopt a similarly progressive ethos. Clare college has already emailed Charlie to request materials, so that they might match St. Catharine's progressive ethos.

The revised dress code for formal halls now includes the statement: "Members and their guests must be dressed in suitably smart dress. 'Smart dress' is defined without reference to considerations of gender identity or expression."

Open up the Arts

Anna Bockmuehl talks to the director of the Cambridge Junction



Since the economic upheaval of 2007, there has been an ever-growing crisis in the Arts Sector. Jobs are competitive and incredibly hard to come by with many people forced to complete years of unpaid internships before landing their first paid job in museums, recording studios and theatres.

This system clearly favours those that are financially better off since candidates from less privileged backgrounds cannot afford to work for nothing; diversity within the art industries is diminishing. Speaking to Daniel Brine, Managing Director at the Cambridge Junction, he explained that for this reason the Junction "like a lot of people in the arts, no longer offer unpaid internships". This is indicative of the distinct change in the tide of opinion that has occurred in the past couple of years. Arts Council England addressed the issue in 2011, publishing 'A guide for arts organisations' on offering internships. The Chief Executive emphasised in the foreword that employers have certain "responsibilities when offering this kind of position".

Recently, large and influential institutions in

the Arts Sector have decided to make a move towards only offering paid internships, and these often rely heavily upon charitable funding. Brine spoke of a new scheme that the Cambridge Junction and Kettle's Yard have become involved with, funded by the Jerwood foundation. He explained "this particular fund, is interested in people who have gone to university and have received a full grant through their course...in people who have come from a social economic background where they might not be able to afford to work for nothing."

This kind of responsible internship seems very much in keeping with what Arts Council England was propounding in 2011, and Brine confirms that such a scheme has come about "because Arts Council England has sent out a very, very clear message that it is no longer appropriate for organisations to have unpaid internships." The ending of unpaid internships will also put a stop to arts organisations exploiting free labour under the guise of offering that all-important 'work experience', which has become widely accepted as essential for young people who want to get a job

in the arts, or any other industry.

If this scheme funded by the Jerwood Foundation marks a wider trend in the arts sector then there is reason to be optimistic. Brine affirms, "Huge efforts are being made to increase the diversity of the industry, in terms of ethnic minorities, women and people from a lower socio-economic background". He goes on to describe how effective the government's apprenticeships programs are "which have enabled people from all walks of life to break into industries traditionally only available to those with a university degree". And undoubtedly in the long term the arts sector will flourish with the new ideas that diversity brings.

Brine believes that these problems will not disappear overnight, but there is hope that changes will occur. He predicts "I think we'll see some big changes, social shifts and growing opportunities over the next few years, especially for young people". For those interested in the Weston Jerwood, or other paid internships, visit the Arts Council England website for advice.



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Review: Agora's Ticket Marketplace

A security success and more efficient experience for general ticket sales

Keertan Kini
News Correspondent

“Safe and Secure Ticket Sales” is what Agora’s new May Week marketplace promised, and it lives up to this. Agora has solved its target issue and has done so with style: while sending large sums of money blindly to strangers is a leap of faith, sending it to Agora as an escrow is safer.

Payments for posted tickets are made via bank transfer to Agora, and then the buyer and seller are connected to figure out details about name changes, etc. As the Agora team puts it, “[W]e act as a kind of financial intermediary, holding the buyer’s payment securely until everyone’s happy with the sale. The payment is passed from Agora to the seller if and only if both seller and buyer agree that they are satisfied.”

Beyond the payment security, the platform is pleasing. Agora uses the Django web framework for the website’s backend that also backs Pinterest and Instagram among other services. React.js is used for the frontend, used by Facebook, Netflix and Khan Academy. The tools are well utilized.

The user interface is simple. Not



Agora’s May Week platform: a useful tool or profiteering on ticket exchanges?

only are the features easy to understand, but also the layout is clean. In particular, with all the details for different Garden Parties and events, the page as a one-stop glance for major events occurring during May Week.

For sellers, rather than relying upon being at the top of the Facebook list

of posts or using friends of friends to shed unwanted tickets, the posts on Agora are compiled and available consistently until sold. Cheaper tickets are easier to find and get snapped up quickly as email notifications are sent whenever new June Event and May Ball tickets are posted.

The price is slightly increased from advertised given that Agora needs funds to support the service and that part of every sale is given to charity, but the marginal increase is worth it. According to the Agora team, they project that about £2,000 will have been raised for various charities by

May Week’s end.

Given that safety in ticket sales was key in this iteration of the new marketplace, the progress made is admirable. Yet the next stride for the platform may well be removing excess friction in the process. While it is easier to post tickets and find them, the negotiations behind the name change and other details take place off of the platform. These negotiations are required in every means of selling tickets, but Agora has a unique opportunity to work with May Ball committees to take care of name changes and the like. Such a collaboration would not only standardize and optimize different ticketing processes across colleges but also would remove pressure from the committees to handle each name change individually via email. One reason that name changes are so expensive is as a deterrent to numerous and arduous ticket changes.

Similarly, among many different online payment options such as PayPal or Venmo, only bank transfers are accepted. While not necessary, providing greater breadth of options would be icing on the proverbial cake.

The new May Ball platform provides safety and security and a smoother means to transfer tickets, and should be applauded as the first iteration. Nevertheless, now the platform is up and running, Agora should be bold moving forward in ensuring that the experience of exchanging May Ball tickets is as frictionless as possible.

Science: The recap theory of evolution

Aniket Patel
Science Correspondent

Most people have heard of Charles Darwin and his theory of evolution by means of natural selection. While this theory is widely accepted by the scientific community today, Darwin unsurprisingly faced widespread opposition when he first published his book, *On the Origin of Species*. He had anticipated this reaction and had accumulated support for his theory that he included in his book – one of these pieces of support was recapitulation theory.

Recapitulation theory, also known as the ‘biogenetic law’ or ‘embryological parallelism’, is best summarised in the words of the 19th century German scientist Ernst Haeckel: “Ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny.” In plain terms, the development of an animal from an embryo to an adult mirrors the evolution of that animal. The concept is an ancient one, having been first formulated as a theory on the origin of language by the Egyptian Pharaoh Psamtik I. Some Victorian evolutionists used the theory as evidence to promote the concept of evolution following the publication of Darwin’s book.

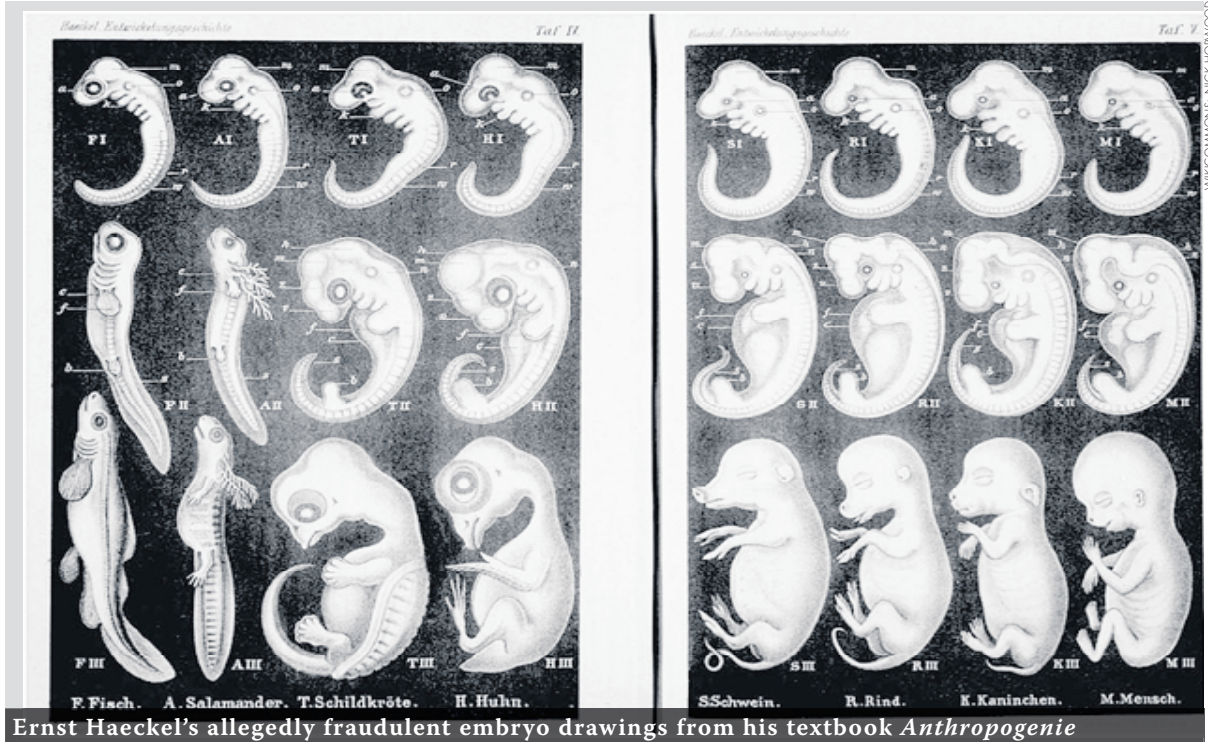
Haeckel was the most enthusiastic proponent of the theory. He claimed that each stage of an animal’s development represented the adult form of one of its evolutionary ancestors. He even went as far as to draw various diagrams of animal embryos at different stages of development to display how he believed they resembled one another, but he greatly exaggerated

the similarities between the embryos in his drawings and was therefore accused by his contemporaries of distorting the images.

Darwin’s view of the theory was slightly different from Haeckel’s. He believed that the certain embryonic stages of a species resembled the corresponding embryonic stages of related species, as opposed to their adult forms as Haeckel advocated. Darwin’s view has since been confirmed by modern evolutionary developmental biologists.

Evolutionary developmental biology is a relatively new science that views evolution as the result of changes in development. When Darwin was writing *On the Origin of Species*, he consulted his friend and fellow biologist Thomas Huxley about the origins of variation. Huxley told Darwin that the variation between species was due to differences in their development and that these differences “result not so much of the development of new parts as of the modification of parts already existing and common to both the divergent types.”

This is one of the key concepts behind evolutionary developmental biology: if development is the change of gene expression and cell position over time, then evolution is the change of development over time. Indeed, altered embryological structures would give rise to altered structures in the adult, which could confer an evolutionary advantage to an organism. Changes in adult organisms that confer evolutionary advantages result from changes in the embryological structures, meaning that the traits that natural selection selects come



Ernst Haeckel’s allegedly fraudulent embryo drawings from his textbook *Anthropogenie*

from different traits in the womb.

Although embryological development may not exactly mirror the evolution of a species as Haeckel believed, and whether or not developmental changes are the driving factors behind evolution itself, one thing cannot be denied: certain features found in embryos of various species are similar to and homologous with features found in the embryos or adult forms of animals in different species, and therefore share a common source.

A good example is the branchial arch artery system in fish compared

with the human circulatory system. The fish’s system consists of one ventral (bottom, near the fish’s belly) aorta and two dorsal (top, near the fish’s back) aortas running along the front of a fish’s body. Aortas are the primary large arteries that carry oxygenated blood away from the heart. The dorsal and ventral aortas are connected by a series of arched arteries, which run alongside the gills of the fish to carry out gas exchange with the water. In humans, a similar system forms, but is remodelled during development to form part of the circulation as it exists

in the adult. The aortic arch arteries must therefore have evolved from a common evolutionary ancestor of both humans and modern fish.

While the recapitulation theory is today considered redundant in its Haeckelian form by most of the scientific community, embryos do go through a period where their development closely resembles their evolutionary ancestry. While much of the science of evolution remains shrouded in mystery, the links between development and evolution are incontrovertible.

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The Interview: Sir Peter Stothard

BRINGING THE NEWS TO LIFE



Former editor of the Times and current editor of the TLS, Sir Peter Stothard discusses the changing world of journalism with **Talia Zyburtz**

“I edit a paper which is one of the few places left which still has a strong, consistent diet of argued criticism”.

Like many in the industry, Sir Peter Stothard, current Editor of the Times Literary Supplement, Editor of the Times for ten years and 2012 Chair of the Man Booker Prize, is worried that newspapers are going downhill.

“The ‘five stars I like it and I’ll give it to my sister’ school [of cultural criticism] is running very strongly,” Stothard insists, while “argued criticism is being overwhelmed”. Driven, in part, by the “pressures of the internet”, speaking to the editor of one of Britain’s foremost literary publications does not immediately inspire confidence in the industry to which he has dedicated his life.

“Every opinion on a book is not the same,” he persists. “We don’t think that every opinion on if you’ve got cancer is the same, or every opinion on whether your plumbing needs repairing is the same.”

Parts of the literary community “have somehow got the idea that people want as much equality as possible”. They “pretend that every opinion on a book, or a piece of music, or a film is as valuable as anybody else’s”. According to Stothard, however, “it palpably isn’t”.

This steadfast insistence on the primacy of traditional criticism over newer forms such as the book blog, which he has previously lambasted as

being to “the detriment of literature”, has unsurprisingly stirred emotions. The Guardian writer John Self hit back at Stothard, defending the place for long-form criticism in blogs, whilst Amy Riley, a book blogger herself, claimed blogs “might be scary to people like Mr. Stothard who is used to being a controlling party in the conversation”.

An hour long chat with Stothard about literature, however, and he comes across as more easily confident than scared. This confidence in the objective value of criticism is reassuring, especially from the man responsible for propelling Hilary Mantel to the hall of ‘modern classics’ fame, having led the panel of judges that awarded her a second Man Booker

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EVERY OPINION ON A BOOK IS NOT THE SAME

Prize in 2012. But even with careful criticism in place, can Stothard really be sure that *Bring Up the Bodies* was the best piece of literature to come out of 2012?

“It’s quite fashionable to knock prizes,” he admits – and the controversy surrounding the Booker and its Chair the year prior to his

involvement is quickly brought up. Stella Rimmington, who chaired the prize in 2011, “got into quite a lot of trouble, not all of it fairly, [for] saying it was all just a matter of opinion”.

If the crusade against Rimmington’s proposed focus on readability was not “fair”, however, I have little doubt that, at least in principle, Stothard thinks it was right. If it’s “all a matter of opinion,” he tells me: “Why bother?”

“My experience of the Booker”, he continues, “was that if you really worked at it”, even if it was “hard to compare one book against the other because they were very different, you could compare the strength of the argument for each book”. For Stothard, “that was an important lesson, which I think extends beyond prizes to the way in which we look at books in the media in general”.

Stothard looks to ‘traditional’ journalism in more ways than one. I ask about a tradition particularly prominent in the press of late – political endorsement – and Stothard is candid in his disdain. “I never liked it,” he mulls. “A lot of newspaper editors[...] think it’s the worse thing they have to do. I mean, if you spend all the year trying to be even handed, and in the end, you have to say you want ‘x’ rather than ‘y’[...] I’ve heard a lot of newspaper editors say that that was a tradition they wish didn’t exist,” he smiles.

“But newspapers are living creatures, they have traditions and they

have parents and they have children”. To keep these living creatures lively,

“

MY ONLY HOPE IS THAT IN THIS NEW ERA DECENT, HONEST, IMPORTANT JOURNALISM IS NOT CHILLED

“it’s dangerous to abandon the whole of the heritage”.

Heritage, perhaps; but there is no doubt Stothard is finely tuned to the changing landscape to which this heritage must adapt. Recalling his student days on the *Cherwell* – based then in “a terrible sort of leaky shed at the back of the Oxford Union” – Stothard believes student journalism “became a bit less self-indulgent in terms of ‘print my poem’”.

The big change, though, was not confined to students. The invention of software that allowed journalists to directly input and design their content was a “massive, massive change”, Stothard stresses, “as big, if not bigger than the current change of moving onto digital”.

Indeed, Stothard believes “there have been two big newspaper revolutions in my lifetime”, and there is no doubt in my mind that he spent both

on the front line.

But what of the most recent, legal revolutions facing the press? “You can presumably do a PhD at Cambridge very soon on Leveson and its implications,” he half jests. Weighing up the public interest and the means through which it can be served, Stothard admits that “people like me[...] were editors in a different age”. An age with “a simpler sort of proportionality test”.

“Young people going into journalism and papers now enter a climate that is much more regulated, much more planned” and “some would say a little bit less spontaneous,” he tells me.

But does journalism need spontaneity? “My only hope”, Stothard muses darkly, “is that in this new era, decent, honest, important journalism is not chilled” – that “you’re not discouraged from doing the things that keep journalism alive”.

It’s not only that “crimes will not be investigated” – “a common objection to what could come from the current arrangements – “but that journalism will become very boring”.

“And that, in the longer term, could be even more dangerous.”

Literary or investigative, for Sir Peter Stothard, journalism must be thoughtful, critical and above all, lively. As he quips, “It’s easy to produce a dull newspaper”. And in a world where newspapers are “living creatures”, Stothard provides a stark reminder that dullness could very well mean death.

Comment

Snap out of it and live in the moment



Ian Johnston

Let's make sure our memories of May Week are not just photographs

With summer approaching, those “bloody tourists”, arriving in floods and armed with iPhones and the desire to photograph Cambridge’s every quaint brick, can become the bane of students’ lives. Whether it’s avoiding occupying centre-stage of a family photo or dodging selfie sticks thrust into our paths as we cycle through town, the struggle is real. Selfie culture thrives in Cambridge; not content to merely document every passing moment of their Cambridge experience by camera, many feel they must appear in front of King’s Chapel or the Bridge of Sighs, as though doing otherwise might risk the accusation that they somehow hadn’t been there in the first place.

Yet, for all our scoffing at this behaviour, as May Week approaches, we too will capitulate to selfie fever. Modern technology has led to an explosion in image creation and where photography was once the domain of the artist, today’s David Baileys are anyone and everyone with a smartphone. That’s why our social media revolves almost entirely around photography or video: Snapchat, Instagram and the like. But, just as there is no longer any questioning of

the quality of the photographer, the object of the photo is becoming increasingly mundane: alongside photos of beautiful landmarks, hidden within the amateur photographer’s album are invariably failed attempts to capture atmospheric snaps of what are no more than dingy alleyways and city streets.

I’m as guilty of this as anyone else, and yet I also laugh at those who view Cambridge almost entirely through their cameras. The democratisation of photography, enabling us all to capture our experiences, is a positive development. But, as filtered Instagrams of Granchester and punting trips fill our newsfeeds and we prepare ourselves for the bombardment of photos of suited May ball-goers and Snapchats of whoever Trinity got in when Taylor turned them down, I’m left wondering how much we differ from the tourist with the selfie stick. It seems that we need to validate our experiences with the approval of others, constantly seeking likes and converting personal events into public spectacles.

The act of photography can infringe on the experience itself. In a recent article to The Irish Times, Dr Robert Harris, a professor of

philosophy at Trinity College Dublin, writes that modern culture dictates that we not only capture our experiences, but that we treat them as if they exist to be captured. By attempting to channel and control anything that seems even slightly extraordinary through a flat 2D image, we lose the opportunity to live the moment with as much intensity as we can.

Of course, we can both enjoy life and capture it with photography but the anticipation of the upload to social media and the pressure to obtain as many ‘likes’ as possible can postpone enjoyment; the act of photography becomes an integral part of the experience rather than merely a means of recording it and therefore detracts from it.

The American comedian Louis C.K. summarises the absurdity of the situation perfectly. Describing parents constantly taking pictures at a children’s party, he tells them to “just look at your kids: the resolution on the kid is unbelievable. If you just look it’s totally HD.” How often do we really look at videos of events we missed the first time around, having viewed them all through a 6-inch screen? The obsession with “doing it for the Vine” involves thrusting

personal events onto others, all the while missing out on the initial experience. Even though the hilarity of the situation is clear, we often fail to realise that we are in on the act.

Come May Week, then, newsfeeds will fill with group shots at garden parties and black-tie selfies and I will no doubt contribute my fair share of blurred, uninspired snaps to the mass. The desire to record the most extravagant events of a Cambridge student’s university experience is entirely understandable; it helps to assuage the sense of sadness which comes from their passing. But let’s not allow the event to become the photograph. It seems more important to share May Week with the people we are with rather than to force it on Facebook friends who have, at best, a fleeting interest in what we do. Part of experiencing moments with intensity is not to cling to them but to let them pass, recognising the need to replace them with new ones rather than constantly reliving what has gone before. Looking back on May Week, photos will no doubt help us remember it fondly, but in the rush to record our experiences, we also need to remember to enjoy them in the first place.

Why you just can’t say no to May Balls



Kate Edwards

Despite the cost, there’s something so compelling about May Balls

I was already £30 overdrawn when I bought my first ever May Ball ticket – not even actually to a May Ball, but to Trinity Hall June Event. Needless to say, after I had a lovely time enjoying the extravaganza, a lot of Sainsbury’s Basics and a summer job were more than necessary to plug that black hole.

Looking back on that 19 year old’s decision-making process has been interesting to me recently, particularly because I’m 90 per cent sure I’d make the same decision now as I did then. It somehow fills me with a sense of pride. And I know that this year, and next year, and so on, a vast number of the students here will also make the same decision, even though it seems an impossible sum for one night (albeit a very long one).

My friends and I have had countless conversations about the possibility of having £140 worth of fun in one night and after careful calculations (mac ‘n’ cheese portions consumed + gin & tonics thrown back ferris wheels ridden = not a reliable equation), we decided we could do it. When you reduce it down to £14 per hour, on the basis that you’re eating a meal maybe every two hours and drinking all the drinks all the time, it just about starts to seem reasonable. That’s the price of one cocktail at the Shard (another bank-breaking exercise). It’s 50p less than the ribs at Bill’s. Not too troubling after all, I say to myself as I stare at the water bill.

May Balls are undeniably great, the genius of prepayment meaning that you can, queues notwithstanding,

bumper car to your heart’s content and eat as many ostrich burgers as your fancy clothes will allow (freshers: pick a fabric with some give). As one friend pointed out, by the time it gets to the actual night, you begin to feel as though the whole thing were free anyway.

“
HOW DO WE SQUARE SPENDING THAT MUCH MONEY WITH MAKING RENT, OR BUYING FOOD?

But value for money (or forgetting the money) is only half the story, even if it does help make the decision. It’s having the money in the first place, which a lot of people barely do. How do we square spending that much money with making rent, or buying food? It’s really hard to do, and it’s certainly not a question I’ll claim to have answered in this article.

Peer pressure certainly plays a role, as does the image of Cambridge that freshers conjure up before they start unpacking their bags. Any sort of interaction you have with older students, be it in college families, with your freshers’ reps, or through (especially drinking) societies, there is always a conversation about how wonderful May Balls are. They are the promised land after exams. Who

would want to avoid paradise, or even an older, wiser student’s advice?

Of course, I’d like to think the majority of people here are strong-minded enough not to spend £100+ plus simply because their friends have told them to. It’s a curious phenomenon of The Bubble, this consensus that it’s fine, it’s all fine, we deserve it, it’s fine, we can justify it, it’s fine.

Perhaps it’s more a question of groupthink. We’re not exactly forced by our friends to go along with it, but we get caught up in all the excitement and agree to ignore asking the cash machine for an advice slip for a few months. Who needs advice anyway, when you’ve already made the best decision you possibly could?

We’ve all gone through the stress of exams together. We’ve cast longing glances at the carefree tourists wondering around the city and dreamt of punting on sunny days with a bottle of Pimm’s and a book to cause a literary reviewer to self-combust. We’ve all decided that this period after exams is for enjoyment only, whatever the cost, and any naysayer is strangely pitiful. After all, where are they even going to sleep if they’re not partying at their college’s ball?

Four years and two degrees later and I still really want to go to the ball, even though I could have saved a lot of money and seen Deathcab last week rather than, er, The Feeling (Downing’s headline act this year). Glastonbury doesn’t cost much more, if you’re going to spend that kind of money. Flights to most European cities are considerably less expensive.

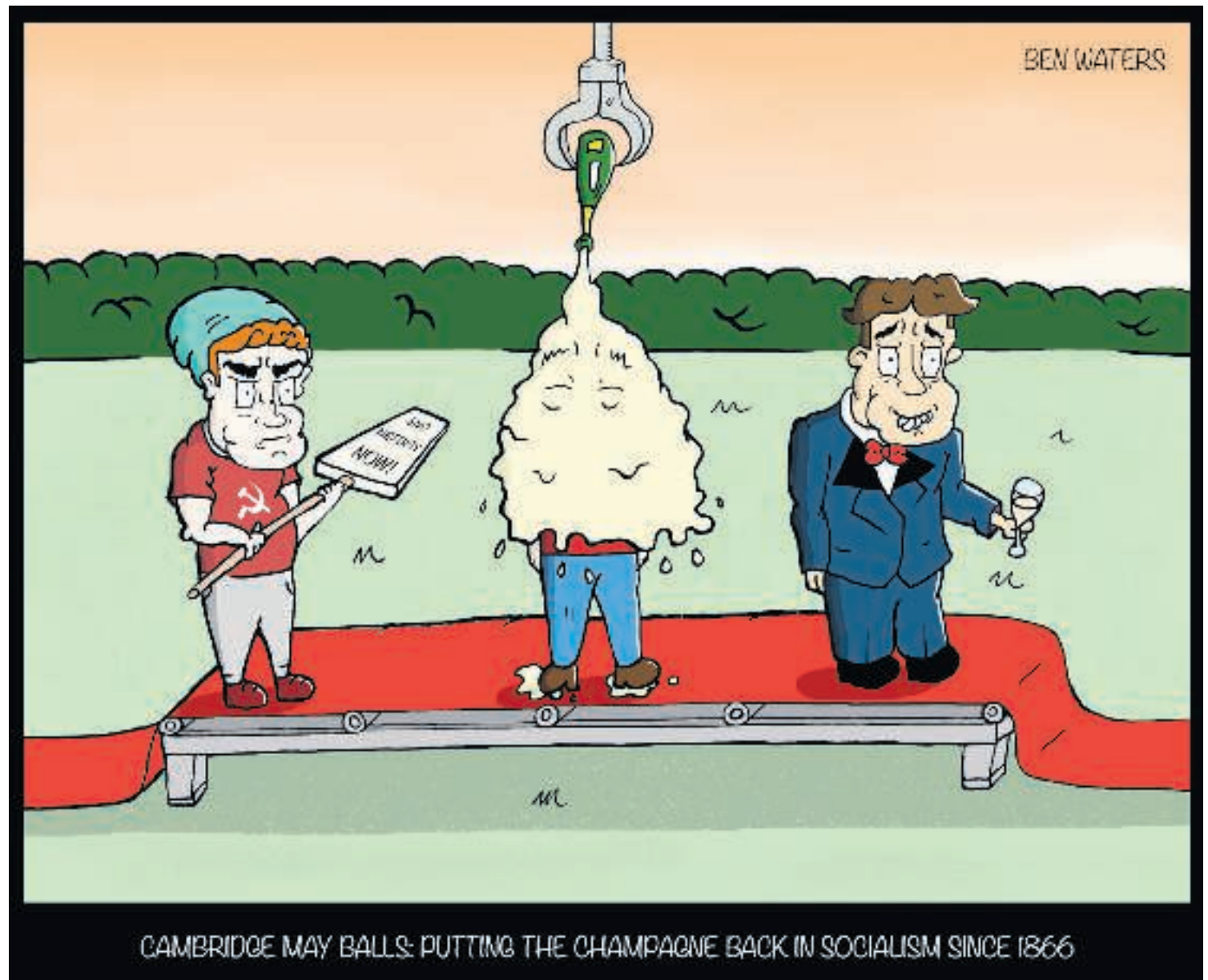
And unless it’s terribly planned or so wild that you get yourself deported, a city break often lasts a lot longer than ten hours.

And yet the May Ball still looms large in my Cambridge experience. If ever I’m asked to think back to the highlight of my year, then an evening spent drinking, eating, dancing and laughing in a fancy dress and nice shoes takes an awful lot of beating. My most glamorous photos from the three terms of trials and tribulations are the ones taken after I’ve finished getting ready.

I love May Balls. It’s why I bought a ticket again this year. It’s why I nudged (pushed) my little sister into buying a dress on sale before she’d

“
AN EVENING SPENT DRINKING, EATING, DANCING AND LAUGHING IN A FANCY DRESS AND NICE SHOES TAKES AN AWFUL LOT OF BEATING

even met her offer. It just fascinates me that so many people are willing to pay so much more than at other institutions to get an end-of-year fix. Then again, as I glide between the gin tent, the dodgems and all the food at this year’s ball, the mystery will become clear again.



May Week: a relic of an elitist past

Glittering gowns, white tie, silent discos, world famous rock bands, smash hit DJs, extravagant gambling tables, rainbows of flowing cocktails and champagne, oysters, burgers, caviar, chocolate fountains, helter skelters, bouncy castles, inflatable observatories, night punting, balloon rides, four course breakfasts, fireworks displays over the rooftops of Cambridge...

It's a familiar scene, one many of us have experienced first-hand. Even the most modest May Balls and June Events provide unlimited alcohol, delicious food and extravagant performances. And it's a glorious scene, one which belongs in a world of revising on the backs in golden sunshine and getting firsts in all of your exams – the world in which the glossy mirage of a perfect Cambridge is the reality.

In that world, students don't need bursaries which are scraped together in the annual telephone campaigns, the university counselling service is well-funded with plenty of staff to support the eighteen thousand-strong student body, and every employee is paid the living wage.

For fifty-one weeks of the year, I'm well aware that this version of Cambridge simply doesn't exist. I read testimonials revealing students' experiences of having to switch rooms halfway through the year because their finances take a turn for the worse; I watch friends staying in for weeks on end because they can't afford a night out; I hear rumours that the college subcontracts our bedders so they can cheat the living wage pledge and pay less than £7.65 an hour to clean our mountains of mess.

For fifty-one weeks of the year I

know this, and I feel deeply grateful for my financial privilege. Many indi-

“
HOW IS IT THAT WE ARE SO ABLE TO INDULGE IN DAYS OF LAVISH OPULENCE AGAINST WHICH OUR MORALS USUALLY PROTEST SO FEROCIOUSLY?”

viduals across the university feel the same. We support campaigns against raising tuition fees, we sign petitions to force colleges to acknowledge that not all students are able to support themselves, we try our utmost to contradict the 'Guardian' perception of us Cambridge students as privileged brats with more money than we know what to do with.

Unfortunately, for the fifty-second week of the year, that is precisely what we are. There is no plausible excuse for the astonishing displays of wealth that are the Cambridge May Balls. They exist out of their time, contradictorily canonical, remnants of a time when Cambridge really was just for the rich, and when social elitism was the norm. In an age when we presumably know how to check our privilege and class is recognised as a construct to be dismantled, how is it that we are so able to numb the guilt and indulge in days of lavish opulence against which our morals usually protest so ferociously?

First, we like to make the most of the 'everyone else is doing it so why shouldn't I?' excuse. If the rest of our friends are okay with forking out £300 over the course of a week on balls, then there's no one to berate us for it, and we can all turn a blind eye on our own hypocrisy together. We don't want to be the only ones missing out on the fun – and anyway, it's cold up there on that moral high ground. No one likes a killjoy.

Second, there's an element of constructed resignation. We tell ourselves that missing out on all the fun will only be skin off our own noses and won't make any difference in the grand scheme of things, just like boycotting Primark won't mean that Indonesian seamstresses will be given proper pay, or how becoming a vegetarian won't bring down the corrupt cattle industry. If we don't buy that ticket, someone else will, so we might as well just partake. Besides, if we don't spend the money now we'll only spend it on booze and food over the summer instead. There are plenty of music festivals we could be attending, and the food and drink isn't even free there. What difference does it make?

Most of all, we let ourselves get away with it because May Week is so fun. For those of us with the cash to spare, there's simply no better opportunity to let loose and take advantage of the opportunities at our fingertips.

I like moonlight punting in my Ted Baker; I like drinking champagne with friends; I love oysters (which, like most of the rest of the world, I don't eat very often). Given the chance, who wouldn't don their finest gladrags and dance until dawn on the lawns of a castle? May Balls are the

stuff of the most fantastical of fairy tales. After seven weeks of stress and work, the glamour and glory of May Week is irresistible – and I don't blame anyone for succumbing to it.

Nonetheless, I think we need to start a conversation about what this annual week of revelry represents. It contradicts our attempts to instigate financial equality across the university by virtue of the fact that some can afford to experience this highlight of Cambridge life while others can't.

When Guardian writers label Cambridge an elitist and outmoded institution, our protests are undermined by our ready acceptance of May Week. And when we tell prospective students from less privileged backgrounds that Cambridge is a place where everyone feels equal and where we're judged by the size of our brains rather than the size of our bank accounts, we're lying. There are times when the gulf of wealth be-

“
THE GLAMOUR AND GLORY OF MAY WEEK IS IRRESISTIBLE – AND I DON'T BLAME ANYONE FOR SUCCUMMING TO IT.”

comes apparent in ways that are seen in few other places. While May Balls are the norm here, equality simply is not.

I've still got tickets for Corpus and King's Affair, though. And I hate myself for it.



Noa Lessof Gendler

Can we really excuse ourselves for the sheer decadence of May Week?

The next revolution for women

“Paying the bills for changing the world begins today.” With these words, declared by comedian and broadcaster Sandi Toksvig, and met by raucous cheering and applause, the UK’s newest political force was launched.

Last week, I was among the 400 women (and a smattering of men) who descended on Conway Hall in central London for the inaugural fundraiser of the fresh-faced Women’s Equality Party.

The venue was appropriate: Conway Hall is known as the home of freethought in London, and above the stage reads the words, “To thine own self be true”. Fitting for a party looking to shake up the political landscape in a way never seen before in the UK.

What is worse, 45 years after the UK government passed the Equal Pay Act, the International Labour Organisation has reported that this gap has barely changed in 20 years, and is set to continue for another 70.

It is important because there are more men in the House of Commons today than there have been women ever elected to Parliament. Our most recently elected parliament proudly stated that it has the largest number of women MPs in history (191), but this number still remains far below the number of men (459). Before it pats itself on the back, perhaps parliament would do well to look at the work on equality that it still needs to do.

It is important because, according to official government statistics, one in five British women has experienced some form of sexual violence since the age of 16, and up to three million women experience violence every year in the UK.

But the Women’s Equality Party is also important because of what it says about British politics today. This time around, smaller parties have taken our political system by storm: Plaid Cymru was invited to take to the stage in the leaders’ debates, the SNP now holds almost every seat in Scotland, and UKIP and the Greens received over five million votes between them.

For a long time, this country simply swung between Labour and the Conservatives (with the Liberal Democrats making a featured appearance every now and then), and is now faced with a range of political options that is more colourful than

ever before. Where Britain was once in black and white, now it’s in Technicolor and 3D and sometimes the seat in front sprays water at you.

We can talk about polls and electoral reform and the demise of

finally seeing in elections are options. Specifically, new options.

In her speech at the Women’s Equality Party fundraiser, Mayer confessed, somewhat sheepishly, to having taken inspiration from a seemingly unlikely source as she went about setting up her party: UKIP.

This is probably not as unlikely as it may at first seem. Many people in this country will take issue with its policies, attitudes and people, but there is no denying that UKIP has made an impact on the political scene. It may now only have one MP, but this is on the basis of almost four million votes. The party has spoken, people have listened, and, more than that, they have taken action.

What UKIP has managed to recognise – where Labour and the Tories have not – is that the British electorate is not just ready for change – it’s itching for it. The Green Party has also recognised this, as have the SNP, Plaid Cymru, and now the Women’s Equality Party.

I left Conway Hall last week, on reflection, optimistic. I cannot claim that the Women’s Equality Party holds all the answers, and I don’t imagine its leaders do either. But I am energised about what it all means – both on a policy level, and in the wider context of British politics. It appears as though people, fed up with the status quo, are finally starting to take back some control and make change happen.

We thought the revolution would come on the 7th May, and we were disappointed when we thought it hadn’t. Now we’re seeing that it’s only just begun.

“IT APPEARS AS THOUGH PEOPLE, FED UP WITH THE STATUS QUO, ARE FINALLY STARTING TO TAKE BACK SOME CONTROL AND MAKE CHANGE HAPPEN.”

three-party politics (and we have), but what last month’s results really showed us, more than anything, is that things are changing. That this age-old democratic system, with its gilded chambers, Queen’s Speeches and morning prayers, is being forced into revolution, possibly against its will, but certainly not before time.

And the Women’s Equality Party has a great opportunity to take this revolution further. Since last month’s general election, there has been a great deal of disappointment, with 63 per cent of voters now governed by a party they did not cross a box for. Nevertheless, I cannot help but think that this is a truly exciting time for British politics. After decades of staleness, and changeovers which change very little at all, what we are



Millie Brierley

The Women’s Equality Party is both a symptom of and a cure for our politics

“WHERE BRITAIN WAS ONCE IN BLACK AND WHITE, NOW IT’S IN TECHNICOLOR AND 3D”

Toksvig founded the Women’s Equality Party in March of this year, with author and journalist Catherine Mayer. Since then, it has opened more than 40 branches across the country, and will hold its first policy launch in September. Its leaders have big plans for British politics.

This party is important. It is important because women in the UK still earn 81p to every male pound.

The end result: Exams aren’t everything

By virtue of being a Cambridge student, the odds are favourable that you have always been pretty good at exams. With Cambridge dishing out some of the most challenging offers in the country, it’s entirely possible that you spent the majority of your time at sixth form chained to your desk, constantly repeating to yourself that mitochondria are the powerhouse of the cell. Even if you weren’t a biology student, you might have other such little-known facts up your sleeve.

So when results day came around and you found you’d made your potentially ridiculous offer, you (deservedly) congratulated yourself. Your entire family told you how proud they were of you, how successful you are. You got good exam results, and now you’re off to one of the best universities in the world. Your exam results were not only a source of pride, but the key to your future.

Consistently succeeding academically is a common scenario for almost all Cambridge students, so it’s easy to see how we’ve developed the mindset that doing well in exams equals success. Thus, your sense of self-worth often derives from the attainment of success. If you’re somebody to whom academic achievement comes fairly naturally, chances are you’ve consistently been defined by your series of A*s at GCSE and A-Level.

As a result, it becomes all too easy to use academic achievement as a way of measuring your own

success. With May Week finally here, it seems the perfect time to evaluate how the year has gone. It’s important, however, to resist the temptation to use exam results as a way of doing so.

Coming to Cambridge in October was a pretty daunting prospect. It’s a time old saying that university is the place where you truly find yourself and finally learn what it means to be an adult, and there’s a reason for this – it’s very accurate.

Within weeks I learned that I needed to eat fresh fruit and vegetables in order to feel vaguely alive, that the ever-growing pile of laundry in the corner of my room wasn’t going to do itself, and that the essay I produced on two hours’ sleep after a night spent in Cindie’s probably wasn’t going to be my best work. Everyone thinks they know how to survive living by themselves, but the truth is you never really learn until you’ve been thrown in at the deep end and forced to go it alone.

So of course, there are skills that you have to learn at university that cannot be measured by your class mark. But what about your degree? It is, after all, the reason you’re here in the first place (although it may not always feel that way). Your grades seem like an obvious first port of call in measuring how much you’ve achieved in this respect. But even then, they don’t, and can’t, tell the whole story.

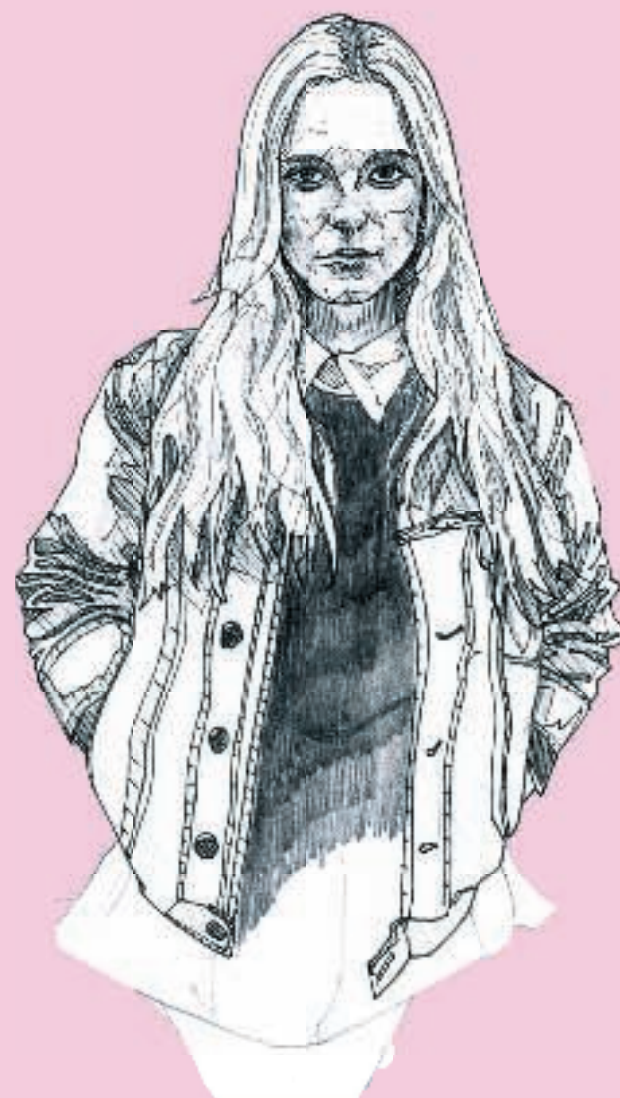
The truth is, it’s pretty difficult to demonstrate a whole three terms’ worth of learning and development

in one three hour exam. Exams test a lot of things – time management, memory, the ability to work under pressure, and whether you’ve listened to the examiner correctly to know which papers are supposed to be treasury-tagged to which.

But even academically speaking there are a lot of things that can’t be determined by exams. Exams don’t necessarily measure your intellectual interest, or the fact that despite the complaining and the moaning yaks posted to Facebook and Twitter after a 6 hour library stint, deep down you love your subject and what you do. Otherwise why would you be here at all?

There are so many other ways to determine how far you’ve come this year other than your grade. Perhaps you’ve met a really great group of friends, maybe you’ve discovered sporting, acting, debating or writing talent you never knew you had, or you might simply have won your battle against the laundry pile before your mum came to visit.

The sooner we realise that our class marks and exam results do very little in defining our worth and our intelligence, the easier it will be to broaden our idea of what it is to be successful. In such a competitive academic environment, this is easier said than done. But rather than focusing on what number you have on a piece of paper at the end of the year, think about the bigger picture: yes, exams are important, but being a well-rounded and developed person is far more so.



Millie Paine

The value in the 'unemployable'

Alex Matthews

The Telegraph recently ran a piece by its education editor who, lapping up the words of "lead" HSBC lawyer Sandie Okoro, advised students to spend their gap years working their way up the greasy pole at a sports shop or a supermarket rather than building an orphanage in China.

The reasoning is flawless, as long as you keep Okoro's target firmly in the crosshairs and forget about everything the scope is blocking out. Working at JD Sports shows you have initiative and can interact with the public (it's not me making this up, promise), but going off on a gap year only serves to prove that your Daddy is rich.

If you want to be hired by Ms Okoro's HSBC mentoring scheme, or another big bank or firm (and who doesn't...), you need to show something different on your CV. And you are far more likely to find that in your local supermarket than you are on another continent. This way you also avoid showing that you earned something with the help of your parents, because nobody in the city ever earned their great jobs through family connections either...

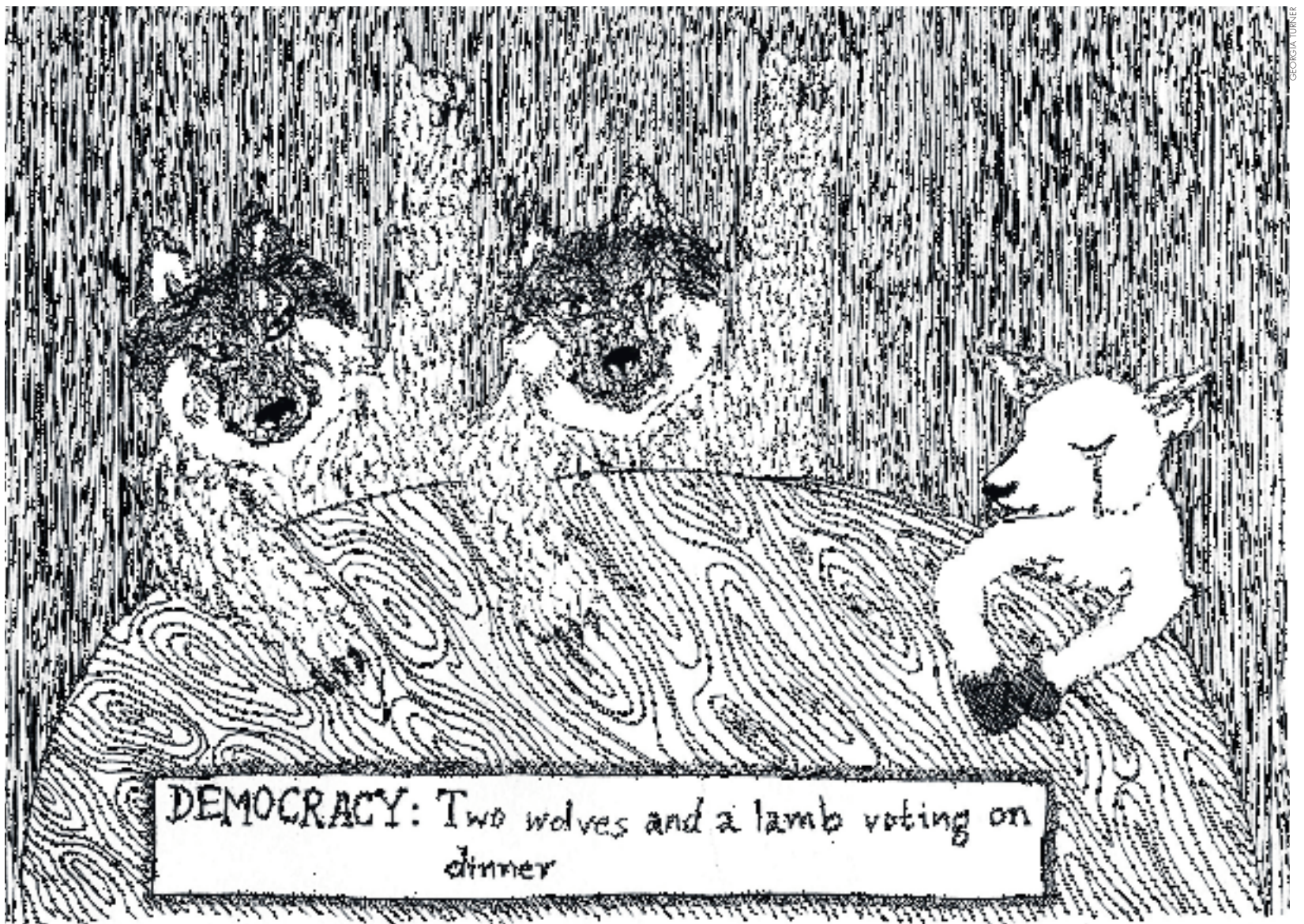
I'm going to admit it. I don't particularly agree with the Telegraph's education editor or Okoro. But it's not simply because I think they aren't looking at the whole picture. It's because they're shooting entirely wide of the mark.

We shouldn't be shrinking anything and everything down to 'employable' skills. If these are the only things that people target, we don't actually turn out to be particularly employable people. If you spend your formative years 'dealing with customers' and 'hitting targets,' you don't necessarily become better at interacting with customers. Believe me. I heard my boyfriend, who has worked since school, talking on the radio about his company's 'halo product' (not the Xbox game), and it nearly killed me. Instead, talking normally and with a little cultural understanding can go a long way.

This kind of career-focussed thinking ends up feeding into everything, from degree choices, to societies we join, and eventually how much time we spend being conned into creating an 'expert' profile for LinkedIn. As if LinkedIn is anything more than a piss-poor social media platform for posting the top-ten platitudes of employability over and over again. 'Number two: Be creative.' Sure, I'll give creativity a go once you think of something else to write.

The fact is, everything we do in our lives counts for something, and everything can be spun into a desirable skill if necessary. Living your life for your CV is so clearly the wrong way round. Live your life how you want to live it. Seek out fun experiences and enjoy them to the fullest. Think about your CV later. Life's too short.

After all, I've learned a vast array of useful skills even at university that wouldn't make it onto my CV, and the value of which employers won't immediately recognise. For example, I congratulate myself wholehearted every time I win the struggle of logging onto CamSiS, but Ms Okoro might not necessarily see that as HSBC material. Which is a shame, because it's a wonderful example of 'persistence.'



The electorate is not always right



Vincent Garton

Of course people can criticise the election result, even if one party won

Since the election, there's been a spate of opinion pieces complaining about the intolerance to which Tory-voters have been treated, the foibles of the 'loony left,' and the like.

In many cases the hypocrisy of this position is obvious: many who complain about 'political correctness' and the proliferation of safe spaces now appear to want to turn the entire British political arena into a safe space for them. The more fundamental problem, however, is that such articles almost invariably betray a distorted and naïve view of politics.

This view is best represented by the idea that the electorate cannot be wrong. Of course, we know empirically that the British public are outright wrong on many important issues—not least because of the distorted information presented us by our media. And yes, it is certainly true, as some have pointed out in response to this, that the election did not show a quantitative majority of voters behind the Conservatives. Yet there wasn't even a majority behind the Labour party in 1945. The electorate did speak. The problem with the notion of electoral infallibility is more fundamental: we are expected to accept that this superficially plausible idea is the basic principle underlying Western democracy. In fact it is anything but.

Successful liberal democracies have never shied from establishing fundamental values beyond everyday politics. The death penalty, for instance, is gone for good in Britain despite the fact that there's never been a lasting majority for its abolition.

Even when policy is decided by

electoral contest, however, we must never be afraid to speak out against 'the will of the people' when we think it's radically wrong—like the post-election protestors in London did, for better or worse. It is not 'anti-democratic' to realise that the majority believing something to be right does not make it so. It is common sense.

This is because democracy doesn't just mean carrying the triumphant views of the electors into policy: it means fundamentally moulding those views. Politics may be the art of the compromise, but at a more basic level it is also a struggle to define the truth. This means that politically active people must be prepared to accept that most people might be wrong—and to attempt to make them right.

If politicians and activists are not shaping those views, other people, less democratically responsible, already are. We should not be complaining about our political opponents being abrasive and irascible. It's a sign of the honesty that politics as a fight for the truth demands—yes, even if that honesty is calling Tories (or anyone else) rude names. Throwing up our hands and abandoning our views in the light of electoral defeat is not just intellectual cowardice, it is also negligent.

This is what focus-group politics and the relentless drive to a softly spoken centre fail to accomplish. Instead of letting the vanguard of twee banality turn politics at the highest level into a dull and endless horizon of sycophancy, we should be happy when at least some of our politicians are less intellectually compromising, less 'tolerant' of their opposition, more willing to defend

to the bitter end the fundamental principles on which they stand. This was something that the Labour party in 2015 singularly failed to realise. Not exactly a 'dictator of the electoral battlefield,' Ed Miliband.

Of course we don't need to insult people at every turn we get. But the British public are not toddlers who will get frightened and hide when an irrelevant student activist calls Tories cunts or a Labour politician uses a scary word like 'socialism'.

If it was the much-feted 'Shy Tory factor' that swung the election, we would expect live interviews (such as phone polls) to have yielded results that were even more divergent than the anonymised online polls. Yet it was—repeatedly—phone polls that predicted the result, often with significant accuracy, and were suppressed by pollsters worried about contradicting the mainstream narrative. In Labour safe seats, surely the areas where voters would be most scared of being 'outed' as Tories, Labour gained votes. Despite their calamitous performance north of the border, indeed, Labour increased its share of the vote overall.

We won't know for sure until the polling agencies have conducted their post-mortems, but it's worth being sceptical of the common wisdom.

In the 1920s, the archconservative Carl Schmitt posited that any genuine political theory must suppose that humans are evil. His idea was that politics is more complicated than just trusting the inherent knowledge of the people. It's a shame that the modern right has lost sight of the austere, corrective realism that Schmitt, for all his flaws, represented.



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ROBERT MACFARLANE

The prize-winning nature and travel writer and fellow of Emmanuel College discusses his new book with **Katherine Dunbar**

Robert Macfarlane's sensitivity to nature is immediately apparent as we start our interview walking through Emmanuel's gardens. He delights in showing me the trees, making sure to stop off at the Japanese Plane. But the most striking stop on our tour is tucked away just behind the imposing plant – the Victorian swimming pool. Macfarlane smiles and explains that in the summer this is a place where “a kind of order starts to break down,” how any hierarchy between the years seems to disappear as they share a sunny day spent on the poolside. It is clear that Macfarlane's interest in the outdoors extends beyond mere description, encompassing how human beings interact with the natural, how we respond to the outside and the words we use to describe it.

Entering his office, he warns me it is a room occupied by “a parody of an English fellow” and the space does not disappoint. Piled all over the floor are clusters of books and papers, including replies to his latest work, *Landmarks*, a book containing glossaries of local words for nature which are starting to fall out of use. He has already received responses from people all over the country with more words they want to see preserved. “People are interested in having a local language for specific places and what those specific places mean,” he explains, adding that he will collate their suggestions in a new glossary in the paperback edition.

His campaign to preserve language for the natural landscape has inspired “the kind of response I couldn't have predicted”; nursery schools have started running programs getting children to use words for nature that have started falling out of use. However, he laments the example set by the Oxford Junior Dictionary, which recently removed words such as buttercup, dandelion and willow from its pages. I ask



me that the others were actually about that as well.

“It's very easy to become fluent in your own vernacular,” he answers when I ask why he feels the need for such a dramatic shift. “When you change terrain you have to change language as well.” Looking back over his writing, Macfarlane adds that he has begun to “notice patterns in retrospect”; in his work there are “strange forms of rhythm and recurrence.” Some of the objectives of *Underland* are not so new after all; he still wants to conduct a “retrieval and salvage of a sort of semi-buried language.”

“Darkness is a weird experience,” he adds after a pause, “claustrophobia has an amazing, vicarious, affective power that touches people even more than vertigo.” Underneath cities is “where we dispose of things, bodies, memories, nuclear waste.” Yet it is also a place where we “retrieve precious things”, where Orpheus goes, where people make dangerous journeys to find lost things, “minerals, precious metals, language, the dead.” The metaphoric resonance of the underworld is huge. He wants to find out how to listen to it and part of

this process has involved “literally making sound recordings”.

Macfarlane is also keen to tell me that he has also begun exploring new media. He is “finding [his] way into working with film”, having recently adapted the book *Holloway* into a short film that will appear on Vimeo. “I'm just about to start work on the script of screenplays for a big feature length documentary about oil and ice and polar bears and climate change”. He is trying not to use the words ‘climate change’ in the entire 90 minutes. Macfarlane has spent his career exploring the “communal mark making that we do as a species,” and as readers it is worth giving thought to the way we interact with nature: the stories we tell, the words we use, the responses we have and the ways we intend to look after and preserve the world around us.

him what his vision is, what his ideal language would look like; “It seems to me uncontroversial that we should want a rich and diverse language for nature” he responds. He wants to “find and gather and aggregate these words”, to “catch and release” them into the imagination.

Macfarlane first became interested in this kind of language growing up “at the end of a country lane in Nottinghamshire” naming Hopkins, Hughes, Heany, Dillon Thomas and the Gawain-poet as influences. When he began writing in 2002 he was seeking the kind of language that could “pierce rotten diction”, something “precise but hefty.” “12 years on,” this has turned into “a larger desire to capture that language”. Losing a language for certain things and places means that we start to lose one of the most important ways we interact with those

places. We not only make sense of the world through language, but it is one of the only ways we're able to share that sense.

Macfarlane is currently working on another project, *Underland*, a book he says will take him about seven or eight years to write. It is distinctly different from his other works, but nevertheless one that follows a general “trajectory”, from mountaintops to underneath the earth.

“It's a book about darkness where the others have been about light,” he says, “a book about enclosures where the others have been about freedom predominantly, and it's a book about cities. I've spent 15 years coming closer and closer to cities – coming down from mountain tops to sort of city fringes which is where I've ended up.” He also labels it a book about death and politics. He pauses, and then, laughing, tells

HIDDEN GEMS: WHAT TO WATCH THIS SUMMER

THE STATION AGENT



“It's a film about a dwarf who tries and fails to live as a modern hermit in an abandoned train depot. It received rave reviews & awards at Sundance in 2003, but somehow failed to pick up much media traction. I find myself enjoying the characters company even more, particularly Bobby Cannavale, who plays a loveable but empty-headed goof.”

Mike Osborne

GOODBYE, FIRST LOVE



“First love is such a universal experience that it is hard to imagine a novel way of portraying it in film. Hansen-Løve brilliantly succeeds by infusing her creative choices with a subtle blend of the essence of first love: simplicity, tenderness and emotional depth.”

Sarah Anne Aarup

EARTH



“Shot in the Soviet Union in 1930, it dramatises the arrival of new machinery and collective farms to a Ukrainian village and the class conflicts that soon arise. *Earth* is such an extraordinary visual experience, all the more remarkable given its origins in a time when Soviet cultural freedoms were being vigorously suppressed.”

Jacob Osborne

ORLANDO



“Same person. No difference at all. Just a different sex.” An adaptation of Woolf's novel, *Orlando* follows the life of a boy who is born into Elizabethan England and lives through 400 years of human history, mysteriously transforming into a woman at age 30. It's a must for anyone interested in gender issues. Visually luscious, relishing the wealth and variety of historic detail without feeling tokenistic.”

Millie Foy

Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them

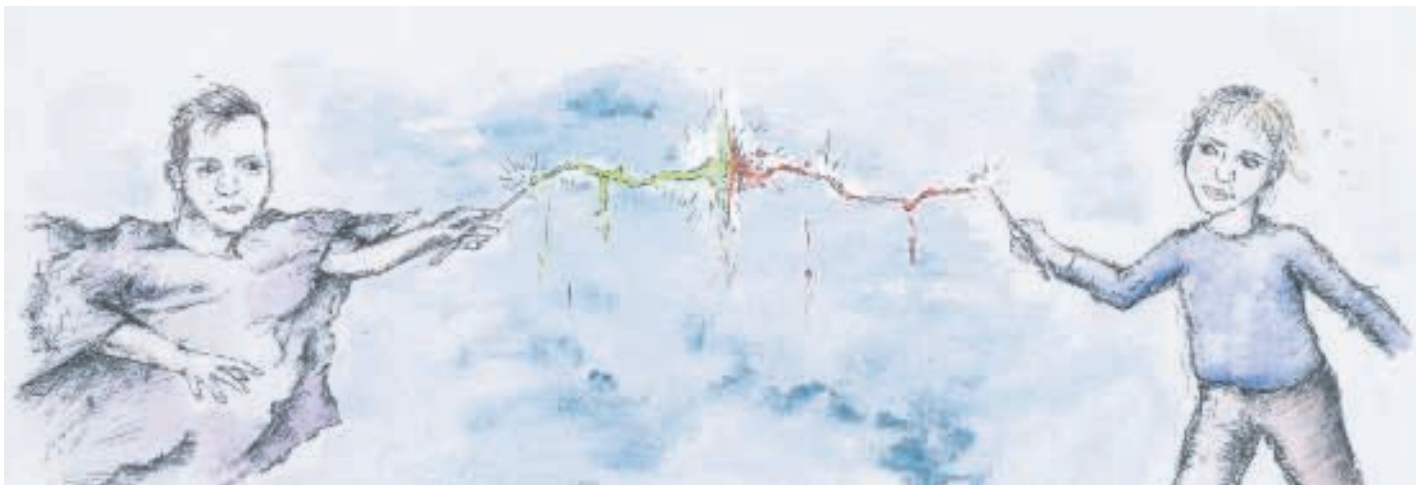
Being an overly keen Harry Potter fan I've always wondered what my boggart would be. I'm not bothered by heights, spiders are too easy to kill to be scared of and I'm normally too drunk to have agoraphobia in Cindies. Yet upon the confirmation that Eddie Redmayne has bagged the role of Newt Scamander, I have had a revelation; the prospect of *Fantastic Beasts of Where to Find Them* absolutely terrifies me.

This is partly to do with my sheer love for Harry Potter. As a child I was pretty weird; I essentially lived in a world of fantasy and imagination, and the world of magic was one I would visit regularly. If I felt alone or weird, Hogwarts was a place that made complete sense. And the thought of anyone meddling with the world that as a child meant so much to me makes me both sad and angry.

There is also a general sense of stupefaction as to why these films are being made. Although all fans upon finishing the final page of the last book or seeing the final shot of the last film had a yearning for it to last forever, there is a general admittance that an end to the series was necessary and that Rowling couldn't have given us a more poignant and perfect conclusion.

So why are Warner Bros. trying to convince us that we want more? We don't! It's not like Star Wars or the Alien when an extension to the franchise was either planned or logical. The fact is that Warner Bros. is attempting to expand a universe that has run its course.

Admittedly this isn't the first expansion of Harry Potter outside the books and the films, all of which I've kind of enjoyed. The Tales of Beedle the Bard was quirky and interesting, Pottermore was great fun up until I got sorted into Hufflepuff (twice!) and the original *Fantastic Beasts* was a perfect companion for any Potter geek. The difference with these is that they were possible to ignore; no one is going to call you out on not completing the



Varsity Screen Editor Will Roberts & Julia Craggs debate Cantab alum Eddie Redmayne's starring role in the forthcoming Harry Potter spin off

latest level of Pottermore as long you know the medical properties of a bezour. However, unless you live far from civilisation, these films will hunt you down.

Yet what annoys me most about *Fantastic Beasts* is not necessarily my personal gripes with it, but rather what it represents. The other day I watched Alfonso Cuarón's *Gravity*; a huge, expensive blockbuster with bold ideas and most importantly with no intention whatsoever of milking its potential success for future expansion. However it saddens me to say that these types of films are a dying breed; hardly any original stories are turned into event films anymore because studios are simply afraid of doing something new and innovative. And you'd have to be the least cynical person in the world not to see that this trilogy is just another corporate venture. What's worrying is that this money over quality mentality is spiralling out of control. Pixar are bringing out more mediocre sequels than ever before. There are even plans for *Hunger Games* spin-offs which would frankly be insane.

So while I admit that my aversion to these films is largely down to personal reasons, they also represent something a whole lot bigger. Because *Fantastic Beasts* and *Where to Find Them* doesn't just terrify me for selfish reasons, it's also another nail in the coffin of originality.

Will Roberts

People whining about J.K. Rowling's new film trilogy, *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*, frankly need to calm down. The first instalment is due to come out in November 2016, and already the Pottersphere is reaching peak hysteria. Yet to some of those who have grown up with Harry, and who see it as a cornerstone of their childhood, the new films are as unwanted as a ghoul in the attic.

One of their key worries is that this is a 'sell-out' move in a bid to squeeze every last Galleon, Sickle and Knut from the Harry Potter universe. But I believe J.K. Rowling has proved her integrity from the first film. For example she banished Steven Spielberg for his attempts to have an Americanised Harry. It's highly doubtful that Rowling would sell out her prized franchise, and with regular Potter director David Yates on board, it's guaranteed to be so much more than just a one-dimensional Potter spin-off.

The film will be set in New York, and will pre-date Harry by 70 years, so we'll be able to enjoy the familiar world of hippogriffs and house-elves in a brand new way, without worrying that the perfect end to the Potter series will be compromised. In fact, this new trilogy will provide us with the kind of background knowledge of the magical world henceforth only available inside Rowling's brain.

Just from a glance at the book of *Fantastic*

him comfortably alongside the acting royalty from Alan Rickman to Maggie Smith that propped up the last eight films. With Rowling as script-writer, she'll have more control over the outcome of the film than even in the Potter series. Redmayne too has a deep respect for her script, as he said to the *Evening Standard*, "J.K. Rowling's a genius, I am so thrilled to be a part of it...I've always loved that world and I feel thrilled to be invited into it."

I, for one, am also 'thrilled', especially to see a magical world of 'Magizoology' – if only to better understand Hagrid's love of magical creatures when I return to Harry. As for Newt Scamander, the main character in *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* – a character that, according to Harry Potter Wiki, began life dismembering Horklumps in his bedroom and ended up on a chocolate frog card – is, in terms of protagonist-ability, second only to one that defeated Voldemort as a baby and was saved from the wreckage by a half-giant on a flying motorbike.

Let's be sirius. Any of these arguments – that Rowling has sold out; that the new trilogy will despoil the memories of our childhood favourites; that she's milking the franchise – are ridiculous. And if it doesn't get at least a 9 ¼ on IMDb, I'll eat my sorting hat.

Julia Craggs

Zadie Smith At Pembroke

"Why are you all so quiet? Is that lectures?"

Zadie Smith casts a rare glance out into the audience, her sardonic edge cutting through the heady cocktail of post-exam languor and the body odour of early summer which fills the Judith E Wilson drama studio. A packed audience laughs nervously, the room having reached full capacity a full forty minutes before in anticipation of Smith, prize-winning author of *'White Teeth'* and *King's College* alumnus.

In the best kind of talks and interviews put on in Cambridge, themes seem to inevitably emerge, and thankfully Smith's visit to the Faculty of English on the 2nd June falls into this category, an interview that draws on her time as a student at Cambridge in the 1990s, her experience of North London as a child and of New York as an adult.

In the moments before Smith enters the room one especially nervous student in the second row, after detailing the travails of removing a particularly potent mix of cava and glitter from one's hair, earnestly diagnoses himself with *'White Man's Complex'*: the compulsion to 'shut up and listen'. His anxiety might reflect the composition of the audience, which although in typical Cambridge fashion lacks substantial representation of BME students, is predominantly female. There is also the expectation that the arrival of Smith, whose books often concern the complications gender and ethnicity bring to bear on our personal relationships, will precipitate debate on these so often highly contested issues.

But beginning the interview with a reading of her new short story, *'Escape from New York'*, serves to remind the audience that Smith is first and foremost not an emblem or a symbol for any particular cause or opinion, but a writer. The story, inspired by the urban myth of the 'escape' allegedly undertaken by Michael Jackson, Marlon Brando and Elizabeth Taylor after planes hit the twin towers on 11th September 2001, also serves as an opportunity for Smith to showcase her unexpectedly hilarious Michael Jackson impression. Cynics might suggest that Smith's subject matter demonstrates her attachment to the early Noughties, the era of her most groundbreaking success with the wild acclaim *'White Teeth'* was met with upon its publication in 2000. But throughout the interview one senses very much Smith's ambivalence towards the success of the book, which after determined questioning from members of the audience she claims not to have read since she sent it off to the publishers.



Indeed, Smith seems to consider her move to New York an escape, not only from the attention she received at the hands of the British press, but from the mentality she was surrounded by and internalised during her time at Cambridge. She talks of the constant need to please, to seek approval from peers and supervisors, exacerbated by the inferiority she felt as a student coming from a less-than-privileged background. Her ambivalence is summed up when asked if she is pleased to be back in Cambridge, she casts another of those rare penetrating, knowing looks out to the audience, murmuring dryly that 'the weather's nice'.

Smith's comments on the need she felt to write, talk and argue like a man in her time at Cambridge recall the recent controversy at Cambridge concerning the lack of firsts achieved by female students in essay-writing subjects at Cambridge, particularly in the Faculty of History. As scripts are marked blind, it was suggested that female students needed to write with greater aggression, conviction and flowery language. It seems that in this respect at least little has changed since Smith's time at the university. And she has damning criticism too for Cambridge's current accessibility, pointing out that were she 18 today she simply would not have applied, on financial grounds. She does, however, speak positively about the advantages a Cambridge education brought her, suggesting that in order to break the rules, you need to learn them first.

In terms of Smith's writing, it seems too that she is now breaking the rules she once set for herself. She is no longer so interested in the voice of the disinterested author, and not so scared any more of being seen as an 'angry writer'. In a way, maybe it is helpful that the conversation surrounding Smith is always so haunted by the spectre of *'White Teeth'*, as it marks the way in which her writing has changed, less concerned with aphorisms and sweeping pronouncements on human nature, more interested in reflecting the extraordinarily complex emotional lives of normal human beings. 'As you get older,' she explains, 'you become so less confident in summing up the entirety of a person in a couple of sentences.' As students flock out at the end of the talk, rising up from the basement of the Faculty to an early June evening, the embrace of uncertainty, in life and in writing, seems to have been the embrace of uncertainty. It doesn't escape one earnest Varsity reviewer that this is the exact kind of aphorism Zadie Smith would probably hate.

Emily Page



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May Week on a Shoestring

Ellie Olcott and Tom Wheeldon

The scene of 100s of medics stampeding out of their exam, released from the iron cage of rationality is strangely reminiscent of the hectic annual crossing made by buffalos across the Serengeti River. Once these captive animals are set free, their fellow kin come join in celebration by dancing around the released students and pouring "champagne" down their necks. Having smelly cheap cava soaking your clothes isn't, as many would assume, very pleasant. Nevertheless a talismanic symbol of freedom it brings joy to the mind of the emancipated students, topped off by the rapidly accelerating sense of Dionysian joy as their lightweight bloodstreams have alcohol pumped into them.

Euphorically walking down King's Parade, feeling on top of the world, bottle of cava in each hand, such extravagance, despite being frowned upon by the Daily Mail, is well-deserved. It is this level of extravagance, however, that many of us cannot afford to sustain.

Some have a tendency to avoid thinking about problems before they are forced to confront them. Such is the case with many Cambridge students who have buried their heads in books but given little concern for the practicalities of how much money is actually in their bank account.

You don't have to think about that during exam term, right? No excessive purchasing of VKs, no drunken rogue decisions to scroll on



Amazon and buy that unneeded coffee pecolator. The only extravagances are "Cigarettes and Pro Plus", to misquote Oasis.

But checking the bank account balance after the May ball tickets have degraded your savings is never a pleasant experience.

So how to survive May Week on a shoestring budget is of primary concern.

Strolling down the aisles of Sainsbury's and Aldi, the student shopper is able to come across some surprising deals.

Forget the Pimms and Hendrick's gin. A girl can only dream of such luxuries. The cavernous pits of Cindies and Life demands something of more reliably intoxicating substance.

Aldi's finest "Cocobay White Rum and Coconut", or "Cocobae" as it is preferably known, promises such delights. Indeed, one complimentary online shopper by the name "bellinigr157" noted "This tastes and smells just like Malibu for less than half the price!". Bell, your sense

of enthusiasm for a product gives me faith. Not that I really need it at £4.79.

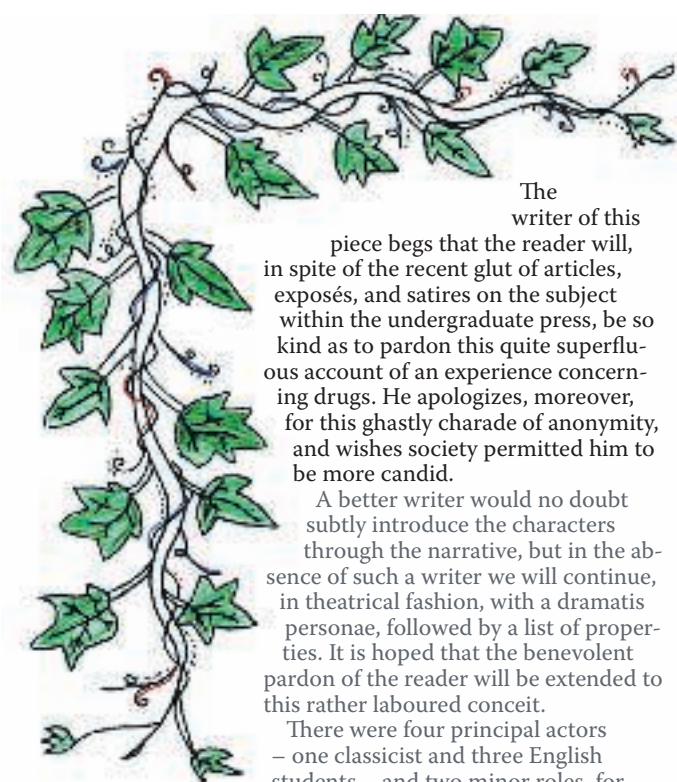
What to eat?

Sainsbury's aisles are filled with suitably cheap delicacies which will not cause too much pain to your bank account. Why not get a can of Sainsbury's Basics "Potatoes

in Water", for the princely sum of 20p. Resist the thought that the two saddest words in the English language are "Sainsbury's Basics"; the combination of potatoes in water here epitomises efficiency. Combining calorific starchiness and that perennial necessity, hydration, potatoes in water symbolise everything that modern capitalist society is about. All the buzzwords of the corporate world epitomising the cultural logic of late capitalism have deep meaning in relation to the unbelievable efficiency of "Potatoes and Water" for 20p. SYNERGY- DYNAMISM- EFFICIENCY - POTATOES - WATER.

To make the process even more efficient you could incorporate the two and have a Cocopotato predrinks session.

The authors of this article apologize to any reader who was expecting to find useful information about how to realistically survive on a show string budget. We did our best.



The writer of this piece begs that the reader will, in spite of the recent glut of articles, exposés, and satires on the subject within the undergraduate press, be so kind as to pardon this quite superfluous account of an experience concerning drugs. He apologizes, moreover, for this ghastly charade of anonymity, and wishes society permitted him to be more candid.

A better writer would no doubt subtly introduce the characters through the narrative, but in the absence of such a writer we will continue, in theatrical fashion, with a dramatis personae, followed by a list of properties. It is hoped that the benevolent pardon of the reader will be extended to this rather laboured conceit.

There were four principal actors – one classicist and three English students – and two minor roles, for a Romanian NatSci and an Austrian philosopher. The writer was, he has subsequently concluded, the classicist. Beside the pillows and blankets and rolled cigarettes, the central props were four small paper tabs, emblazoned meaningfully with yin yangs and such-like and saturated with a certain not wholly legal substance beginning with an L and ending with a D.

The crucial fact that must be grasped is that everything that happened almost precisely a day and a half before the beginning of our first year exams, which,

as astute readers will have worked out, places the action on the night of the 19th April. Returning from a sensible revision session to what was intended to be a sensible night's sleep, the writer went to talk to English student number one, who had just finished a sensible telephone call to her mother and was intending much the same. We agreed that a sensible, calming drink with a friend would not go amiss – for no more than an hour, mind, before bed. The only flaw with this plan was that English student number three is not a massively sensible person, and after a couple of hours of gin she suggested, with an enticing, Puckish glint in her eyes, that we 'do some acid'. Experience is valuable in itself, we said, citing the changeable tenets of a convenient faith.

The substance was duly sourced (don't ask me from whom), ingested, and quickly the writer's desperate attempts to continue revising the Ars Amatoria were confounded, as the words started to float from their positions and signified drifted from signifier. The four or so hours that followed (according, at least, to the testimony of the clock) were a mess of blankets, pretty colours, and unsettling womb imagery. The writer's identity shifted from ornament to eunuch to the unborn child of English student number three and English student number four. Troubled by the happy family that was developing across the room, English student number two began to see evil things in the magazine pull-out reproduction of

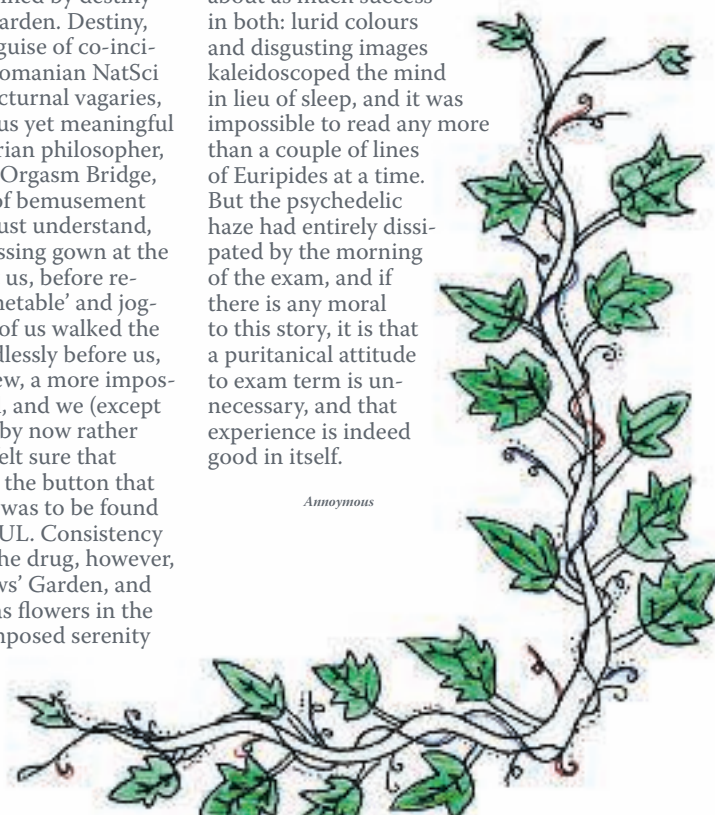
Botticelli's Calumny of Apelles on the wall, convinced herself that we were poisoning her, and decided to go for a walk, alone; she has still not entirely forgiven us for it.

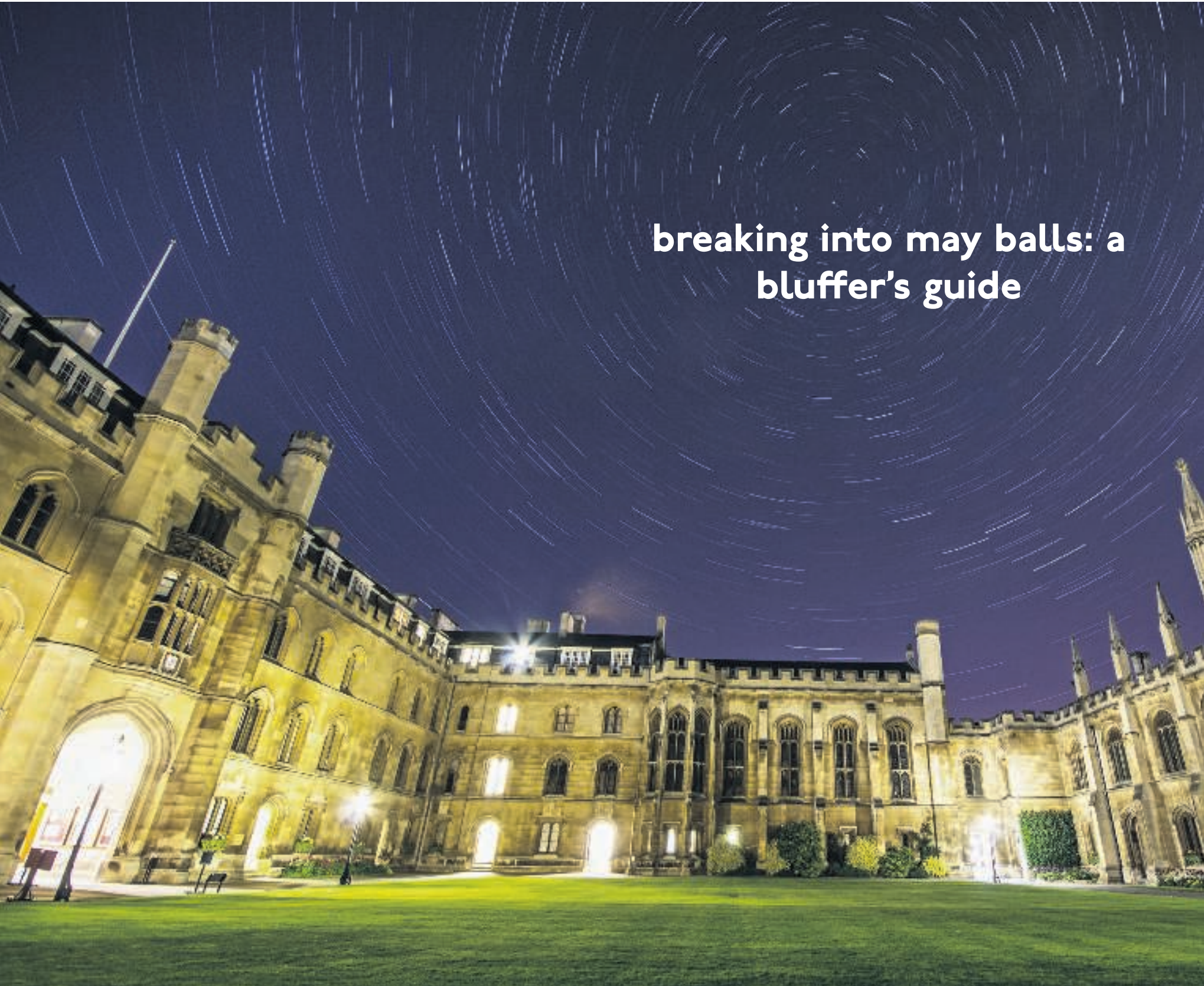
On to act two. At around dawn, the three of us that were left decided that we would also go on a walk. After much fumbling for shoes, we departed, following the course ordained by destiny towards the Fellows' Garden. Destiny, appearing to us in the guise of co-incidence, picked up the Romanian NatSci in the middle of his nocturnal vagaries, and resulted in a curious yet meaningful meeting with the Austrian philosopher, who jogged past us on Orgasm Bridge, and, with a good deal of bemusement (the writer was, you must understand, in his pyjamas and dressing gown at the time), stopped to greet us, before returning to his 'stoic timetable' and jogging away. As the four of us walked the path that stretched endlessly before us, the UL loomed into view, a more imposing erection than usual, and we (except perhaps the sober and by now rather impatient Romanian) felt sure that our predestined goal – the button that would end existence – was to be found on the top floor of the UL. Consistency not being an effect of the drug, however, we turned to the Fellows' Garden, and the rest of the night was flowers in the dawn mist and the composed serenity of the morning backs as we returned to college.

Act three should

probably contain a retributive sting and a moral lesson, and tell of how the writer's residually addled mind produced only scribbles on the exam paper and Mephistopheles dragged him down to hell. But, to be honest, all was fine. Certainly the following day was alarming, lying down in bed alternately trying to reread Medea and sleep, with about as much success in both: lurid colours and disgusting images kaleidoscoped the mind in lieu of sleep, and it was impossible to read any more than a couple of lines of Euripides at a time. But the psychedelic haze had entirely dissipated by the morning of the exam, and if there is any moral to this story, it is that a puritanical attitude to exam term is unnecessary, and that experience is indeed good in itself.

Anonymous





breaking into may balls: a bluffer’s guide

The art – the *science* – of May Ball crashing is sought by many, but mastered by few. And yet, as long as there have been May Balls, there have been noble souls defrauding those May Balls, tirelessly and selflessly working to dismantle a system that identifies as a definitive part of ‘the Cambridge experience’ an experience available only to those members of the University willing and able to shell out on costly tickets and attire to match.

One such dissident is among our number here at Varsity. And by pooling her knowledge and that of the members of the dark circles in which she moves, we have put together the *Varsity* guide to crashing May Balls –which *Varsity*, its editorship, and its board, of course, in no way condone, nor will they accept any responsibility for damages incurred by any persons adhering to the advice offered herein.

So, that said, here are your options:

1. The ‘Break-In.’ Fairly self-explanatory, but get creative. And, by that, I mean that the risk of gate-crashers abseiling into the party across the Cam and a wall guarded by Porters is already on the security briefings for several Balls on the Backs. Not for the faint of heart: if you are not happy clambering up, and hopping down from, the walls of Sidney in a ball gown and heels, and – crucially – walking off from the crime-scene like nothing happened, then this is not the approach for you.

2. The ‘Agent Provocateur.’ Sleep with the Security Officer: sometimes the only way to get them to breach their brief is to breach their briefs yourself first. Viable alternatives include bouncers, Porters, and other committee members: adjust to taste.

3. The ‘Stolen Identity.’ There were definitely two Masters walking around St. John’s last year, and that is a resounding testimony to the power of an elaborate disguise. Recommended person-ages to assume this year include would-be headliner Taylor Swift (‘Surprise!’), and treasured graduates of the year Eddie Redmayne (‘I’m a Pitt Club alumnus *and* Oscar winner: make way’) and Stephen Hawking (‘*this* is definitely a universe in which I’m on the guest list’). But you make it your own.

4. The ‘Wristband.’ An old chestnut: you wait in College with your sewing kit whilst your paying friends (fools) send back intelligence as to the design and colour the committee in question has favoured, knock up a replica, and in you saunter. Some colleges are getting around this with flashing wristbands, so add an Engineering student and some LEDs to your arsenal.

5. The ‘Tall Tale.’ You’ve spent all year studying the narrative techniques of oral transmission amongst Yugoslav bards: now is the time to apply that multi-applicable Arts degree. Tailoring to your audience is essential. For example, if you are dealing with a male bouncer, make him absolutely as uncomfortable as possible by recounting in detail how you came onto your period and had to leave for a bit. Or if it’s a committee member who’s spent the last week drowned in complicated arrangements for the Ball, start explaining your own complicated arrangement for the Ball: your principal ticket-holder is a performer at the Ball and therefore already inside, they were meant to come out and find you but their set got delayed due to complications arising from...They’ll shut you up with a wristband faster than you can say ‘impending mental breakdown.’

So that’s the game: there are ten balls left, you have ten lives. Godspeed.

VARSITY FAIR





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Edinburgh Fringe Preview

Love Handles

Billed as 'the most renowned sketch troupe of them all' by The Independent, The Footlight's reputation goes without saying. Having provided career platforms for the likes of David Mitchell, Stephen Fry and Emma Thompson, the troupe's international reputation needs no introduction. Their show 'Love Handles' will be performed at The ADC from 9th-20th June before it heads to The Fringe in August. The cast of five will comprise of Luke Sumner, Olivia Le Andersen, Archie Henderson (famous for his Severus Snape impersonation), Adrian Gray and Eleanor Colville, and they can be found at the Underbelly Med Quad at 15:45. Not to be missed, particularly for comedy-lovers.



The Cambridge shows to catch if you're heading north this August

What the Dickens!

If you're after comedy, the Cambridge Impronauts are on hand. Following numerous well-received shows around Cambridge, the country's oldest university improv troupe are transporting their Edinburgh audience back to Victorian London with their show What the Dickens!. With 4.5 stars from Varsity and labelled a "highly enjoyable, impressive display of farcical humour," this hour of audience-inspired comedy is bound to be one well spent. Find them at 12:00, August 6th-30th, performing at the Underbelly, 56 Cowgate.

Picasso Stole the Mona Lisa

A self-termed 'tragic-farce' and another CUADC production—was performed at the start of Lent Term and will take to The Fringe stage this August. Written by Cambridge student Jamie Fenton, this witty, at times slapstick, comedy was well-received in a Varsity review, labelled 'innovative, charming and highly entertaining'. It draws its inspiration from historical suspicion surrounding the renowned artist, and would be worth looking out for if you're after an hour of original comic writing. Showing from August 16th-31st at 20:50, C Venues - C Nova (Venue 145).



Midnight Cafe

Another original piece of writing Cambridge-based stage writing, Jamie Rycroft's Midnight Cafe will debut at this year's Fringe. Described by the writer as a 'tragic madness', the play draws together various shades of characters between the hours of 12am-3am in a Milton Keynes cafe. Find it at 18:00 from August 19th-30th, performed at Paradise in the Vault.

Titus Andronicus

For those Shakespeare lovers, the Cambridge Shakespeare Collective are tackling one of the Bard's most violently disturbing plays, Titus Andronicus. Expect blood, severed limbs and cannibalistic revenge, all in the adapted setting of a children's playground; Greg Forrest's direction promises chilling disturbance, so this one's not for the faint-hearted. Performed at 14:30, August 16th-31st, C venue 34.



Paintings and Cake, & Pippin

Cambridge is represented by a variety of performances at what promises to be an excellent Edinburgh Fringe this August. This, of course, is not all Cambridge has to offer: the absurdist drama Paintings and Cake and the musical opera Pippin will also take to the stage, along with several other sketch shows. So if you're heading to The Fringe in two month's time, keep your eyes peeled for these Cambridge-based shows, all of which provide their own unique forms of entertainment.



A Midsummer Night's Dream

CUADC are taking an array of shows to this year's Fringe, including a darkly twisted adaptation of Shakespeare's summertime classic, A Midsummer Night's Dream. This comedy-turned-surreal-nightmare foregrounds the manipulative power of the Gods (the mischievous Puck becomes Cupid), and their merciless power over humanity. Catch it at 15:05, August 16th-31st, C venues - C cubed (Venue 50)

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VARSITY





JOHANNES HJORTH

All the world's a garden...

May Week theatre will see an influx of outdoor shows across Cambridge, making the most of the fine weather and the idyllic backdrop of college gardens as a welcome reprieve to the likes of the ADC and Corpus Playroom. With a host of locations to choose from, audiences across Cambridge are spoilt for choice: the Maria Björnson outdoor theatre in Robinson, two different productions of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* performed in the gardens of Selwyn and Emmanuel and Benjamin Britten's adaptation of *The Turn of the Screw* at the Sidney Sussex Arts Festival to name a handful.

"The Maria Björnson outdoor theatre hasn't been used much in recent years, but it's a great space to have access to" says Tom Folley, who is directing *The Brickhouse* production of *Waiting for Godot*. "It's located right in the heart of Robinson's gardens, by the lake. That scenery alone is better than most sets."

"There's not much you're allowed to do with *Waiting for Godot*, as most of the script has

to be left untouched. It's mainly about making sure everyone knows the physical cues, where to stand, where to look.

"Thankfully the text transfers naturally to this particular outdoor space. The play has minimal stage effects, and as it's a night-time performance we are using lights, but apart from that it's as the play would be. It's liberating not to have to consider the stage effects; you can focus on what the actors are doing without distracting them from their performance."

Acting outdoors of course requires artistic alterations to the way the actors go about their roles, accommodating their line delivery and movements to the environment around them.

"With an outdoor space," explains Folley, "I encourage performers to act into that space: be louder and make bigger movements. You don't want their performance to be lost if it's windy. *Godot* needs that kind of performance indoors or outdoors, so it's another natural step."

But producing a play outdoors also presents its own directorial challenges, the most obvious of which being temperamental British weather.

"The rehearsals have been outdoors when it's been dry. That's one of the issues, if it's wet on the day we have to move into Robinson Chapel and do the best we can. It's nice to rehearse on the stage when possible, just because it is such a wonderful venue."

Venessa Upton directed *Twelfth Night* in the Peterhouse Deer Park last week, and found that her rehearsals also encountered problems that weren't weather-related.

"Directing outdoors definitely has its challenges," she explains. "Shouting lines over the lawnmower, darkness cutting short the dress rehearsal and losing your set when the gardeners decide to cut down a tree."

"The most difficult challenge I've faced as a director is finding a suitable back stage. There was talk of planting bushes. What we have settled on is the cast hiding behind trees, which are somewhat further away from the stage than we would like."

Yet Upton also agrees that outdoor theatre lends itself to minimalist set design, allowing the natural beauty of the garden to create its

own tranquil aura.

"The advantage is that the set automatically looks beautiful with a bench and some ribbon. It is also really nice when people are wandering through the gardens and catch parts of the rehearsal. Overall, it has been a great space to work with and when the sun is shining and the Shakespeare's flowing unprompted everyone is in a great mood."

Alice Attlee, director of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in Emmanuel during May Week, agrees: "Putting on a play outside is pretty dreamy. Performing the play underneath a tree actually makes a lot of things easier; the scenery is basically created for you, the atmosphere is already magic, plus you can rehearse in your performance space without having to book it out!" College grounds provide delightful backdrops that lend themselves fittingly to the May Week shows Cambridge has to offer, so make sure you don't miss out. Fingers crossed that the weather holds...

George Ramsay,
Theatre Editor

Summer Reading List

It's been weeks – no, months since you've been able to choose what to read. Up until last week, every book you picked up was to do with Anglo-Saxon burial sites and the reproductive system of fruit flies. You're not knocking it – it was interesting, and it was definitely useful for that exam question on the Great Fruit Fly Infestation of 772 – but the prospect of delving into a novel on a sunny day is now delicious. But the question is: what novel? Fear not. Once more I'm here to offer my unsolicited advice, and this time it's on your summer reading list. These are all what I'd consider 'literary poolside reads.' They're dead easy, fun, and colourful, but also, you know, actually worth reading.

The first for those of you who find the prospect of leaving Cambridge, either for the summer or for good, daunting. Dusty Answer by Rosamond Lehmann is about Cambridge students at women's colleges in the '20s, and is full of sunny golden gardens and the torment of undergraduate life in a world that's eerily recognisable. And the focus on early twentieth century feminism and women's education only makes it better.

Mrs Dalloway is also set in the early '20s. But rather than being reminiscent of a summer pining after spires of Cambridge, this one sings of a summer spent doing work experience in London. Virginia Woolf unpicks the mind of Clarissa Dalloway as she prepares for a party in the heat of June, and you'll see the London parks in their full glory, the trundling crowds in Piccadilly, and the relief of cool drawing rooms at the peak of the daily heat.

I Capture the Castle by Dodie Smith is another that's enticingly summery. There are scenes of midsummer bonfires and dancing and flower crowns on the mound of an ancient castle. And there are also some beautiful accounts of meals (I think these are far too rare in general) and strange goings on like shutting people in towers and dying dresses green. It'll probably make you cry a lot, but everyone needs an emotional purge now and then.

For another that's potentially quite emotional, consider Life of Pi by Yann Martel, if you haven't already read it. It's really about a boy's relationship with God and with himself, which is pretty big and not necessarily summery, but

the wonderful scenes set at the zoo in Pondicherry will make you want to go on holiday there, and the description of Piscine Molitor is once that really ought to be read by a pool.

The Garden of the Finzi-Continis by Giorgio Bassani is what I'm reading at the moment. I can't speak for the ending, obviously, but the first few chapters are brilliant. It's set in Italy which immediately makes me feel summer, and it's got tennis playing in the sun day after day and a great garden of cedars, limes, oaks, beeches, pines...

E.M. Forster's Where Angels Fear to Tread is also set in Italy, upon a Tuscan landscape shimmering in heat and haze. A family have a crisis, run around like headless chickens, behave horribly and screw up other people's lives. I think this is probably as close as 1905 got to Gossip Girl – albeit without the happy ending.

If you're looking for books with happy endings, here are a couple. Swallows and Amazons by Arthur Ransome is about the summer holiday you longed for when you were ten – camping without parents, pirate wars, sailing your own boat and mapping your own world. Admittedly, this is also written for ten year olds, and there are questionable attitudes to indigenous peoples along the lines of Robinson Crusoe, but on the whole it's hilarious and charming.

And then there's Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice. This is ultimate chick-lit: romantic, funny, heartfelt, hopeful. If you've never read it, now's the time. Austen didn't know it but she wrote this so that you could read this instead of 50 Shades whilst you're sunbathing by a pool or commuting in the morning rush hour.

My final recommendation is that you read something really difficult that you've wanted to read for ages. It could be Ulysses, it could be In Search of Lost Time, it could be the Iliad in the original Greek. Now's the time to tackle the monsters – you've got four months, so even if it's just a little headway, it's worth it. But for goodness' sake, don't waste this summer on Netflix or crappy magazines. Make the most of your freedom and read, or you'll really regret it once we're back here in October writing weekly essays again.

Noa Lessof-Gendler

Editors' Lunch: When Features met Magazine



Tom Wheeldon

In the outer Siberia past Christ's pieces lurks the sub-culture of Mill Road, full of independent restaurants where Cambridge's doyennes of the metropolitan elite such as Miss Cockerell go to eat, in a vain attempt to absolve themselves of a totally unnecessary guilt at growing up in nice houses in Notting Hill. There are many fine culinary establishments around here – the Turkish restaurant Tulip being its delectable jewel in the crown – but Norfolk Street's Zhongua Traditional

Snacks is not one of them.

Issy suggested that I liked it more than the impression I gave, as epitomised by the look of furious dismay in the picture to the left. Admittedly, the pork and prawn dumplings were exquisite – the crispy texture on the outside combined delectably with the juiciness of the prawns and the tenderness of the pork. They pulled off the tricky feat of putting two subtle flavours together, without one overwhelming the other.

But this single success serves only to highlight this place's appalling culinary standards. Churchill's famous description of Russia as 'a riddle, wrapped in a mystery, inside an enigma' springs to mind when one is confronted with the question of how Issy or anyone could describe the seaweed as 'delicious'. It looked and tasted like it was picked up from the beach at Skegness, imbued with the flavour of the nuclear waste and raw sewage with which it was carried from the sea onto the shore.

After attempting to eat this monstrosity, I moved onto the egg and 'edible fungus' dumplings (they may well feel the need to specifically designate it as 'edible' because so much of their

food is inedible). Instead of utter egregiousness, I found bland mediocrity. It was like Aldi ravioli, with the same absence of flavour, the same sweaty yet starchy exterior – but I suppose nothing could have prepared me for the following course: pig's ears. I was expecting a crunchy batter coating – like that which the best Italian restaurants put on the finest squid the shining deep blue Mediterranean sea can offer. Pig's ears are a horrible enough food as it is, but Zhonghua made a pig's ear of cooking them. It was like trying to eat my own measly, unchewable biceps. It was a culinary experience down there with the vile moment in that vile book American Psycho when Patrick Bateman takes his girlfriend out for her birthday, gets a urinal cake from the toilets, asks the chefs to coat it in chocolate and subsequently tells her it's a special dessert, and so she actually eats it.

If you want dinner amongst the edgy vibe of the Mill Road earlier, I would ardently recommend – with every fibre of my being – that you opt for the fine Anatolian cuisine at Tulip, instead of exposing yourself to the cruel and unusual offences to the palate on offer at Zhongua.

strumming a Ukelele, on another a noisy family, and dotted around were a number of Chinese students eating separately and alone with their headphones plugged in. We were directed to sit down next to one of these – to Tom's utter amazement.

Zhongua is a popular pre-Picture-house hang out for the dark horses of the Cambridge student scene. Those rare birds who live outside College on Mill Road populate this place frequently, the types who wear black, smoke roll-up cigarettes and slurp their noodles over a volume of Isherwood. We ordered the seaweed salad (Wheeldon

The Third Man



"Like the fella says, in Italy for 30 years under the Borgias they had warfare, terror, murder, and bloodshed, but they produced Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, and the Renaissance."

Carol Reed's The Third Man was first released in 1949 at the height of the Hollywood fashion for Film Noir, a genre that produced films with titles like: The Big Combo, The Big Heat, The Big

cheered up when he thought it would be old fashioned crispy seaweed, and flagged visibly when he realised it was actual kelp, tossed in a zingy chilli and soy dressing, eaten like spaghetti, and quite delicious). I ordered for both of us, like a fat businessman would for his lady companion, with relish. Along with the kelp, we had the egg and black fungus steamed dumplings, the prawn and pork fried dumplings, a tom yum soup and – this, perhaps, was pushing it – the five-spice pig's ears. These last were, well, cartilage-y. I sort of thought they would be like dry, crunchy crackling, but they really were just like

Sleep and This Gun for Hire. Movies that followed a reckless, sometimes even feckless, law enforcer or haggard private detective. Think Humphrey Bogart, or even the much overlooked Dick Powell, as Philip Marlowe, or Alan Ladd and Veronica Lake double-crossed and on the run, on the East coast. This was the Film Noir audiences knew and, in their multitudes, frequented on their trips to American multiplexes.

The Third Man, by contrast, was set in Europe – war torn Vienna – in the chaotic aftermath of the liberation, when allies fenced city corners off from one another, and black-markets soared. The

munching on bits of tragus. They went cold incredibly quickly, and weren't any better for it.

But the dumplings, soup and salads are the understated triumph of Zhongua, with their zinging freshness and savoury depth. If you don't mind sharing slightly sticky tables with Mill Road's finest, you'd be hard-pressed to spend more than a tenner on a varied and satisfying lunch. Drag yourself away from your collegiate bubble and over to Norfolk street. Take a Wheeldon-esque companion while you're at it: he might actually enjoy it.



Isobel Cockerell





SCOTT RUDIN PRODUCTIONS

'happy as a lark' hero, Holly Martins, is a dime-a-dozen novelist of western romances. His latest, 'The Lone Rider of Sante Fe', bears a striking resemblance to the story of the film itself. As is recalled, in Martins's novel, "The lone rider has his best friend shot unlawfully by a sheriff. The story is how this lone rider hunted the sheriff down." The question is: who is the sheriff and who is the lone rider?

Graham Greene, the tormented Catholic novelist, wrote the novella of the film before the screenplay and was no stranger to generic films like this (he penned the script for Ladd's This

Gun for Hire in 1942). Reed, on the other hand, had a history in directing British comedies called things like Bank Holiday and Penny Paradise, with only a few outings in the thriller/noir vein. This first writer/director collaboration, consisting of a main cast of American actors (Joseph Cotten and Orson Welles) that first got people's attention with Citizen Kane in 1941, made The Third Man unlike many other generic noirs of its time. The hero doesn't get the girl. There's no double crossing or back stabbing revenge. Only the shadows of broken men in a broken city, and Anton Karas to play the zither.

At the end of the famous carousel scene, one which sees unfamiliar faces in old friends, Harry Lime (Welles) says to Holly Martins (Cotten), "In Switzerland they had brotherly love - they had 500 years of democracy and peace, and what did that produce?" Martins is quiet. "The cuckoo clock." Lines, supposedly improvised, resonate with the film as a whole. It asks the question: from where comes the greater art, war or peace? By the end of the film, no one really knows.

William Hutton

London Road



Between 30 October and 10 December 2006, five female sex workers were murdered in Ipswich. London Road is not their story however, but that of the community around the tragedy, as residents face down the ensuing media fanfare, whilst also trying to comprehend how a murderer dwelt amongst them. The script is entirely made up of verbatim transcriptions from interviews conducted by writer, Alecky Blythe. Also it's a musical. And Tom Hardy's in it. Briefly.

Olivia Colman gives the stand-out performance as Julie, who is by turns charming, tender and cold—but unfortunately the only character that shines through the Creature Comforts-esque interview format. The rest merge into one undifferentiated mass of quips and opinions. The camera has a shifty habit of trailing certain figures—the shaggy-haired Dodge in particular—as if we were being asked to suspect them. This distrustful Camera Eye makes sense theoretically,

but in practice it's just frustrating; the screen-time these stooges soak up only highlights their lack of depth. Tom Hardy's one scene feels like a throwaway: material Blythe was determined to incorporate without much purpose.

The film's distinctiveness lies in its intersections of documentary-style realism with theatrical movement (being originally a stage-show at The National) and of course the music. There are some great numbers: school-girls played by Eloise Laurence and Meg Suddaby weave, singing, through shops and cafes, half terrified, half fascinated, that the killer might be such

The Haunted Bookshop

Truth be told, I have never bought anything from The Haunted Bookshop. Perhaps this is because it is not, if you'll forgive me, one of my chief haunts: I always seem to forget that it's there on the way to G. David or Market Square or some other destination, and just brush past it. Perhaps it is a matter of pricing: at this time in term, when most of us attempt to throttle back on our spending and retreat into a tepid austerity before May Week, £8 for even a little old out-of-print A6 hardback requires a bit of justification.



SWAN STOCK

many things that gives The Haunted Bookshop its appeal. No spare inch has gone to waste, and yet you know that they would always have room to stock more, even if it means squeezing Aristotle in beside Beatrix Potter. As the lady behind the desk, overseeing my fruitless browses, noted: "You can never have too many books."

Only in the last week have I become a regular visitor, if not customer, no doubt leaving many a finger-mark on many a page. Places like this force you to make some pretty agonising choices, like leaving behind a beautifully compact, two-volume edition

of Milton's poetry, the price as eye-watering as the font size. That's probably unfair: The Haunted Bookshop houses a lot of antique, hard-to-find treasures, rarities that have increased and will continue to increase in value. Of course, the best reason

But The Haunted Bookshop, situated on the same sidestreet as the Indigo Café and the Corpus Playroom, is one of Cambridge's most enigmatic and enticing curiosity shops. It is absolutely tiny, smaller than my room in college, but it makes the most of its impressive surface area-to-volume ratio. A bookshelf forms every wall, and another bisects the floorspace. Barely-controlled chaos prevails. Any grand design or plan is well disguised: beyond one shelf which seems to uphold the great tradition of English poetry, and its neighbour, home to particularly large and valuable artefacts, it is very difficult to predict where a title should be. This is not a plea for more organisation; in fact, this random architecture of dusty spines is one of the

-perhaps the only good reason - to buy a book is to read it; it is a pleasing bonus if it should turn out to be a financial investment.

But as for the real, nagging issue of this secondhand booksellers, I can only give secondhand report. 'Why is it called The Haunted Bookshop?' I asked the lady behind the desk. "Because it's haunted", she replied. "A woman in Victorian dress comes down every night after closing time, and smells the violets."

I did not enquire about the violets, but I had noticed a roped-off staircase, twirling up to a higher level, piles of books resting on the lower steps.

Harry Cochrane



BBC FILMS AND CUBA PRODUCTIONS

or such a man. The verbatim method, at its best, lends song-lyrics trippingly playful rhythms, while at its worst, lands us with messy, grating refrains that ultimately beg the question why these Dictaphone-recorded voices had to be stuck to so faithfully.

There is of course a conspicuous absence: that of the victims. Fellow sex workers make a brief appearance, but the tale is not theirs. In the view of the residents, they and their way of life constitute a level of human degradation comparable to the murders themselves. A cheery-faced husband calls them "slags", to the laughter of his wife, and indeed the cinema audience. This tendency culminates with Julie – icy and measured – as she announces that the victims are better off dead; that she would shake their killer's hand. London Road has been billed as uplifting – Blythe herself calls its story

'redemptive' – yet leaving the auditorium I was struggling to find a sense of hope. It's supposedly about community – but what community, and whose? The street party crowning the road's renewal seems more like a timely travesty of Cameron's Big Society, replete with optimism that deep-running social problems might be glazed over with flower-boxes. The film is undeniably ambivalent (sex worker Vicky is played by Kate Fleetwood, who originally played Julie in the stage production, undercutting in a subterranean way Julie's malice) and yet I struggle to gauge to what extent.

While London Road trips over some of its quirks, it remains an intriguing musical and a disturbing vision of contemporary society. It's probably worth seeing, if only because you're unlikely to see anything else like it this year.

Jim Hilton

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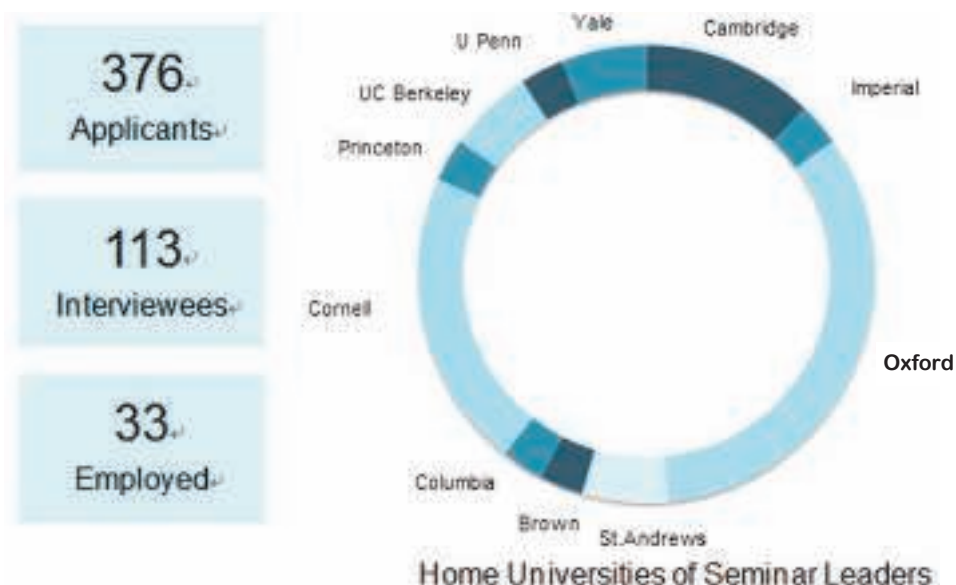
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Racing to the top: Ned Boulting

ITV's Cambridge alumnus, Ned Boulting, reflects on his career

Zack Case

Sport Editor

Ned Boulting has worn the Yellow Jersey for ITV's coverage of the Tour de France since 2003. He began at Sky Sports in 1997 as a tea boy and left in 2001 after working on the popular show 'Soccer Saturday'. He then joined ITV's football coverage team, before making the switch to cycling. Along the way, he has won the Royal Television Society Sports News Reporter of the Year in 2006, written three books on cycling, produced and directed documentary programs on Denis Bergkamp and Steven Gerrard, and even covered the Oxbridge boat race.

And his race began at Cambridge, where he studied Modern Languages at Jesus College from 1987-91...

Or not. Boulting spent most of his undergraduate years at the ADC, where he "bounced from one production to the next." He loved the freedom which student dramatics entailed: "there are no grown ups in charge; the animals are running the zoo."

Such an investment into drama came at a cost. "I was barely involved in my studies, to be brutally honest. I did the bare minimum to keep myself ticking over."

Boulting's interest in football began to develop during his time at Cambridge, which directly correlated to Cambridge United's surge up the Football Leagues. He remembers going to the Abbey stadium with friends to watch the matches, as well as the feeling of antipathy from 'townies' since they were "not necessarily made to feel welcome."

Growing up in Bedford, a town without any professional football teams in the vicinity, Boulting "wasn't massively into sport" and "certainly didn't play it very much."

In spite of this, he acknowledges that it was hard to avoid the biggest sporting events. "I generally liked my sport and liked the big occasions. The seed was sown and bubbled away, but the gene only really expressed itself later in my life."

After completing his degree, Boulting moved to Hamburg where he became deeply fond of a local club called FC St. Pauli, which he describes as "the alternative left wing anarchist football club of the German Leagues - and they play in Brown!"

By his mid-twenties, Boulting was hooked: "I was a football fan to the point of obsession." But his life lacked any real direction.

In 1997 everything changed. "When my incompetent grand master plan to be an actor dried up, I fell into working for Sky." He started off as a tea boy, working for £50 a week.

By 1998 he was a reporter. "That is how it works sometimes in the media. If you show willing and initiative things can happen quite fast."

Boulting worked on 'Soccer

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IF YOU SHOW WILLING AND INITIATIVE THINGS CAN HAPPEN QUITE FAST

Saturday' with "some of the best" in the business. Namely Jeff Stelling, whom he describes as "unparalleled", possessing an "encyclopaedic knowledge" of football.

After joining ITV in 2001 where he continued similar work with football, a groundbreaking opportunity arose in 2003. ITV had secured the rights to cover the Tour de France and needed somebody to present it: Boulting was their man.

"My sporting professional career turned on an axis when I was introduced to the Tour de France." At first Boulting describes how he was quite out of his depths: "It took literally years to understand the sport. I wasn't quite prepared for how absolutely stunning the Tour de France is as an event."

He claims that he has been to World Cup finals which "hadn't even approached the Tour in terms of grandeur and global interest. It is immense, uncontrollable, unfathomable, over-complicated and foreign."

He explains cycling as "as sport within a sport, stories within stories

- like cracking a code, and a lot of it was written in a foreign language." With 198 riders and 198 narratives on any given day, the Tour de France is "so much more interesting and engaging than football."

The state of cycling in 2015 is very different to where it was in 2003. While Boulting concedes that it remains a fairly minor sport, when he started working it was "an invisible sport, right up there with croquet, badminton and chess, so unimportant in the national scheme of things. And now it is everybody's second favourite sport."

This "unimaginably successful fairy story" began in 2008. "Cavendish won four stages of the Tour de France, and Hoy, Pendleton and Wiggins all came back from Beijing with a flood of gold medals. The best cyclists in the world were British. Britain had a global superstar in the Tour de France and Britain dominated the track."

"Cavendish continued to become the greatest sprinter there has ever been, and then Team Sky formed (2010), stating that they wanted to win the Tour within five years. They did it within three (2012), and again the following year." The rest is history.

But it is not all about reporting and presenting. "It is important to keep my life varied."

I never imagined that I would be able to write a book", he said, and yet he is currently working on his fourth. He is also an acclaimed director and producer, which he describes as "great fun."

Boulting also used to cover the boat race. "At Cambridge I held active antipathy towards the boat clubs and rowers," but after covering the race extensively claims a "new found respect for the Cambridge rowers."

Reflecting on his career, he will remember jousting with Lance Armstrong most clearly. "I was captivated by him at first. But I was very quickly aware of what was going on - all the journalists knew - but we didn't have the silver bullet fact that would nail him and stand up in court. We could only raise an eyebrow and express doubt."

"Funnily enough, he quite enjoyed it. He was a clever man. When he dominated the sport, he felt so impregnable, so indomitable because he had so many friends in high places. In a way the entire sport depended on



him, and he knew that nobody could touch him.

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THE ENTIRE SPORT DEPENDED ON HIM AND HE KNEW NOBODY COULD TOUCH HIM

"And he was bored of sycophants and he always used to seek out the challengers. He would single me out and say "go on, what have you got for me today?" One in ten times I might land a blow."

Has cycling been permanently tainted? "For some people it will be", Boulting accepts, but the Armstrong scandal was perhaps a blessing in disguise. "Cycling needed to be singled out because it had by far the biggest problem, and today cycling is doing ten times more than any other sport to combat doping. I think it is cleaner now than ever in one hundred years. That doesn't mean that it's clean - just cleaner."

Boulting too recognises the "human cost" of competition. "Athletes are human beings at the end of the day, and the real tragedies are the lesser athletes who are on a UCI minimum wage and need to feed their families. They

are locked down in a system where you can only compete if you play ball."

A perk of Boulting's job is the chance to witness the biggest events live. He says that he will never forget Liverpool's comeback in the Champions League Final in 2005 or the 2006 World Cup Final when he happened to glance at Zidane's infamous head butt.

Yet the free tickets are also one of the pitfalls of the job: "attending sporting events feels like work." Boulting actually enjoys going with his youngest daughter and buying a ticket to watch Charlton Athletic.

As the conversation draws to a close, Boulting concludes with a word of advice to aspiring journalists - even if "the days of secure jobs on newspapers are numbered if not vanished."

"There will always be value in having the right contacts. That is what journalism is - knowing the right people and being trusted so that people will talk to you."

"You can sit at your keyboard and be a blogger and a warrior all you like, full of opinion and bluster, but you have to get out there and chat to people and build up connections and contacts."

Boulting will soon be presenting his 13th Tour de France. He certainly has ridden a long way from the Cambridge United-supporting thespian of his university days.

"I'm not sure if Cambridge really prepared me for any of this, but maybe it did - in a funny way."

The football season in a nutshell cont.

Continued from back page

Caretaker Managers:

"Never mind with the world's best, we have got them in our ranks" was once the thought process behind Barcelona's hiring of new coaches, and since it proved so successful, it seemed that the mid to lower table Premier League teams thought just the same.

Yet for neither John Carver nor Chris Ramsey was it a Guardiola-esque performance of unknown qualities, but rather more reminiscent of the reality of throwing a small child into the deep end without armbands.

Although the former managed to survive drowning, largely thanks to the rather hapless performances of his rivals, both did little to enhance their reputation as full time generals rather than second-hand lieutenants.

The success of Tony Pulis, the

veteran of clubs in plight, or of the reputable Dick Advocaat, may remind clubs that however likeable they may be, the assistant manager may not be the best bet for future success.

Underrated Managers:

Vilified during his presence, but yearned for in his absence, Newcastle fans must be feeling like the Germans of the 1930s who had decided to pass on the liberal decadence of the Weimar Republic in return for a Nazi Germany after Alan Pardew left to mastermind a brilliant end-of-season spurt with Crystal Palace, while Newcastle plummeted to new depths of misery.

From dartboard pin up on Tyneside, this season was the perfect time for Alan Pardew to remind English football that however much he may be disliked, he may actually be a quite talented manager.

Tim Sherwood will also enjoy a summer where he managed to walk the walk as well as the talking the talk. His Aston Villa team seemed revitalised after the stale, turgid regime of Paul Lambert, and it only adds to the fact that his maverick behaviour on the touchline might also provide the team with much needed impetus.

Other managers with a broad chest this summer will be Nigel Pearson, the first class graduate from Alan Pardew's School for the hot-headed but successful manager Sam Allardyce (or Allardici as he would like to style himself), who led West Ham to mid-table comfort after taking over with them in the Championship, and of course Mark Hughes and Ronald Koeman deserve massive credit for their overachievements.

The Greats:

The winners, and deservedly so in a season where pundits tried to find moments of crisis to create some title-race excitement in a season of quasi-domination, Chelsea were already the favourites after a solid first year under Mourinho where the foundations were laid for next year's success, and this year the 'little horse' turned into a veritable thoroughbred.

The squad effortlessly combines practicality, quality and balance. Even more disconcerting for the opposition is that the team seemed to grow in confidence and quality with every passing victory.

Whisper it, and quietly so in case there are any other disbelieving Londoners supporting Chelsea or Tottenham around, but this Arsenal team seems to be the most complete since the last era of silverware glory.

In a season where results were only count from October onwards, Arsenal

would be atop the Premier League tree together with Chelsea (more or less). A second FA cup triumph consolidated another year with a trophy, and however pathetic their Champions League exit may have been, there is a sense that another team, and maybe another era, is growing around Arsene Wenger.

Honourable Mentions:

Caps must be doffed to Louis van Gaal, who may have taken the first step in Manchester United's rehabilitation to respectability; Ryan Bertrand, who smuggled himself into the PFA team of the year after years of derision due to his start, and win, in a Champions League final alongside such footballing greats as Salomon Kalou; as well as the underrated, or previously unappreciated, English strikers of the future, Harry Kane and Charley Austin.

Sport

The football season in a nutshell

A rewind through the 2014/15 season

Felix Schiichter

Sports Correspondent

It may not have been a classic Premier League season. The title was over by late April, but in theory by the end of February. The relegation battle did nicely for a while, but any end of season round which features a 3 minute break to carry players off the pitch smacks somewhat of anti-climax.

Nevertheless, there were enough winners and losers to praise and commiserate for our off-season entertainment.

Manchester United's star signings:

Last year it was almost time for an obituary on the career of Juan Mata, and while he may have redeemed himself, United's recent trend for turning players of world renown into tripe for at least a season continues.

When Di Maria loses his starting spot to Ashley Young and Radamel Falcao turns into a figure of Torres-like sporting ridicule, clearly something has gone wrong with Manchester United's star acquisitions.

When Falcao joined in August, a memorable quote from Phil Neville read, "It doesn't matter where he fits it, just play him and he'll score goals." But Falcao was unable to fulfil these prophecies – or Phil Neville is rubbish at punditry.

With all the energy of Duracell bunny but all the finishing qualities of one too, he showed little on the pitch to vindicate the much-celebrated move. Although Di Maria occasionally

managed to punctuate the season with flashes of brilliance, his mediocrity serves as a reminder to any potential star considering a move to Manchester in the summer.

The Premier League:

Gary Lineker, pointing to West Brom's victory over Chelsea, said that we had the best league in the world. "In no other league does this happen." It may be that Gary Lineker simply missed Freiburg's (eventually relegated) win over Bayern Munich, but even if excitement still reigns over the Premier League, quality seems woefully absent.

It was another year, in a worryingly long line of them since 2011 (excluding Chelsea's anomaly in 2012), in which the Premier League failed to properly impose itself on important Champions League proceedings.

Something has gone wrong and it is certain that, Chelsea aside, few Premier League teams will have a realistic continental chance next season.

It has been proven that these things come and go in cycles, but there is little to doubt that currently the Premier League is in the doldrums of European football.

Even the ageing sick man of Europe, the Serie A, had a Champions League finalist and two Europa League finalists.

A European Overview:

The European Leagues finished more or less as expected. Barcelona, Bayern Munich, PSG and Juventus are all serial winners in their own countries and each managed to cruise to the title relatively unhindered.

PSG probably had the toughest time against a resurgent Lyon and a strong-

starting Marseille, but their quality shone through.

Bayern and Juve both made equally good cases that their respective leagues may be a touch too easy for them.

Barcelona were without a doubt the stand-out team of the year, and fully deserved a stunning treble after a few years of unfulfilled ambition.

In the smaller competitions, Andre Villas-Boas continued his success with teams expected to win the title in leagues with (relatively) little competition, and Dnipro proved to be the surprise of the Europa League, although winners Sevilla are establishing their names as perennial favourites for the award of best non-excellent team in Europe - bets on the likelihood of them to finish third in their Champions League group and win the Europa League again are probably currently suspended.

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A group of the Corpus cricket team take a break during a practice session at the college's Leckhampton site

SIMON LOCK