

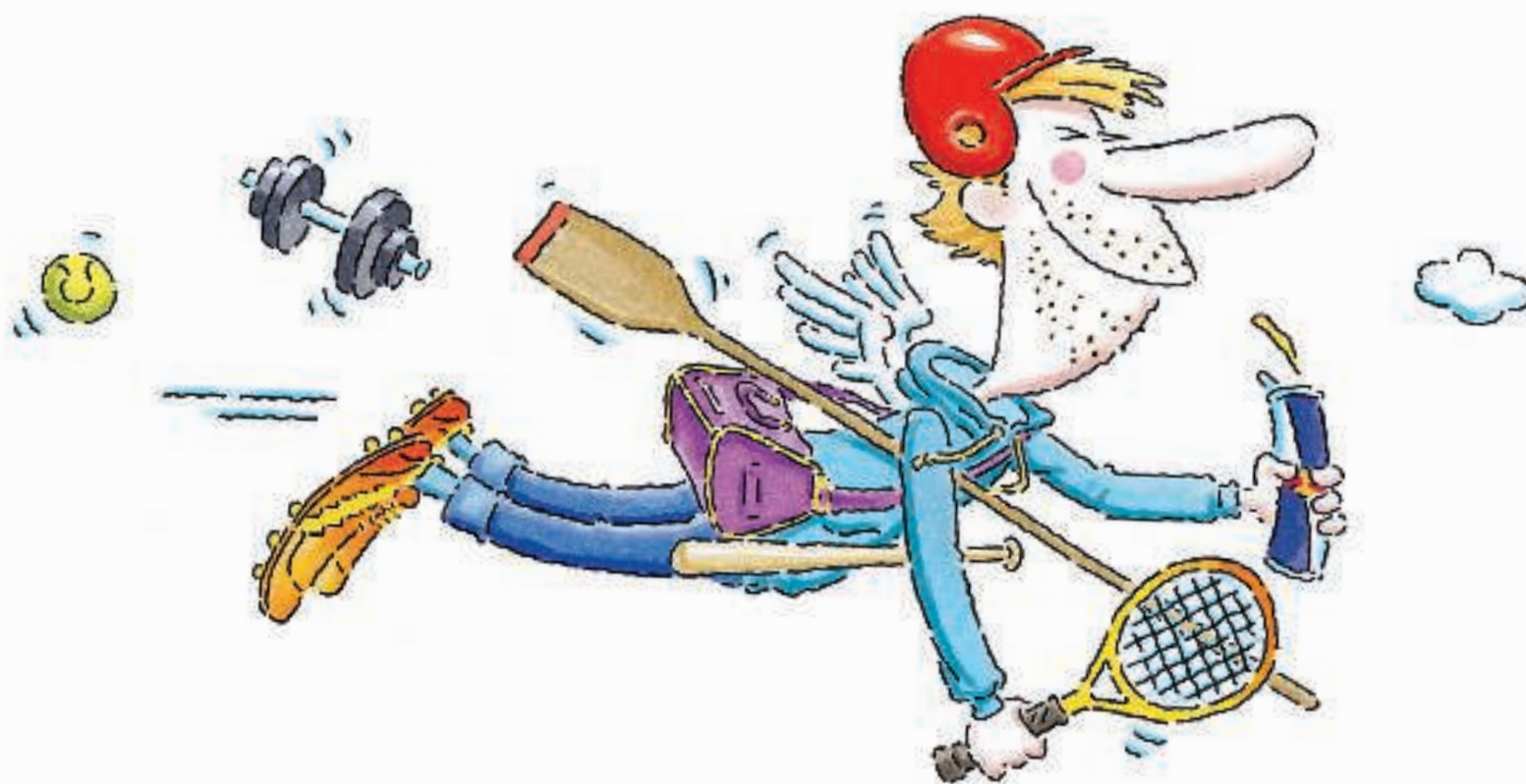
Number 793  
Friday 9th October 2015

# VARSITY

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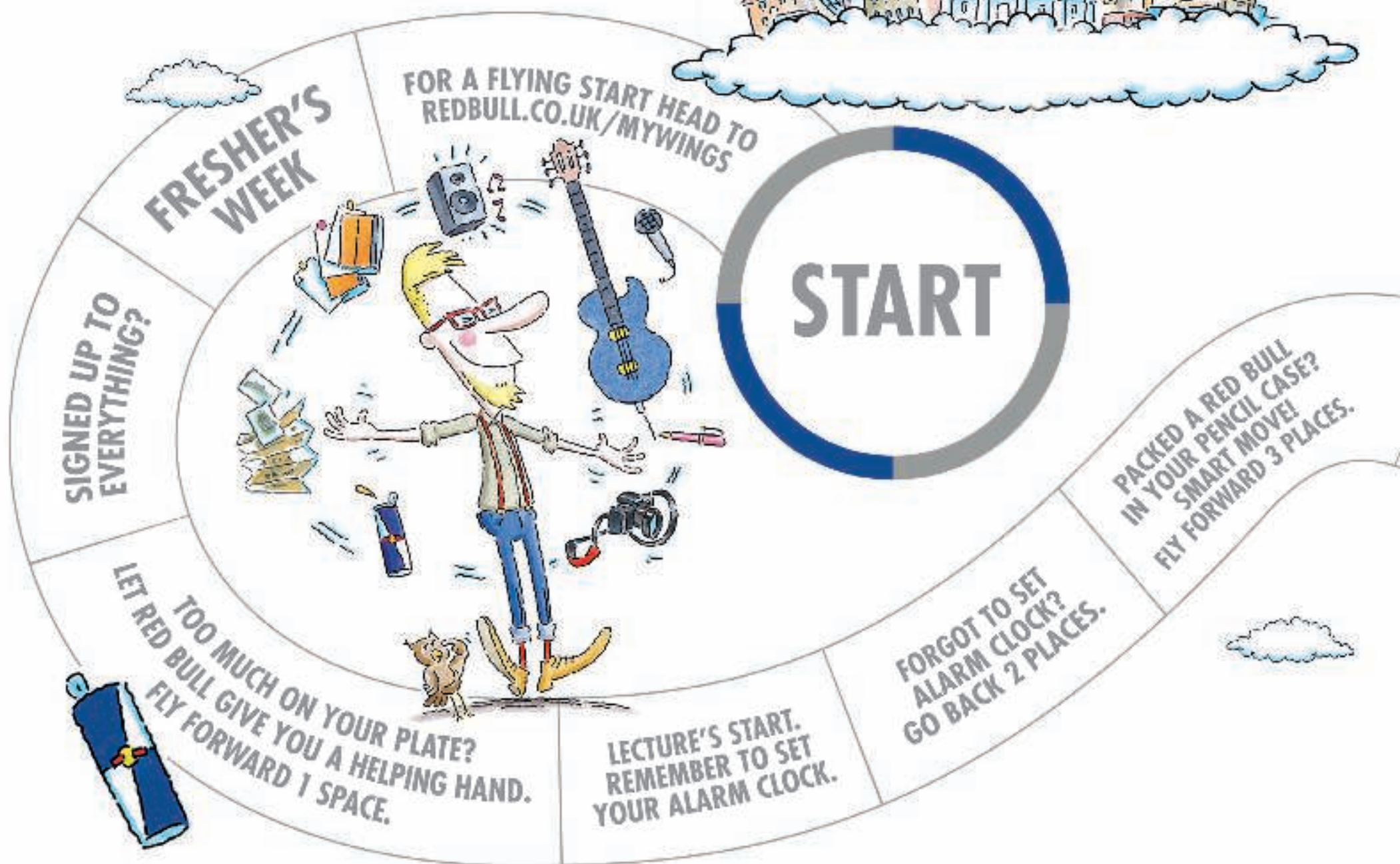


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Number 793

Friday 9th October 2015

# VARSITY

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## Dark times at the UL

Morale sinks to new low as “badly treated” staff suddenly made redundant in bindery closure



**Tom Wilson**  
Senior News Editor

All 18 members of the bindery at the University Library are to be made redundant after dramatic restructuring proposals were approved by management.

The plans, which were approved by the Library Syndicate, were circulated to staff on Wednesday, when they were informed of the closure of the bindery

department.

Staff members have alleged to Varsity that they received no prior consultation about the redundancy plans before being told on 7th October.

A university spokesman confirmed that the Library Syndicate had approved these changes to preservation and collection care as “reserved business”, which are not included in publicly available minutes.

In response, one bindery employee told Varsity: “Staff feel that the matter

### – EXCLUSIVE –

has been handled secretly, and very badly.”

The move comes as part of a broader restructuring of the University Library’s Preservation Policy.

In the most recent version of the policy, released to management in May 2015 and obtained by Varsity, it states: “Where possible all materials, modern and antiquarian, are preserved in their

original format.”

The document also notes that “the [conservation and preservation] measures taken will be within the constraints of budgets, staffing and other resources”.

A university spokesman confirmed to Varsity that this policy change, “along with the shift from print to electronic publication”, directly resulted in the closure of the bindery.

“The revised approach will place a new emphasis on the long-term

preservation of material in its original state, retaining original features such as binding as well as the printed content for future research,” he told us.

Despite its publication date of May 2015, one member of the bindery told Varsity that they and their colleagues had only been informed of the closure on Wednesday.

The spokesman admitted that the consultation process with affected staff was currently “ongoing”.

*Continued on page 5*



# In defence of the right to criticise

Last week's *Varsity* story about an unexpected black hole in CUSU's finances in the 2014-15 executive year, which required the organisation to seek a bailout from the university to make up for lost income, caused such a stir with the students' union that it released an official response outlining its position, accusing us of "affront[ing its] structural foundations".

This week, we report on the sudden closure of the bindery at the University Library and the consequent loss of 18 jobs. Soon-to-be former bindery employees allege they were not consulted about the closure of the department, despite internal documents dating from May obtained by this newspaper strongly suggesting that the closure had been long planned in advance. Discussions, it seems, fell under the purview of "reserved matters" and hence were not logged in publicly available minutes, leaving staff members to find

out about the long-planned closure on Wednesday and red-faced university officials admitting that staff consultations are still ongoing, despite the closure plan already having been approved.

Both of these stories have one significant feature in common: they have involved bringing to light compromising information, embarrassing to an institutional organisation.

This is not to suggest for a moment that a funding gap is morally equivalent to laying off 18 members of staff, allegedly without prior consultation, a decision which also brings to an end a long tradition of in-house book binding and repair in the University Library. The latter involves livelihoods, families and long periods of employment and craft, when the former involves a deficit that was easily plugged by university resources, albeit with "emergency funding".

But shining a light on CUSU's financial difficulties and the university's concerns that it might not have confidence in future CUSU budgets is important, not only for illustrating the scale of the sums involved that the students' union spends on behalf of undergraduates, but also for shining a light on how the organisation is funded. It is perfectly coherent to point out a funding crisis and also to believe that a students' union should not have to finance itself using dubiously named publications like the *Guide to Excellence*. What if the university provided more money upfront, so the union didn't have to go cap in hand in a crisis?

No serious newspaper can engage in malicious campaigns against charitable organisations who have at their heart the desire to help. But reporting is not a vendetta, and it is vital that students be aware of embarrassing facts about some of the university's most important institutions.

## NEWS

### Hupupdate!

A place in the POLIS department for former Liberal Democrat MP for Cambridge, Julian Huppert (*page 4*)



## SCIENCE

### The Space Hotel: coming soon

Weekly columnist *Charlotte Gifford* returns to explore the opportunities for holidaying amongst the stars (*page 9*)



## INTERVIEW

### Mike Bartlett

The renowned playwright chats to *Naomi Obeng* about his controversial new play *King Charles III* (*page 10*)



## COMMENT

### Online activism can only take us part way

*Chris Waugh* on action beyond clicktivism (*page 11*)



## FEATURES

### A pretentious guide to wine

Heading to formal hall? *Daniel Jennings* advises on a range of wines for the occasion (*page 18*)



## REVIEWS

### 80 Days

*Michael Davin* gives full marks to the new PC game which recreates *Around the World in Eighty Days* (*page 25*)



## Varsity Squash

Varsity will be holding a squash for aspiring writers, illustrators and editors on Sunday 11th October at 6:30pm in our offices at 16 Mill Lane.

Come along, or email [editor@varsity.co.uk](mailto:editor@varsity.co.uk) to find out more.

## Letters to the Editor [editor@varsity.co.uk](mailto:editor@varsity.co.uk)

Dear Editor,

After reading the latest version of *Varsity*, I was dismayed to see a basic error on page two of the supplement entitled 'Culture'. It is 'Cambridge Universities Labour Club', not 'Cambridge University Labour Club' – crucially because our club also includes members from Anglia Ruskin University. One such member is even on our executive team. This error is not only wholly inaccurate; it implies the Club is inward looking when we are doing our very best to represent all Cambridge higher education students. I am not speaking on behalf of the club, but my own outraged self.

Yours sincerely,  
Colm Patrick Murphy  
CULC member and former executive officer

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Varsity, 16 Mill Lane, Cambridge CB2 1RX. Tel 01223 337575. Fax 01223 760949. Varsity is published by Varsity Publications Ltd. Varsity Publications also publishes the *Mays*.

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We will also be hosting a networking event to provide students with the opportunity to meet one of our partners, Philip Yates, and a number of our bankers to find out more about the Firm. The event will be held at The River Bar Steakhouse & Grill (Quayside, Cambridge CB5 8AQ) at 7:30pm on Wednesday 28th October. Please confirm your attendance via email to [Cambridge2016@pwpartners.com](mailto:Cambridge2016@pwpartners.com)

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# Cambridge alumni top international Nobel laureates list

**Joe Robinson**  
Deputy News Editor

The University of Cambridge has been named the top UK university for attracting and educating international students who go on to win Nobel Prizes, research conducted by the British Council has shown.

The British Council study, released in the week that the Nobel Institute announces this year's award-winners, found that over a third of Nobel Prize winners were educated in the UK.

In the 114 years since the award began, 860 individuals have received a Nobel Prize. Nearly two-fifths have spent time at British universities.

The 50 prizewinners who studied in the UK compares favourably with the United States and Germany, who had 37 and 23 Nobel Laureates respectively.

17 of the UK-educated Laureates received their prizes for physiology and medicine, eight won for physics, eight for chemistry, seven for economics, and five each for literature and peace.

The University of Cambridge topped the charts of British institutions which had awarded degrees to those who would go on to win Nobel Prizes, with 18 Laureates to its name.

The University of Oxford has 11 Laureates and the London School of Economics and Political Science has five. The most recent Cambridge-educated Nobel Laureate is Michael Levitt, a biophysicist who is currently professor of structural biology at

Stanford University.

Levitt, who studied for his PhD at Cambridge in the 1970s, was awarded the 2013 Nobel Prize for Chemistry for his role in the "development of multi scale models for complex chemical systems".

“

**WITHOUT QUESTION, NOBEL LAUREATES HAVE CHANGED THE WORLD**

Past international Cambridge alumni and teaching staff who went on to win Nobel Prizes include economists Joseph Stiglitz and Amartya Sen, chemists Roger Y. Tsien and Subrahmanyan Chandrasekhar, and poet and playwright Wole Soyinka.

Describing these achievements, Jo Beall, the British Council's Director of Education and Society, claimed that Britain's "global reputation for excellence" attracts overseas students.

She added that "The British Council celebrates UK alumni and, without question, Nobel Laureates have changed the world. Their journeys would have begun with their studies at university, so it's wonderful to discover that, for Nobel Laureates who went abroad to pursue their education, more studied in the UK than anywhere else."



Joseph Stiglitz and Wole Soyinka both spent periods in Cambridge

## Hupupdate! Julian takes up teaching role

**Jack Higgins**  
Deputy News Editor

Julian Huppert, the former Liberal Democrat MP for Cambridge, has returned to a role as a University Lecturer at the Department of Politics and International Studies (POLIS) for the next academic year. Huppert previously held a University Lectureship in Physics, before being granted leave in order to perform his duties as an MP, and is now being seconded to POLIS.

Huppert, after losing his seat in the general election in May this year, will be involved with

the Master's in Public Policy, which was added to POLIS's curriculum in 2013. The course aims to strengthen "the inter-connections between science, research and innovation in public policy."

The former MP said that his role also involves training "policy leaders of the future" in "how to make sensible policies." He will lead a module based on the scientific method and evidence, believing the latter to be crucial to "drive what is done by governments".

A POLIS spokesperson told *Varsity* that Huppert would be "tasked with widening our policy networks" amongst his other

duties.

Huppert will be conducting his own research into the use of evidence within policy making. He is also thought to be studying the nature and role of privacy in the modern world.

"I've been working for many years on privacy in our digital age – including successfully leading the fight against the so-called Snooper's Charter – and will use this time to develop that further," Huppert told *Varsity*.

Huppert will also help out with other graduate teaching, and will be reflecting on May's general election result in a talk to Clare Politics Society on 27th October.



Huppert is expected to be involved with graduate teaching

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# Redundancies “handled secretly and very badly”



## “Everyone is disappointed”

The Library Syndicate, whose membership is primarily appointed by the Council and the General Board of the Faculties, is charged in the university's Statutes and Ordinances with “exercis[ing] a general oversight over all matters relating to the administration, staffing, and financial resources” of the library.

Jobs at the Conservation Department, which is linked to but distinct from the bindery, are said not to be affected.

A university spokesman told us: “We are working with staff to seek to identify alternative roles for them within the university to minimise the impact of the proposed closure.”

*Varsity* understands that six jobs in the Conservation Department are available to bindery staff as part of the restructuring.

“

**“WE ARE WORKING WITH STAFF TO SEEK TO IDENTIFY ALTERNATIVE ROLES FOR THEM WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY”**

However, one bindery employee told us that the jobs require a skill set “significantly different” from the jobs in the bindery, and that recruitment for these posts is being opened to candidates other than those who are losing their jobs.

“It is just a case of people applying for jobs if they want them,” they told us, alleging that “no training ha[d]

been offered” to bindery staff to help them relocate.

“Everyone is disappointed... Most are going to have to look elsewhere.”

Robin Mansfield, an ex-manager of the UL bindery, paid tribute to staff and the department.

“When I consider the skills lost and the wonderful service the Bindery provided to Library readers over a period of probably in excess of eighty years, it is a great loss to the Library and to Cambridge University as a whole.”

## “We all feel like we’ve been badly treated”

Tensions with staff have flared in response to the creation of three new senior management positions at a time when the library has to find three per cent budget cuts for this year.

Only one of these positions has so far been filled. Instead of sourcing recruits through the university's Human Resources Division, the university is paying “executive recruitment” firm Berwick Partners to source candidates.

The document *Shaping the Future of Library Services* circulated to library colleagues, updated in August 2015, outlines the “enhanced senior leadership capacity” the managers will bring.

“The Library is working with Berwick Partners (Odgers Group) to help us recruit our three new senior leadership team roles,” the document states.

University Librarian Anne Jarvis outlines “two main first steps” in the programme *Shaping the Future of Library Services*, neither of which mentions the planned closure of the bindery despite being published four months after the Preservation Policy.

“Staff do not feel listened to or

appreciated,” one former bindery employee told us. “The relationship between management and employees is strained, which is not surprising considering the quite appalling way some people have been treated following previous restructuring of UL departments.”

A former member of staff told us that the closure of the bindery “will be a blow to staff morale at the University Library”.

“However, it was already quite low to begin with,” they said.

They also spoke to *Varsity* of their disappointment that money was being spent on the appointment of three news senior managers and on initiatives like the recently released ‘SpaceFinder’ app, first announced in 2015, which allows students to find study spaces matching their particular preferences, at a time when an entire department is being closed and budgets are being squeezed.

“

**“IT IS A GREAT LOSS TO THE LIBRARY AND TO CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY AS A WHOLE”**

The university declined to respond to questions regarding why there had been a five month delay between the issuing of the new Preservation Policy and its circulation among staff members, whether they could guarantee that alternative jobs within the university would be found for those affected, and whether other jobs and departments in the UL were safe from the restructuring plans.

**3%**

Value of the budget cuts to the University Library of which the closure of the Bindery forms part

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Number of staff directly affected by the proposed closure of the bindery department

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# Uni considers plugging streetlight funding gap

**Joe Robinson and Keir Baker**  
News Correspondents

Decision-makers in the upper echelons of the University of Cambridge are considering directing funds towards keeping lights on in the city after the County Council said it would go ahead with a night time switch-off of street lights unless it received outside support.

According to plans released by the County Council, from 1st April next year street lights on footpaths and residential roads will be switched off entirely. Those which are located on main traffic routes will only be dimmed.

There is significant concern regarding the proposed lighting switch-off between midnight and 6am, as it is believed that this could increase the potential for sexual assault and other crime across the city, due to the lack of light. These worries are exacerbated by the fact that Cambridge is a city where students often travel late, both studying and going out.

Councillor Markus Gehring, a lecturer in Law and fellow of Hughes Hall, suggested that the proposals could create a "gender imbalance" in certain subjects, with late lab hours, long travel distances, and a history of "very serious" incidents potentially putting off prospective female students from applying for courses which are being relocated to the West Cambridge site.

"I think it is completely unreasonable, especially in the area around the

colleges," Gehring said, "I think we've had some criminal incidents in dark spots that were very serious and we've now improved the street lighting, and now we're switching it off." He argued that the reduction in night-time lighting was "unbelievable".

Meanwhile, in an open letter to Stephen Count, the Conservative Leader of Cambridgeshire County Council, Labour City Councillor Ann Sinnott criticised the County Council's plans as "ill-advised" and described them as likely to have a "disastrous impact" on Cambridge residents.

She highlighted how lack of lighting "facilitates crimes such as burglary, theft from the person and also rape and sexual assault". She asserted that reduced levels of lighting would "arguably breach the County's obligations under the Crime and Disorder Act".

Cllr Sinnott also emphasised how the combination of poor transport infrastructure – namely potholes, which are the responsibility of the County Council – and reduced lighting for cyclists will lead to an "inexorable rise" in cycling accidents.

In 2009, in response to a series of incidents, Trinity College introduced a minibus service for students.

In response to these concerns, the university is considering funding the illumination of street lights between 12 am and 6 am in order to ensure student safety.

If it chose to make a financial contribution to the funding of streetlights, the University of Cambridge would be following in the footsteps of other community groups which have

done so, such as Cottenham Parish Council, who are considering contributing £800 to keep 62 lights on.

A spokesperson from the University of Cambridge confirmed that "the collegiate university is committed to the safety of its students and will work with local authorities as appropriate as their plans develop".

The Conservative-led County Council intends to cut back on lighting to save money, with budget cuts requiring the Council to make savings of £41 million. A spokesman explained that the Council would be "happy if the university wished to fund the period when the lights are proposed to be switched off," and also explained that "lighting will remain where they use CCTV, in the centre of the city and traffic routes."

The County Council has also defended the plans on their website, where they emphasise that "street lighting is not a statutory service that the County Council is legally required to provide" and that they will "monitor any increase in [crime] levels on a regular basis".

The County Council has also claimed that concerns over safety have been overblown, stating that "evidence supplied from other local authorities who have implemented part night lighting street light operation to date is that there has been no increase in crime or accident levels which could be attributed to the introduction of part night lighting".

These claims are corroborated by Balfour Beatty, the private firm which operates Cambridge street lights on a

PFI contract with the County Council. Representatives of the company, speaking at a South Area Committee of the council on 30th March claimed that "there was no correlation between crime levels and hours of darkness".

However, the findings of this report, and the evidence used to support the claim that reduced lighting at night has no impact on crime levels, have been criticised by some.

Lib Dem City Councillor for Queen Ediths' Tim Moore, who was in attendance at the South Area Committee,

claimed results of the cited report were "unclear" and did not contain "enough evidence to say" that there would be no impact on safety.

On the other hand, research from May this year by the Department of Population Health at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine concluded that there is no evidence to suggest that a significant change in the levels of crime or traffic accidents can be attributed to the switching-off of street lights.

*Comment: page 11*



Parker's Piece, which has been the scene of previous incidents

## Women's conference marks 50 years of Lucy Cavendish

**Jack Higgins**  
Deputy News Editor

The new President of Lucy Cavendish College is to commence her tenure by holding a conference to "evaluate the current experiences of women", and will include an "outstanding" panel of women such as former Labour deputy leader Harriet Harman.

Jackie Ashley, a former journalist for ITN, Channel 4 News, the BBC, the *New Statesman* and the *Guardian* and the incoming eighth president of the college, said that the achievements of Lucy Cavendish students she's met are "inspiring".

"These women are aiming high and I have no doubt that they'll succeed. They highlight just how far women have come in a generation – but I do wonder if it's far enough."

Lucy Cavendish – the only women's college in the UK for students aged 21 and over – is also using this event to celebrate its 50th anniversary.

The distinguished guests scheduled to appear at the event are women at the frontline of politics, journalism, business and public life.

Alongside Harman, this includes *Guardian* columnist Polly Toynbee, Carers UK CEO Helena Herklots and, and author Jane Hawking who will discuss women's experiences "in the workplace and at home" alongside former Culture Secretary Maria Miller and deputy chair of UKIP Suzanne Evans.

Feminist activist and journalist Caroline Criado-Perez OBE, who was previously accused of "persistently attack[ing] trans people and other feminists online" by members of CUSU's Women's Campaign, has also been invited.

Criado-Perez's invitation to a Women of the World event in 2014 was labelled "totally inappropriate and offensive" by the group, though

her attendance was undisrupted.

The Lucy Cavendish conference, entitled 'Where are the women?', will consider the "choices and challenges" professional women face and how these can be overcome, including discussions on issues at work and on social media, before concluding with a debate on how gender equality can be achieved.

The former culture secretary, Maria Miller, is also expected to appear at the conference, despite having previously come under fire for her approach to abortion legislation.

The event is due to take place on 15th November at the Cambridge Union. Tickets can be purchased from the ADC Theatre online.



Jackie Ashley, the new President



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## NEWS IN

## BRIEF



### Pointless man in taxi dispute

Richard Osman, co-host of the quiz show *Pointless*, has criticised Cambridge taxi firm Panther, tweeting on Saturday to say that “one of your cabs, number 303, just drove off when he saw his passenger was in a wheelchair.” Panther’s general manager has rejected Osman’s claim, insisting that the car involved was not a Panther cab.



### Memorial unveiled for late Corpus master

A memorial stone for Oliver Rackham, long-standing fellow and former master of Corpus Christi College, has taken pride of place in the college chapel. The stone is due to be officially dedicated during an Evensong service next Sunday.



**In this together:** Actress Gugu Mbatha-Raw addresses the UN’s gender equality campaign ‘HeForShe’ at the Freshers’ Fair on Tuesday

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# The cutting edge of cancer treatments

## Beating cancer at its own game: the engineered virus

**Saeed Kayhanian**  
Science Editor

Bioengineers are taking inspiration from viruses to synthesise super-specific targeted vessels for chemotherapy drugs.

James Swartz and his team at Stanford have been re-engineering viruses to bring us closer to using virus-like particles in modern cancer therapy. They have added structures that enable a virus to bind to specific cancer cell markers, and have modified the existing structure to make it less likely to activate the body's normal immune system. Four years ago, funding agencies said it couldn't be done.

These findings highlight the potential for viruses to guide us towards the next big steps in drug therapies, in particular for cancer. As is widely known, current treatments such as chemotherapy and radiotherapy have many different side effects because they harm healthy cells in the process of destroying tumour cells. If treatments become even more specific, not only could they increase effectiveness, but they could also reduce the impact of side effects.

Most current cancer therapies rely on molecules which target a particular characteristic of tumour cells. Such characteristics include rapid growth, division and replication (sometimes leading to a lump appearing where it shouldn't be), resistance to 'self-destruct' signals from other parts of the body, and the secretion of chemicals which change the cells nearby so that the tumour can invade or increase blood supply. Some side effects arise because other cells – such as hair follicles – also show rapid growth and replication. Hence why hairloss is a side-effect of cancer treatment.

These 'hallmarks of cancer' go hand-in-hand with chemical changes within tumour cells, and most importantly, changes in the cell membrane. For example, in stomach cancer, cells demonstrate marker-molecules on the surface called MS57A and MS57B that would not usually be present.

So modern cancer therapies target these markers. Antibodies are the cells that make you immune to a disease by being able to recognise foreign markers, and drug manufacturers can modify these highly specific cells to recognise cancer cells. The limitation? Antibodies lock onto the surface of the cells, but do not enter; rather, they may kick-start an immune response that ideally destroys the cell – but may also make you feel like you're fighting off the 'flu'. This is sufficient for some cancers. Some types of lung cancer can be treated like this, for example.

“

THE FIRST STEP HAS JUST BEEN MADE

A real breakthrough in targeted cancer therapy would be a treatment that can enter cancer cells – and only cancer cells. Cell membranes, however, are very good at allowing through only the things that should be going in and out. Only a small, uncharged molecule could possibly slip through the membrane without a channel. Again, this works for some cancers, such as chronic myeloid leukaemia. But viruses are up to a hundred times bigger than a small molecule. Nevertheless, they consistently succeed in invading cells and releasing viral genetic material inside.

What properties do viruses have that make them so useful for cancer research? In short, their self-assembling structure, the fact that they can be directed to the appropriate cells, and their ability to contain more protein

– which is usually their genetic material, either DNA or RNA.

Self-assembly is highly useful. The protective protein coat that contains the genetic material is called a capsid, and consists of many proteins which interact with each other, attracting or repelling, to form a stable closed container. In the lab, it is possible to put individual capsid proteins alongside each other and wait for them to assemble into the recognisable virus structure. Bioengineers like Swartz and his team can therefore modify the capsid proteins, and then see how they actually function when assembled as one. When synthesised this way, they are called virus-like particles.

Natural viruses are not like antibodies, which target specific foreign bodies only. Rather, because they have to integrate into cell metabolism to replicate, they are usually specific to a species. In the lab, bioengineers can add tags to the structure – like address labels, determining which cell type can be entered, and thus where the virus-like particle will deliver its contents. Swartz and his team found that replacing the charged regions (that make viruses soluble) with 'spikes' not only reduced the chances of an immune response kicking in, but also provided a convenient point to tag with address labels.

Finally, the feature which makes all this bioengineering worth the effort: where viruses contain DNA or RNA, virus-like particles could contain chemotherapy drugs. The significance of such a highly specific delivery system could be huge for cancer research.

We're not close to that yet; a lot more investigation needs to be done. The work in Stanford shows that virus-like particles can be engineered to be safe and useful vessels. The next step towards a viable cancer therapy will require further modifications so that the self-assembling capsid forms around a medicinal 'package'. But the first step – showing that virus-like particles could be a feasible cancer therapy – has just been made.

## The NanoKnife: future or false hope?

**Charlotte Gifford**  
Science Correspondent

The NanoKnife, a method using electrical impulses to destroy cancer cells, has been hailed as a pioneering technique for cancer patients where surgery poses too high a risk, but clinical trials are yet to prove its effectiveness and safety for humans.

The benefits of NanoKnife seem obvious at first; if a patient's tumour is adjacent to a vital organ or blood vessel, traditional surgery may be deemed too dangerous to be carried out, whereas the ultraprecision of the NanoKnife means that it can target these tumours without damaging healthy tissue. Cancers of the liver, prostate and pancreas are among those most frequently treated by the probe-based therapy.

Currently used by several hospitals around the world, the NanoKnife kills soft tissue tumours through the application of an electric current, leaving the healthy surrounding tissue of the body unharmed, and making it a

safer procedure than heat-based treatments such as radiofrequency ablation therapy.

The NanoKnife procedure involves no open incisions. Needles are guided through the skin using ultrasound or CT scans while the patient is under general anaesthetic. Once the needles are strategically positioned around the tumour, an electric current of up to 3,000 volts is passed between them. This causes the cell membrane to rupture, inducing 'natural cell death' (a process called apoptosis).

Little or no pain is experienced by the patient. There is also a much quicker recovery time compared to alternative treatments; after the operation patients typically will only be required to stay in hospital overnight.

Yet concerns have been raised by doctors that the adoption of the technology has not followed the established procedures for making sure it is safe and actually effective in patients. In the United States, many hospitals using the treatment have used a legal loophole which allows them to adopt NanoKnife without subjecting it to the rigorous clinical trial required of other aspiring cancer treatments. Doctors have also voiced concerns about the dangers of high electrical voltages on the human heart, and there have been cases in which patients have suffered punctured arteries after undergoing NanoKnife treatment. Unless these concerns are addressed, it will not be possible for the technology to be widely adopted by the medical community.

For many patients whose cancer is in the advanced stages, though, the procedure seems to be one of the last available rays of hope. A significant advantage of the NanoKnife is that if the cancer does return, the treatment can be easily repeated. As with all new cancer treatments, clinical trials should be an essential part of its adoption. While some members of the medical community are certain of its effectiveness, others are cautious, and cancer patients keep living on bought time. A speedy decision on the future of NanoKnife is essential.



## The space hotel: coming soon to a moon near you



TECHWATCH  
WITH  
CHARLOTTE  
GIFFORD

When we first landed on the moon, it was pretty exciting stuff. Such a huge breakthrough in space travel understandably led to high hopes that people would regularly return, and that

more and more would visit until it became a standard holiday destination. Out came books and films with a vision of a galaxy colonised by humans, where anyone who fancied a change of scenery need only hop into a spaceship and within minutes they'd find themselves landing on some distant planet. The optimism was adorable; seriously, we can't even fly across our own seas without hours of standing around, getting herded through security and waiting for luggage, all the while surrounded by increasingly disgruntled family members.

So far, companies like Virgin Galactic, "the world's first commercial spaceline", have had a hard time taking off. As of yet, no private company has sent astronauts into orbit. But given the vast amounts of money that are being poured into these projects, it seems only a matter of time before wealthy thrill-seekers are cruising through space on the holiday of a lifetime. And those pursuing this starry-eyed dream are already thinking about the next big step: hotels in

space.

So how do you make a hotel in space? Apparently, by printing one. For the past few years the European Space Agency has been exploring the possibilities of 3D printing buildings on the moon. In one of the designs an inflatable dome is covered with printed layers of lunar soil, which form an incredibly strong but also very lightweight shell around the dwelling, protecting inhabitants from radiation and extreme temperatures. The end product looks a bit like something out of Minecraft. 3D printers have made the prospect of towns on the moon much more feasible, as these robots are a hell of a lot easier to transport, and could build using the moon's natural materials.

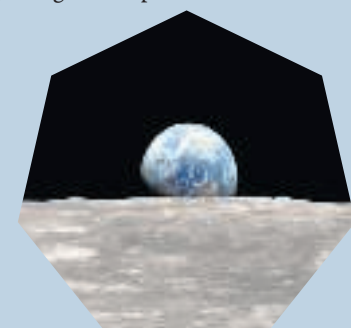
The chance to stay in a lunar hotel is something few of us would turn down. You'd wake up hundreds of thousands of miles from Earth to absolutely unforgettable views, and get to venture out into a world which only a handful of people have ever explored before.

But let's be honest. Is this really the best place for a summer getaway? It's a bit dark in space. And I'm not knocking the moon, it's pretty spectacular, but that's because it's the moon and not because it's especially nice to look at. In fact, as landscapes go, it's fairly bleak. More to the point, in these lunar hotels, alcohol would be banned. So in many ways you might have a better night staying in a Premier Inn.

It almost seems that the more uninhabitable an environment is, the greater our desire to transform it into our own personal playground. We've got hotels underwater, underground, in the desert – so why not put one in space? After all, clearly the best thing space has to offer us isn't resources or the chance to distribute some of our growing population, but a decent holiday for a few minted celebs.

Space travel will never be as accessible to the masses as many in the twentieth century dreamed it would be. But for those who really can't wait to get closer to space, there is a (slightly) cheaper alternative

– costing around fifty grand as opposed to several million pounds – and that is near-space flight. World View is set to launch in 2016 and boasts a voyaging experience like no other – an opportunity to sail across the stratosphere. Travellers step into a capsule suspended below a high-altitude balloon, which gently ascends until it reaches the very edge of our atmosphere. From here you'll be able to enjoy breath-taking views of the curvature of the planet – and way better refreshments than those you'd get in a space hotel.





# Emily Maitlis: “I was so scared of leaving the bubble”

Eddy Wax talks to the BBC journalist about her time at Cambridge, her fears, and moving on from university

**Newsnight presenter and newsreader Emily Maitlis, who studied English at Queens; talked about the power of television, women in the media and BBC bias at the Union on Monday. I wanted to find out what her life was like as an undergraduate at Cambridge and what pushed her to follow a career in journalism.**

I didn't do any journalism at Cambridge. I did a lot of plays, theatre and directing and I played a lot of squash with Des the barman. I thought for ages I was going to go into theatre or directing but I never thought about journalism. In all my time here I only wrote one theatre review.

**When did you start to leave theatrical aspirations behind and move towards journalism?**

It was when I realised I was a rubbish actor and when I worked out I didn't want to live in a suitcase. I never would have thought about journalism if I hadn't been working in Hong Kong. I was there in 1992, three or

four years after Tiananmen. It was the politics of China, the UK and the handover, this massive geopolitical crunch time and I just sat there living and breathing it, thinking: “God this is amazing. I want to talk about this the whole time.”

**Were you interested in global politics and current affairs while you were at Cambridge?**

Not at all. I was so small-minded! I did what you do at Cambridge which was fine. I was lost in the classics, I read loads of plays, I studied literature, I read amazing poems and I talked long into the night about religion and the reason of being.

**Would you really call that small-mindedness?**

Maybe small-minded isn't the word, but it was nothing to do with the real

world. Cambridge was my world and it was that big. It was a bubble and I was so scared of leaving that I actually used to apply for jobs in college



CHRIS WILLIAMSON

libraries so that I wouldn't ever have to leave. I mean what madness! I applied to be a St John's librarian.

**What were you scared of?**

I was scared that I'd live in a toothpaste factory for the rest of my life, I don't know what I thought would happen. And then a week after leaving I was like: “Oh my God, this is great. There are people out here who are making me think and breathe and opening my mind in a totally different way”.

**Is that why you went into journalism, to expand your mind?**

Do you know what I honestly think? This is a really unfashionable, unpassionate thing to say so forgive me. People always go: “Follow your passions, follow your passions” but I think that's a really

hard thing to say to young people because actually if you're at all broad minded you've got loads of things you might try.

After university I could have gone off in three ways. It's like the Sliding Doors thing? I got offered an internship in Sacramento as a theatre director, a job in Hong Kong, and a job working in a developing school in South Africa. As it was, I took the Hong Kong thing, and that was brilliant for me then.

“

**I WAS SO SMALL-MINDED!**

**How much did it help you to have Cambridge on your CV?**

I think that's what this does, isn't it? It's such a centre of privilege. It's ridiculous, the doors it opens. But then we're the ones who are mad if we're not making the most of it.

# Mike Bartlett: “It's not going to be as good as Shakespeare.”

The award-winning playwright Mike Bartlett chats to Naomi Obeng about his controversial play *King Charles III*

**I** think as a writer it's very important that you never get drawn too much into the bubble of theatre. You've got to stay outside and make sure you're looking around you and having conversations about other things, and to me that's the perfect place to be.”

Mike Bartlett is an Olivier award-winning writer, multiple times over. He's had BAFTA winners Katherine Parkinson, Ben Whishaw and Tim Pigott-Smith in his plays. It's easy to forget this as I chat to him. The overwhelming sense is one of honesty, thoughtfulness, and an appreciation and indeed embodiment of a quality that seems to be required to achieve such greatness in theatre: that of truth.

He became a writer not by design, but because it suited him better than directing, where he found it difficult to sell himself for assistant directing jobs rather than selling something that he'd created. It's worked out well



since: artistic collaboration in theatre is what he finds appealing.

“That's genuinely why I haven't directed my own work. I love working with a sort of partner in crime to make something together, and as long as that relationship is good you, in my experience, end up with something that's better.”

The latest partner in crime is Rupert Goold, current Artistic Director of the Almeida Theatre who directed the 2014 future-play *King Charles III*. It played to great success in London and will be at the Cambridge Arts Theatre from October 19<sup>th</sup> 2015 as part of its tour of the UK. It imagines the royal family, with Prince Charles now King, amidst a tabloid scandal and political unrest. Bartlett by no means made it easy for himself. Aside from the magnitude of the play's premise, he has also written it in iambic pentameter. “I had the idea and it was so daunting that I didn't write it for about a year and a half.” He explains, “I knew Shakespeare pretty well and I'd been reading and watching it for years, but it's a whole extra step then to say ‘well I'm going to have a go at writing it.’ The only way I could start was just reconciling to the fact that it's not going to be as good as Shakespeare.”

Taking the form seriously certainly puts it in vulnerable and inevitable dialogue with Shakespeare; it is a play in five acts, there is a ghost and a comedic plot. “Charles, who is our tragic hero and protagonist, can turn to the audience and use metaphor to talk about how he's thinking.” But rather than being an academic exercise, a classical

structure supports the dramatic tension Bartlett envisages. “That way of him articulating thought in a theatre, in a forum, is perfect to explore what Charles genuinely thinks about his position in the world. You couldn't do that in a naturalistic film or even in a naturalistic play. So only through the form can you approach that bit of truth. That's the joy of theatre.” Winning Best New Play at this year's Olivier awards, it certainly seems to have found that truth.

“

**WE WOULD DRAW ON ANYTHING. WE'D LOVE MOULIN ROUGE AS MUCH AS WE LIKED CHEKOV.**

An understanding of his craft and a boldness to experiment with it pervades our conversation. It's delightful to hear that it doesn't end with the rehearsal room. He questions the place of theatre in society and is aware of the inequalities that persist and their effect on audiences. “When I was a teenager theatre was very much the theatre that originated in the sixties: Pinter, David Hare, Tom Stoppard. Although they might have been radical in their day, it had all got very stuck. I remember going to the National Theatre and it was like a car park, it was dead, there was

nothing going on, everyone looked miserable and there were these big stately plays that other people went to who were older than me.”

The idea that some plays are not for certain people seems to be one that Bartlett opposes, and still an important problem in the current theatrical scene. Thankfully, the theatre that he had seen did not restrict where he would take inspiration from, and by the time he was studying English and Theatre at the University of Leeds, the car park atmosphere of The National was just a memory. “At university we really noticed that we would draw on anything. We'd love *Moulin Rouge* as much as we liked Chekov. We wouldn't care about high art and low art. We just wanted to move between the two effortlessly.” For a writer who has moved between finding compelling drama in climate change as in *Earthquakes in London*, to a three-hander centred on a bisexual love triangle like *Cock*, to his most recent BBC One drama *Doctor Foster*, an openness to eclecticism only makes sense. “I think you see it in a lot of playwrights now, Lucy Prebble, Lucy Kirkwood, me, lots of companies that don't worry about being popular and avant-garde at the same time. And, actually that's a very Shakespearean model in itself.”

It is important for those who create theatre to consider what they are contributing to, and also where parting with the past is beneficial. By referencing the classical canon in *King Charles III* while questioning conventions of UK theatre, from marketing to the accessibility of toilets in venues,



PAMELA RAY PHOTOGRAPHY

Bartlett understands the crucial balance of these forces. “There's more energy [now] and there are more young people going, but I think it's still hugely stuck in a single demographic. You still get a lot of people in theatre in different ways saying that they're making theatre for people like them and not for other people.” We talk about Rufus Norris' recent appointment as the National Theatre's Artistic Director and the hope of drawing in more diverse audiences. “It's about constant interrogation of what you're doing and making sure you don't put barriers up for audiences that you actually want but are putting off.”

“I don't think you have to swap one audience for another, I think you can do both, you can totally do both you just have to work harder.”

Ultimately it seems to come back to truth, and with truth comes a connection to humanity. With Bartlett's committed search for drama as a path to honesty, theatre is in good hands.



# Comment

## A collective failure of responsibility



Eleanor Leydon

*When the councils show disregard for student safety, the university has an obligation to step in*

Cambridgeshire County Council have recently received a backlash after announcing plans to switch off streetlights throughout Cambridge between midnight and 6am from next April onwards. The plans are just one aspect of the changes that will need to be enforced if the council are to meet their overall government spending targets, which demand savings of £100 million over the next five years.

Following cries of dismay from students and residents alike, the council's director for infrastructure management has promised to liaise with "parish councils, district councils, Cambridge City Council, to discuss the proposal and in particular whether they wish to contribute financially if they wish to keep the lights on. It's important that we are mindful of their concerns". In the likely event that these smaller councils cannot produce sufficient funds, the concerns of Cambridge's large student body must also be represented. But should the university also have a responsibility to help fund public services? The answer seems simple when the safety of its students is so obviously implicated. Among the areas affected are Trinity Lane, Grange Road, Chesterton Lane

and Free School Lane, all areas at the heart of the student circuit and surrounded by college-owned accommodation. If our streets are plunged into darkness, the hundreds of students whose routes are affected will become immediately far more vulnerable.

The timing of the council's announcement is a painful reminder of this; three men convicted of sexual assault in Cambridge last October, having served their short-term sentences, have been released from prison and are now applying for asylum in the UK. In the same month, two more men were convicted for the rape of a young man which occurred on Christ's Pieces, another park located between several college grounds. Yet a member of the Cambridge City Centre Policing Team has recently said that they are "not personally concerned about the proposal to turn off certain street lighting overnight," suggesting that crime is encouraged rather by overall circumstance than lighting alone. However much we may talk about 'the Bubble,' colleges and students do not exist in a vacuum. They exist within a city and county which have their own overlapping problems and responsibilities. And in a world in

which the county council is unwilling or unable to provide adequate safety precautions, and the police department appear to negate the immediate impact on young persons' safety, the university has a responsibility to each and every student living in their care, and away from their family home for possibly the first time in their lives.

In campus universities such as Sussex, comprehensive night lighting is provided alongside additional safety measures such as emergency phones and night patrols. Students can also request a Security Officer to escort them from the edge of campus to their residence. This is not a campus university: the collegiate system creates a network of routes and channels along which students must travel around the city. As an Emmanuel student, a visit from college to college-owned housing two streets away involves cutting a very small corner across Parker's Piece, a trip I have often made, hands in pockets, clutching a keyring or personal attack alarm. Without basic lighting, even this two-minute trip would become far more daunting and dangerous.

And of course the County Council are aware of these dangers. Cuts to

public provisions will always be unwelcome, and a council spokesperson recently said that "we have already saved £218 million since 2009 and if we do not find further ways to save money we will have to make deeper cuts from services such as frontline social care looking after the most vulnerable in our society." A recent TCS editorial stressed the need to "club together" to demand that the council and the state fulfil their fundamental duty to keep their citizens safe. This is an admirable sentiment, the standards of which we should properly extend to the university body itself. All of our collective energy – the activism, the intellectual debate, the fresh eyes which look out onto the world and are unable to accept those things which seem so glaringly wrong – can't hope to counteract the depth of austerity cuts. We can, and should, put pressure on the council to seek another, less immediately harmful solution. But we must also put pressure on the university to accept its own corresponding duties of responsibility, and to work with local and public authorities – financially, if necessary – to maintain the possibility of a safe and secure daily life for its students.

## Online activism can only take us part way



Chris Waugh

*To make radical progress, we must adopt a multiplicitous approach*

Now, don't get me wrong. I'm all for signing a petition online. I spend lots of time on 38Degrees, Change.org, adding my name to all kinds of causes, but I realised things might have reached a new level of odd when I found myself putting my name to a petition that said "To prevent an asteroid from hitting Earth and wiping out all life." I think we can all agree that this is a good cause. But somehow, I don't think an online petition will have the desired impact. Baboom-tish.

Two parallel theories exist when it comes to 'clicktivism'. One suggests that the internet has opened new horizons for activism, as well as bringing a politicised dimension to online interactions, and this cannot be a bad thing. On the other hand, clicktivism is ultimately lazy, a waste of time; it discourages people from taking part in the real business of politics (getting off their arses and going on that demo), and, worse still, it has reduced political activism to the simple act of clicking 'like'. Both of these have an element of truth to them, but both are also flawed ways of thinking about it. It is also important we distinguish clicktivism from the broader, and much more effective process of politics.

Clicktivism is a part of internet activism, but not the whole picture. Perhaps the most famous clicktivist campaign in recent memory was Kony 2012. The campaign attracted a huge swathe of media interest for its slick videos, high production value, and its earnest demand to

bring the monstrous Joseph Kony to justice. It was effective in drawing the world's eye to Kony. I certainly had never heard of him before, and the campaign did provoke me to read more about the horrors of the Lord's Resistance Army. While there was limited success (the US Senate approved sending troops to support African Union soldiers fighting the LRA), interest died down. Kony still walks free today, and the campaign became rather like the political equivalent of Gangnam Style: something we all liked, we all remember, but have moved on from in the rapid progress of the internet. Kony 2012 provoked much cynicism in its apparent ineffectiveness, but such cynicism shouldn't necessarily be used to tar the broader swathe of internet activism.

The arguments in favour of internet activism are well known. The role of social media in the Arab Spring cannot be undermined – with official news media under the thumb of the Mubarak regime, social media became a tool both for organising the demonstrations that brought down the dictator, and for spreading the word to the outside world. It is worth remembering that while in the West, Facebook (for example) is a space for posting touched up photos of your lunch, in developing countries, and especially in countries where authoritarian regimes control traditional media, Facebook, Twitter, Youtube and so on represent a vital forum for resistance. We should be careful not to fall into a post-colonial mindset

when we consider the effectiveness of social media in activism.

Additionally, the political power of the internet is clearly evidenced in the response to it from state apparatus: the Chinese Communist Party famously cracks down on bloggers and other online activists; at the time of writing, Kashmir has had its internet cut off, while police clash with separatist and radical groups. It is worth noting however, that these examples see internet activism in a very particular way – it is used to supplement and support the process of taking to the streets, marching, occupying – the traditional methods of resistance, if you like.

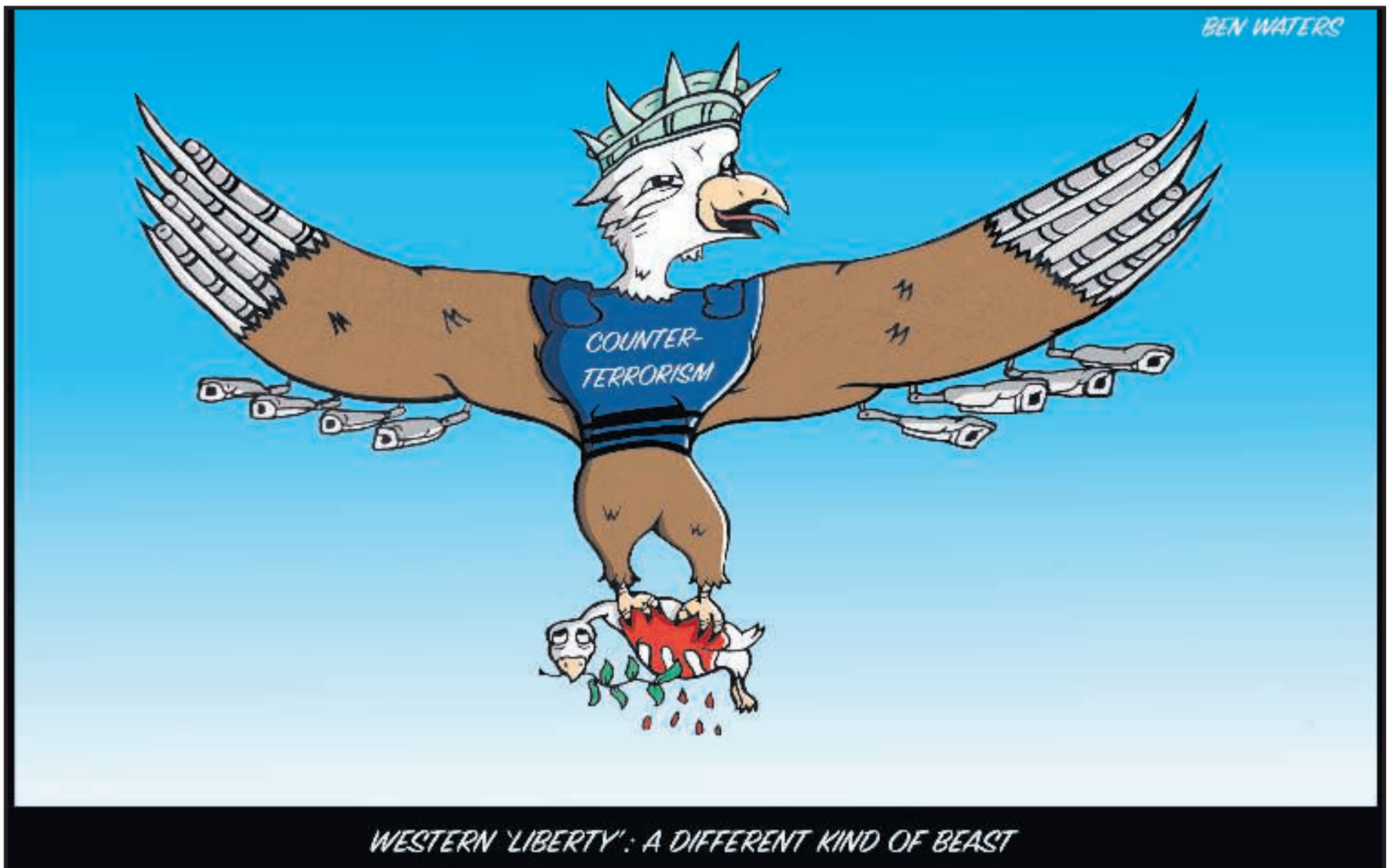
For all the good it does, however, clicktivism and internet activism can be hugely regressive. More often than not, online activist spaces can become an ideological echo chamber. A line is adopted by a group, and dissent results in expulsion, ostracism, and in many cases online abuse. Far too often, I have quit radical Facebook groups because an often mild criticism of a political decision has resulted in some poor kid being inundated with a toxic blend of threats, denunciations and the like. That is not to say that such behaviour is only confined to online activism. But the extent to which the online presence of activists can undermine radicalism through the shutting down of those who think differently is significant.

So what good does online activism do? This morning, I came across a video on my Facebook timeline.

In it, a Tory staff member visibly punches a young woman in the stomach while she is protesting outside the Tory Party Conference in Manchester. I watched as the staffer did this in front of a line of police officers, who allowed him through and bluntly told the woman that no, she couldn't report the incident as assault. Shocking though it was, it reminded me that we do live in a world of corrupt state power, a world where millionaires can get away with raping their children, where you can be complicit in the hacking of a dead girl's phone and still be considered a journalist. Even the activist old guard needs to remember why we fight in the first place, as much as the new generation need to know what the problem is.

Raising awareness is good, but awareness must be followed with action. Action cannot come without awareness, and the internet does provide a vital forum for the sharing of information, alternative media and other potential sources of radicalisation. The fact of the matter is that internet activism on its own will do very little, in the same way that old school marches and glacial meetings will do very little on their own. While the internet is a powerful tool, it can be ignored. Even if everyone in the country tweeted David Cameron at the same time, demanding he reversed the bedroom tax, he can still, like any of us, click ignore on the notification. If we're going to ever change the world, we need to engage in a multiplicity of resistance.





# ‘Prevent’ is the real free speech issue



Husna Rizvi

*We do still need to discuss the state of free speech in this country. But its ardent ‘defenders’ have it all wrong*

Recently, a number of events that occurred at British universities sparked another tired and superficial attempt at the freedom of expression debate. First we had the refusal to distribute sombreros at the University of East Anglia Freshers’ Fair on grounds of cultural appropriation, and then the refusal to endorse or distribute self-acclaimed free speech magazine *No Offence* at the Oxford University Student’s Union. Some would say these executive decisions are ironic in the context of the beautiful free-flowing expression that spills out like fairy dust from the institution of the British university. I’m calling bullshit.

I won’t address the cultural appropriation issue here because I think 800 words in a student newspaper is scarcely enough to review an episode of *Geordie Shore* (my next article), nor will I discuss the obscene comments that were made on the Oxford online discussion group ‘Open Oxford’ by proponents of the *No Offence* magazine (comments such as “Enoch Powell was right”). What I will do is sketch out the massive distinction between the romantic notion of “free speech” some seem to think is owed to them (one without bounds, and by extension with some insidious consequences) and the real freedom of expression that is granted to us – limited by two things: the prohibition of hate speech and the government’s counter-terrorism ‘Prevent’ strategy.

Like the editors of *No Offence*, I

too have some qualms with the current state of the ‘freedoms’ granted to us. Though my concerns aren’t so much concerned with the right to make fun of transgender students finding it hard enough to go about their daily lives, re-explaining their pronouns and integrating with an overwhelmingly cis-normative society. Nor is it to make BME students feel unwelcome, othered or guilt-trip them for disrupting the ethnic homogeneity of this country. These are by and large very much the effects of *No Offence*’s poor attempt at satire. And to attempt to refute that conclusion shows a lack of engagement with what it means to be a non-white and/or transgender person – and how these actions contribute to existing structural inequalities faced by such groups. Though this too, is another article in and of itself.

Instead my concern is far more to do with the state-mandated counter-terrorism strategy called ‘Prevent’. This obliges every public service provider in the country, including universities and local councils (literally every public service provider employed personnel in the UK) to report any people (including children) they believe to hold extreme views. It is worth noting that the government’s definition of what counts as extreme is rather vague and conveniently ever-expanding. Extremist opinion (a non-violent expression) according to the government, is anything that stands in opposition to British values and the ideology of the state. The

government is targeting what they deem a ‘pre-criminal space’.

One may think it is fairly obvious which views are causes for concern and which are not, and that because of this, the Prevent strategy is a sensible policy. Unfortunately this isn’t the case. The consequences of this insidious policy have resulted in a fourteen-year old Muslim school pupil being reported to the authorities (under the Prevent act) for mentioning the concept of eco-terrorism within a discussion about eco-activism. The boy was questioned about his views on ISIS by staff and the police, and monitored without parental consent. A similar incident occurred at Staffordshire University where counter-terrorism student, Mohammed Umar Farooq was reported for reading a book on terrorism. Instances like these are now commonplace because of Prevent. You may think these events do not threaten freedom of expression, and are, by and large harmless. This too is sadly untrue. Samina Malik, a shop assistant and poet from Southall, was given a nine-month sentence (which was ultimately overturned) for writing poetry that was deemed to be inciting terrorism. Attacks on freedom of expression (and freedom in general) go even further under Prevent. Moazzam Begg, a British Pakistani and owner of an Islamic book shop, was detained extrajudicially and unconstitutionally multiple times at HMP Belmarsh, Bagram, and last but not least, Guantanamo

Bay. He states that he was tortured at Bagram, hog-tied, kicked, punched, left in a room with a bag put over his head (even though he suffers from asthma), sworn at, and threatened with extraordinary rendition to Egypt. He has still not been charged.

If these events are an indication of anything, it is that freedom of expression had been compromised far before the surge of political correctness – and poses far more legitimate danger to the freedoms that free speech activists claim to be seeking. Instead, they conflate entitlement to defy political correctness with a genuine discussion of the freedoms that a society should offer – especially to the most vulnerable. The systematic penalisation of Middle-Eastern and South Asian passing people and a restriction of their freedom to express should be of concern to such activists.

The implications of the Prevent strategy pose a systematic threat to the integrity of all public institutions – including this university. Virtually any staff member can, and is legally obliged to, report anyone they believe to be inciting extremist belief. The cases of Moazzam Begg, Mohammed Umar Farooq, Samina Malik and countless more, show that this is a fundamentally flawed approach. So if free speech activists would like to superficially address the merits and limits of political correctness, go ahead – but the real threat to our freedom of expression is still at large.



# Cambridge has a duty to act on its lack of diversity

Lola  
Olufemi



Oxbridge needs to stop paying lip service to its race problem and actually start combatting it

Being a fresher is a difficult experience. It's even more difficult if you don't fit into the preconceived idea of what a Cambridge student looks like.

Black History Month coincides with the arrival of a host of new undergraduates with specific and idealistic ideas about what Cambridge is like. This year, there are a number of events highlighting the history of BME individuals at this institution, including the launch of the Black Cantab project, panels about black feminism, and workshops about cultural appropriation and the erasure of Cambridge's racist history. The BME Campaign and FLY have worked hard to put together events as a means of reclaiming space and to highlight the contributions of black academics and artists. But it is frustrating to work so hard at trying to be visible and then to return to colleges where you are made to feel an outsider just by virtue of your existence. Colleges with only three or fewer black students, colleges that are filled with paintings, mottos, plaques that serve as a reminder that this space was not built for you.

When we talk about diversity, we pay lip service to how appalling it is that a college had just one black fresher last year; or how some colleges refuse to admit their links to colonial endeavors, erase the history of BME admittance or refuse to

co-operate with BME officers who wish to hold events, that's all we do: move our mouths. Diversity seems to have become nothing more than a talking point. We can all admit that Oxbridge has a problem with race but can never bring ourselves to combat it in an effective way.

“

WE CAN ALL ADMIT THAT OXBRIDGE HAS A PROBLEM WITH RACE BUT NEVER BRING OURSELVES TO COMBAT IT IN AN EFFECTIVE WAY.

Admittedly, beyond placing pressure on this institution in various forms, there is little the student community can actually do. We can beg black prospective applicants to apply despite the fact that the government is making this harder for those from poorer socioeconomic backgrounds (who are also more likely to be BME). We can perpetuate an idea of Cambridge as a melting pot but we cannot simply will them here. It is down to the administration to radically reform its admissions procedure and stop clinging to the idea that

it is not “their responsibility” to be diverse. Any institution that claims to have the brightest students in the country must show that those students come from a variety of different backgrounds.

There is something odd about discussing Cambridge's lack of diversity with those who will never suffer from it. Alienation for BME students doesn't disappear when the lack of diversity is self-reflexively used by their white peers in arguments to score points. Empathy in activism is paramount, but seeing a whole host of freshers must bring back, for members of oppressed groups, the anxiety that comes with being “other.” You wonder how much of the Cambridge fantasy will actually become reality for those joining us. How long before they realise that nice buildings and fancy gowns mean nothing set against an institution so heavily steeped in oppression that at times to combat it seems impossible.

For those of us who inhabit elite institutions, fantasy and reality battle it out; there is something about being here that only students seem to understand. Perhaps it is the disappointment at being force-fed the lie that academic excellence is somehow exempt from racism, sexism, transphobia, homophobia, ableism and so on. Perhaps it is the insistence on intellectually rigorous debate at the expense of all else. Misguided

freshers and people who aren't students love Cambridge for the same reasons – its quirky traditions, its attachment and reliance upon history – without recognising that these are the very traits that stop it from being truly inclusive.

It is frustrating to be able to so clearly identify problems, feel passionately about them, share those ideas and then be met with an overwhelming sense of inaction. This is particularly poignant as Black History Month approaches; those involved are simultaneously aware that they are contributing to this institution's future in examining and talking about its treatment of race, both now and in the past. However, as I look around my college and see not a single face like my own in the incoming year, it can feel like talking to a brick wall. Hopefully what this month and the ongoing events can teach is that visibility in itself is a form of action. In refusing to be sucked in by a romantic view of Cambridge and revealing the history of students just like us who studied here in unbearably racist conditions, in being unapologetically black in this space, we show through our defiance that it is becoming nearly impossible to white-wash this institution's history. We contribute to the long list of individuals here who have fought to make it somewhere worth studying for everyone.

## Four days is not enough for Freshers'

*This week, Lana decries Cambridge's condensed Freshers' Week and Rosie argues it's better than the alternative*

Rosie Best

Lana Crowe

I was scrolling through Facebook recently when I saw that a friend had indicated that they were attending “Freshers' Fortnight” at their university. This struck me as madness. Shouldn't that be “Freshers' three and a half days”? Whilst shocked, I was not envious and instead inwardly thanked the Cambridge overlords for not forcing me and others through what I can only imagine would have been a hellish, drawn-out introduction to university life.

For non-drinkers Freshers' Week can be a struggle – the pressure to conform to the drinking culture rife during this time is overwhelming. The constant bombardment of proposed trips to Cindies, the pre-drinks which inevitably precede these and even wine in the Master's Lodge can lead to awkwardness for those who don't wish to find themselves stumbling around college at 3am, in the rough direction of the bathroom. In these situations, a non-drinker is often able to socialise only through a cyclical conversation with an unknown drunken person, in which no meaningful reaction can be induced beyond an ill-aimed high-five. The length of Freshers' Week is

proportional to the length of our term which, of course, is unusually short. A Freshers' fortnight, for example, would mean a huge reduction in our work time and possibly send supervisors into a sort of frenzy awaiting essays to read and mark.

If we welcome Freshers into our colleges with the promise of an easy, relaxed start we are simply setting them up for a fall, whilst a shorter Freshers' Week allows them to anticipate what may have otherwise been a sharp slap in the face.

For many, the most significant aspect of Freshers' Week is the opportunity to socialise, and the more time you are allowed, the more friendships will be formed, right? Wrong. In a new habitat, cliques are swiftly established amongst Freshers and once formed it is difficult to infiltrate ranks or jump ship.

Freshers' Week is less about widening your social circle than about establishing yourself; communicating your fun-loving, easy-going personality to others in order to attract the appropriate counterparts and form a social group – a process which, I have observed, takes only a matter of hours.

Currently, our Freshers' Week can be accurately described as short and sweet; perfectly engineered for maximum social gain and minimal academic loss. Let us collectively shun the notion of a Freshers' fortnight and instead embrace the reality that there is such a thing as too much fun.

Nine a.m. on the first day of lectures. Students are arriving in their masses, bright-eyed and bushy-tailed, eager to start their new year's work with a smile. “I'm really looking forward to finding out more about the significance of marginalia in medieval manuscripts,” one euphoric fresher muses, “learning revitalises me.”

Disclaimer: this scenario is the stuff of fantasy, existing only in the lies of lazy students when chatting with their parents, and in the naïve psyche of the over-enthusiastic school-leaver. The reality of the first morning of lectures involves far more paracetamol, strong coffee and empty seats. What more can you expect when, a few hours earlier, the same contingent, barely recognisable in their Wednesday-best, were rocking up to Cindies to fully experience the rite of passage that is Freshers' Week.

Freshers' Week should be about fun, not about fear. Having to settle down with new people, a new place, and a new independent way of life is stressful enough without mountains of work to worry about as well. It's a week that should be about learning where Sainsbury's is, not learning how to Harvard reference. Having only four days to figure out how to live in Cambridge is a big ask; it requires developing skills for the challenge known as a functioning adult life (even more daunting than exams).

One of the most important aspects of going

to university is expanding your social sphere; Freshers' Week lays the foundation for this. After being in Cambridge for only four days, you are required to spend a significant amount of time alone, in independent study. It's not long before the dreams of going punting or walking to Granchester are crushed by your looming first deadline.

In typical Cambridge style, Freshers' Week throws students in at the deep end. Two weeks' worth of fun is packed into four days, just as three months of work is crammed into an eight-week term. I'm not calling for a Freshers' Fortnight; I do not want you all to indulge, ironically or otherwise, in the ‘Flirt Fridays’ and ‘Smirnoff Saturdays’ of other institutions. First impressions are very important, and the whirlwind way in which Cambridge deals with Freshers' Week begins the process of being overwhelmed that we spend our time here battling. Relaxation is not a sin.



ROSIE + LANA



# Being a finalist is just as daunting as Freshers'



Zoe Silkstone

*Even when you've been here for two years, there are still things to worry about*

As we pulled into Robinson College, the mixture of excitement and nerves I felt was not far from the experience I had arriving as a fresher. Two years later, looking back on my naïve, 18-year-old, fresh-faced self, I realised that not that much had really changed since my time began at Cambridge. Whilst nothing can compare to that 'first-time' feel, like many things, Freshers' Week improves with practice (in other words, when you are no longer a fresher). Having an established network of friends, along with the knowledge to vet 'dead' events from your week, makes the spectacle much more enjoyable for a returning student than for one just starting. The pressure to 'break the ice' becomes a hilarity after the awkward moments experienced as a fresher in those all-important ice breaker events such as speed-dating or boat-building.

Of course, I'm naturally older and wiser, able to impart my abundance of knowledge on new freshers, but group conversations of 'does anyone actually know what we are doing?' still occur on a regular basis. And there's no denying the ever-present FOMO. I think no matter what age you are, if you are starting something new, however big or small, the Fear-Of-Missing-Out complex manages to creep into your psyche and sit comfortably at the back of your mind. If anything, the prospect

of having only three terms left of my undergrad degree is more daunting than meeting eager new faces could ever be. I know that, despite many a stressful experience, I am going to undergo serious separation anxiety once I leave - all the more reason to get a cheeky Masters in, I suppose.

Admittedly, having had two years of 'Freshers' Week, it's a lot easier to pick and choose what you go to and whom you speak to, and I've found my attitude has become a lot more relaxed as time has passed. I've realised that indulging in stereotypical Cambridge notions is very amusing and there's no denying that knowing your environment gives a person much more confidence in their everyday life. Although I'm still worried about aspects of my course and what the year is going to bring, I can already get excited about Christmas in Cambridge and events I know are going to happen which, obviously when in first year, I didn't appreciate.

Understanding that the Cambridge bubble is not the be-all and end-all of life at present lends itself to refreshing your perspective on uni life. It's a lot easier to make fun of stressful moments that seemed unmanageable as a fresher, and I've developed a more carefree approach. Equally, as a serious and studious finalist, I cannot fully indulge in the luxury of not worrying too much about the year ahead. The balance of work

and play is, in a way, harder this year as the work is more demanding and the pressures are extremely real, yet I also know that this is my last year and naturally I still want to experience everything under the sun. Going into finals year, the challenges I face now put all the anxieties I had as a fresher into perspective. At the time, though, they were real worries.

With hindsight, what would I do differently? Coming from a rather sheltered all-girls' school upbringing, I was determined to make up for lost

in the same situation.

As a piece of advice from an aged finalist, watch out for those 'BNOC's. Contrary to my dad's belief, a 'BNOC' is not a sub-par A-Level substitute qualification but, instead, a specimen which thrives in the freshers' environment, imposing themselves on the young Padawan learners, notorious 'sharks' who utilise a fresher's innocence to their advantage, playing the power card of being substantially older and wiser. This can range from several years, stepping into graduate territory, to just a year. Such epistemic distance leads to said BNOC becoming irresistible. And it does take some experience to learn to recognise and deal with this phenomenon.

But whether you're a second-year, a finalist, or a post-grad, it's hard to resist having a Ground-Hog Day moment when, although it's like coming home, the challenges facing you at the beginning of the year are daunting as well as exciting, old as well as new. Although I have the security of knowing my way around college, of a fantastic group of friends, and generally having some clue as to what I'm doing in my degree, the prospect of entering the dreaded 'Final Year' is just as daunting as coming to a new environment as a 'Fresher'. But, of course, in the most cliché manner as possible, I wouldn't change any part of it. Well, almost any part.

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THE DREADED 'FINAL YEAR' IS JUST AS DAUNTING AS COMING TO A NEW ENVIRONMENT AS A 'FRESHER'

time and 'go wild.' Now I realise that although that was really fun, it's also acceptable to rein in a little bit and try less hard. Freshers' Week typically marks the first time somebody has lived away from home for a lengthy period of time and it really is alright to feel worried. It's normal. Be reassured that the majority of people, whether they will admit it or not, are

## The Secret Diary of Katrina Kettlewell

Columnist **Ellie Coote** recently uncovered a diary buried beneath the floorboards of an undisclosed room in an undisclosed college. In this remarkable extract, we are given an exclusive insight into the world of Chelsea socialite Katrina Kettlewell, who seems unaware of her diary's discovery and shows every intention to continue writing. Names have been changed to protect the innocent.

**8th October** Re-freshers is legit MAD! Litro just awoke to the smell of potpourri wafting up my nostrils... OMA, like, what on earth happened last night?! Opening my eyes very slowly to make sure I'm like not actually deceased and in like actual purgatory I scan the room and locate the source of the potpourri... It's, like, actual vom. So apparently I litro spewed my fragrant insides like here there and everywhere #WhatAmILike. Ugh, SO do NOT want to get out of my four-poster... #WakeMeUpWhenReFreshersEnds.

Omigosh just looked at myself in the mirror and I can see like actual brand new Louis Vuittons nestled

under my eyes #FashionIsMyPassion #EyeBags. Definitely FAR too much champers #WokeUpLikeThis. I swear re-freshers is like even more exhausting than hot yoga, I'm like 2010 Election in a noose that's how much I'm hanging, it's unreal. I'm like actually never drinking again, like new year, new me, like out with the old and in with the vintage chic LOL #GirlHumour. G2G now, socialising awaits...

**11th October** So I'm at brunch and everyone's like whispering in a corner, I'm like "hey guys... GROAN... who's also totes hungover... GROAN" but they litro like don't even notice me and carry on talking, so I listen in like "... so like my uncle told me they've litro been like embezzling money for like the past 50 years... sending it to like an actual drug tycoon in Hampshire who invests it and then like uses the profits to litro fund relief projects in Africa?! Like I'm not even joking, like, CUSU is so ridick generous #SoPeak... I can litro relate like so hard though, it's like they went way into their overdraft by being super charitable but like instead of buying their friends jaeger bombs they're litro funding welfare and like the whole of Africa... like they actually just need to cut down on luxuries like fresh coriander and inclusivity and they're litro sorted! Also, like, don't tell anyone about this

it's litro TOP SECRET." I'm like, OMA I litro cannot believe my ears... maybe I can sell this to *The Tab*?

**1st time** So I'm just like totally busy scouting out the new Fresher BNOCs and I litro get a text from Hugo and he's all "where are you?! 'cause we're going punting litro like now!" I'm like "BYE KIDS, MUMMAS GOT A DATE." My phone bleeps again as I'm lady sprinting to the punts #OhTheFlouncyFlouncy: "I want to see you wield a pole #wink..." it says. I reply like "I'm litro pole wielding champion!!! <3" and he sends back a dancing lady emoji and a boat... #WhatCouldHeMean?

**5th time** So like as I walk up to Hugo he's actually like laughing at me like "good afternoon Miss Kettlewell... how are you feeling?" I'm like "don't you dare make fun of me, I'm like in an actual critical state. What happened last night?!" "Don't you remember?!" he asks in a husky growl, grinning like a total hunk of manhood and I'm like actually devoid of sound, like, I am an ovary.

So, like, when we get to the punt there's like some woman waiting for us with like civilian uniform on and she's like smiling at us and handing us life jackets and then she whips out a pamphlet that reads "in case of an actual emergency, like, light this ac-

tual beacon," I'm like, "isn't that like dangerous?" she's like "we're literally on water," so I'm like "rude..." and Hugo's scowling like "what is this, like, the tightening of airport security in response to 911 but like on a punt in Cambridge and about safety?! LOL!" I'm like "that's so true and like actually funny." Ugh he's actually such a literal #Bae. So #excited for pudanting (punting and dating litro

combined into one actual word)!!!

**16th**

DOWN IT FRESHERRRRR!!!!!!!!!!!!21 #courgarrrrrrrwrwr

omh hugo is such a bae./

OMG so, like, litro just wait for all to be revealed #NextWeek...



#drankin #HugoIsMyBae #glam #popular #pudanting



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**PETAR ON FILM**

Petar Lekarski  
unpicks the latest  
releases

## THE UNCONVENTIONAL ROM-COM: PART 2

Dear reader, before we delve into the subtleties of *Mistress America*, allow me to gush about it. Because someone has to; because it deserves to be seen; because it grossed just £642,965 at the UK box office while *Trainwreck* racked up £2,854,935 during the same period. Look, I get it: it's more fun to read scathing criticism than ebullient praise. Unfortunately, when it comes to *Mistress America*, breathless enthusiasm is all I've got: it's a fantastic movie.

When college student Tracy (Lola Kirke) meets twenty-something Brooke (Greta Gerwig) in Times Square, sparks fly. Like most rom-com protagonists, they're initially brought together by a simple plot contrivance—Tracy's mum is marrying Brooke's dad. It's what follows the meet-cute that sets *Mistress America* apart from most other rom-coms. For one thing, both Tracy and Brooke are straight women. The romance here is strictly platonic (talk about unconventional). What's more, nothing much happens plot-wise; the emphasis is almost exclusively on character. And what extraordinary characters they are.

Tracy is our protagonist: we follow her perspective and hear her narration. Brooke, on the other hand, is the eponymous Mistress America. Tracy is quickly smitten and desperately wants to impress her. When Brooke suggests pasta for dinner, Tracy frets over which type to buy: "Is spaghetti 'pasta' the same way as the others?" she asks a male friend. The wistful narration lays it on thick—"Brooke's beauty was that rare kind that made you want to look more like yourself and not like her; being around her made you want to find life, not hide from it." And this is no unrequited love. "You make me feel really smart," Brooke tells Tracy with a smile, "I'm glad you're on my team."

As they learn more about each other, we learn more about them both. It's not all good. Brooke's behaviours "turn from charming to borderline hysteric in an instant", Tracy tells us. Meanwhile, "you are much more of an asshole than you initially appear," Brooke says to Tracy during the requisite fight at the end of the second act. Crucially, both characters remain sympathetic all the way through the drama, because their dialogue makes them seem real. Neither is a caricature or stock type. Consequently, you find yourself rooting for them to work it out.

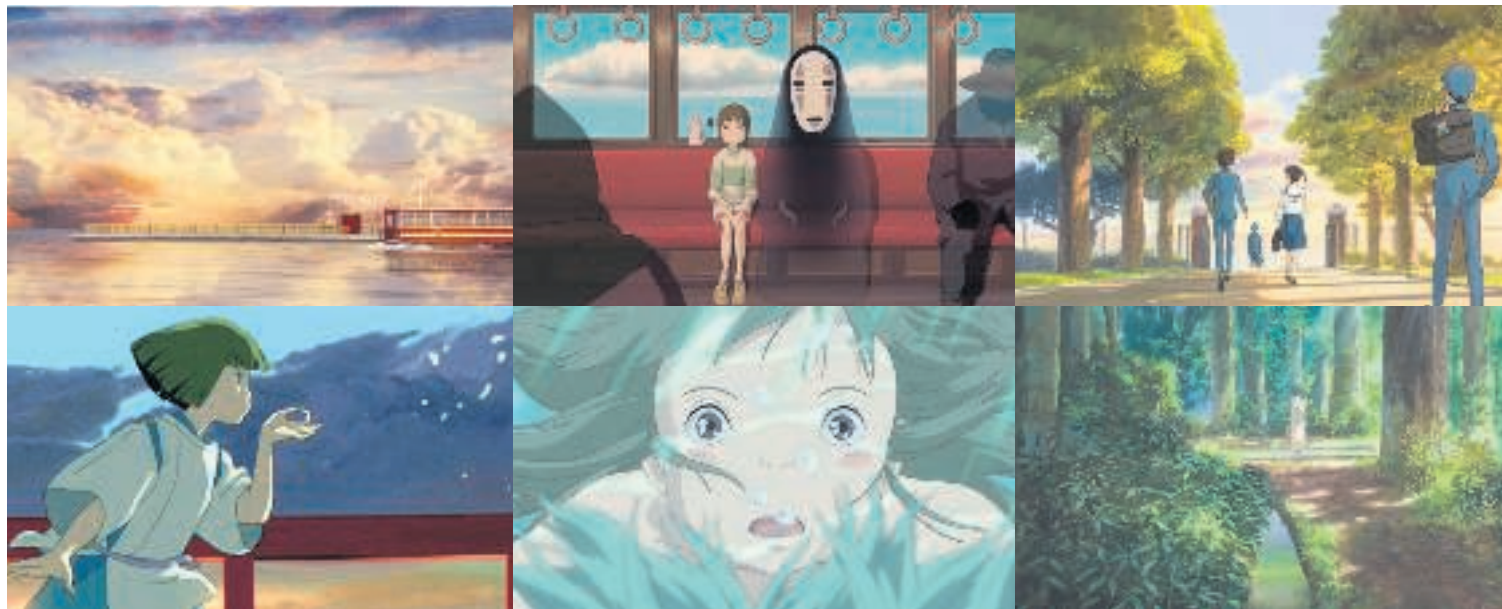
When they do, it's in the most believable and most romantic way possible. The 'grand gesture' is a simple conversation, as it likely would be in real life. It's a breakthrough in Tracy and Brooke's relationship; the point at which they drop all pretence and admit their faults to each other out loud. They connect. We next see them through the windows at a café, sharing laughs: our happy ending. As the title—a neon 'Mistress America'—flashes on screen, the soundtrack pipes up, speaking for all the men sidelined in this story: "you could've been alright, could've been sweet as wine, could've been a lady". That neither Tracy nor Brooke prove to be "sweet as wine" yet still get their happy ending is delightfully subversive. They don't have to change, as Amy must in *Trainwreck*; they just have to get to know each other better. "So it's no one's fault?" asks Tracy. "Obviously; that's always true," comes the reply.

By using the infallible rom-com formula to tell a story about friendship, *Mistress America* elevates itself from would-be screwball comedy to something altogether more affecting. There's no straightforward moral to be found here, and certainly nothing as crude as what *Trainwreck* has to offer. Instead, *Mistress America* subtly raises a number of challenging ideas: that truly understanding another person is as rewarding as it is difficult, that the self is basically relative, and that all relationships are ultimately compromises. In addressing all of this while still being tremendously uplifting, the film is resolutely unconventional. And it's all the better for it.

*Mistress America* is screening at the St John's Picturehouse on Sunday 1st November at 7pm and 10pm. Tickets £4.

# open your eyes

*Pixar and Dreamworks are not the only animation options, says Bret Cameron*



I took two of my best friends to see Hayao Miyazaki's final film, *The Wind Rises*, at the cinema. One walked out half way through; the other reminds me on multiple occasions of what a dubious evening of entertainment he felt obliged to endure.

Even multi-award winning films can't be to everyone's taste, but my friends' reactions seem indicative of a wider level of disconnect between English-speaking audiences and foreign films, especially when it comes to animation; Japanese animation, in particular. It is my experience that many Western viewers aren't willing to give anime a chance and some, still more frustratingly, remain unwilling to embrace the medium even when they're sat in front of one of its most fantastic products. It's as if they've got their eyes closed.

I admit, the word 'anime' can conjure up negative stereotypes. To enjoy anime or manga at my secondary school was to align yourself with a rather unpopular group who had been nicknamed 'the cool club' with a cruel irony and who were viewed by many with unfriendly suspicion.

One of the main reasons for which they were teased was the (ungrounded) assumption that liking anime meant liking hentai, the West's word for the very large body of pornographic animation that's produced in Japan. There's even a lot of anime aimed at children (including many of programmes that, growing up, you might have seen on CITV) which seem to be unduly sexualised. The *Yu-Gi-Oh!* series, for example, featured enormous-breasted and short-skirted women aplenty, the like of which you would be seriously unlikely to find in *Arthur* or *Scooby Doo*. But, most of all, I think this negativity was simply an aversion to anime's otherness, an aversion to anything which did not toe the line of mainstream Western animation.

If pornographic anime tells us anything, it is that in Japan animation is for adults too; adult audiences are taken seriously in the medium

as a whole, resulting in some very moving, complex and not-at-all pornographic films. Indeed, the body of Japanese animation is a vast one, and we are lucky that the cream of the crop, such as the films of Studio Ghibli, are available in English.

It is with some embarrassment and disappointment that, I admit, my exposure to good, non-Western animation pretty much begins and ends with Studio Ghibli. But many of their films are very good and some are astounding. The crap that you might have seen on CITV is not indicative of the potential of anime as an art form, and we should not be closed to it just because some of its derivatives are uncomfortably sexualised or otherwise unengaging.

The same year (2013) that Disney's *Frozen* won forty accolades, Studio Ghibli's *The Wind Rises* accrued seventeen awards – an impressive haul, especially given the steep competition and the English-speaking bent of most of the awarding bodies. And it's not just Japan where animation is pushed to engage our emotions and appeal to adults as well as children. This year, we might look to South Africa where the animated film *Kariba* is being made; the concept art looks stunning and the plot seems promising.

By and large, however, Western audiences seem unwilling to explore animated films beyond the same three staple sources: the Hollywood behemoths Disney, Pixar and DreamWorks. I know, I know, Pixar consistently produces excellent films and their latest offering, *Inside Out*, is probably set to be a classic, but just because some great films are made in the West, we shouldn't close our eyes to great films made elsewhere, animated or not.

We ought to seek out foreign animation with a more open mind and a greater readiness to engage our emotions than we currently do. Unfamiliarity is a poor excuse for condemning a film as artistically void, and reflects more on the audience than on the art.

## Poetry Corner

*Please mind the gap*

**The butt ends of broken promises,  
breathing in the dust they once spat out.**

**The crumpled carsess of a brown paper bag,  
cradling the crumbs that remain.**

**The empty womb of a wrapper,  
still echoing the salty cry off its walls.**

**A receipt for our love, rolling over and over  
until the black ink blinks to grey.**

**A ticket for a train that never departed,  
I tried not to mind the gap**

**when you disembarked from my heart,  
but it swallowed me whole.**

**We now pass like two trains  
running on different tracks,**

**my heart reserved for someone else  
but empty in its embrace.**

**This ceiling could collapse  
and fall in love with the floor,**

**but the distance between them  
is a closed door.**

-Jade Cuttle



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# VARDAGS



# Anxiety and me

Ana Persinaru

Current statistics show that at least one in five people on the UK register suffer from a mental illness. Given such a high prevalence within the population, it would be expected that the issue would be represented in politics. However, it is only recently that the current Labour Shadow Cabinet has appointed a Minister for Mental Health, a position that previously did not exist. This may be due to the fact that mental health concerns and anxiety weren't as commonly recorded five years ago. But they certainly steal the psychological limelight now.

The world we live in follows the supply - demand theory; it takes numbers for change to happen and only now is the government, together with the NHS, trying to improve the way it addresses mental health cases. Currently, and I say this from experience, the NHS doesn't offer the personable and customised help that is needed. This is where I move from facts to real stories.

Welcome to the University of Cambridge, one of the most renowned universities there is, yet blanketed below the prestige lies a world of mental health issues. At some point during their course, the average Cambridge student is likely to experience some type of mental illness, with anxiety being the most

prevalent. Some are lucky and power through Week Five, coming out on the other side unscarred. For others, such as myself, anxiety is an everyday struggle, magnified tenfold by the hectic life in the Cambridge Bubble.

In 2013 I experienced what I now, with hindsight, can call my first panic attack. It was relatively silly, caused by an inexplicable fear of sharing the silence of an exam hall during an AS-level mock. This was hardly a pivotal moment in my student life and I had no reason to panic like I did, but if anything anxiety isn't predictable or logical.

Time only made it worse. It got to the point where I would have to avoid cinemas, theatre halls, sometimes even art exhibitions; those who know me would understand how much of a personal tragedy this last one was. By the time my a-million-and-one boxes arrived in Cambridge for the first time, I had seen two counsellors, read books about it and given meditation an unsuccessful go. Needless to say, my mind was in teeny tiny scattered bits of worry.

Maybe you will be surprised to hear that Cambridge life helped my anxiety rather than worsened it. I am sorry for not preparing you for this particular plot twist but it is a thought in the making as I try to draw a line under my first year and weigh in the progress. Why this is the case would be a perfectly logical question. First of all I have a brilliant tutor; one that wears Converse and whose take-it-as-it-comes mantra has started to rub off on me. He has been the stepping stone towards talking

to a college counsellor who tries to accommodate me whenever possible, as well as to accessing university services.

I wouldn't say that the university counsellor changed my life, neither was he likely to. He did make the very useful suggestion of trying out Headspace, a mindfulness app that helps ease you out of anxiety and create a daily routine around the 'you'll be okay' mentality. Rather it was that I was talking to a complete stranger, adult to adult, about something that deep down I felt ashamed of, thinking that people would consider me weak or self-involved.

I am by no means trivialising it, but at the same time I have had to come to grips with the fact that this is my reality right now; I will have to learn to live alongside my anxiety and not ruin the very little time I have to enjoy university. I sincerely hope that the stigma around mental health and anxiety will end soon; perhaps the new position for a Minister for Mental Health will help, or perhaps it won't. However, if fresher me was reading this last year, I would have liked to have said that, considering how many students suffer from mental health and anxiety issues, you will certainly not be alone and there will always be someone wanting to reach out and help.

<http://somekindofcool.blogspot.co.uk/>

More information and help is available nationally on <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/index.shtml> or specifically in Cambridge at <http://www.counselling.cam.ac.uk/>

# A pretentious guide to wine

In a former life I was lucky enough to lead an infamous Cambridge political society that has been 'exposed' a number of times by this esteemed publication. The most recent exposé of the society in question came to the conclusion that it bore more resemblance to a wine-appreciation society than to a serious and austere political association. Indeed, it was less of a university-wide society and could be described more as a university-wine society. I believe that my distinguished service as Chairman and former committee member of the Cambridge University Conservative Association (CUCA) means that I am the perfect candidate to write an article reviewing some of my favourite wines and hopefully offering some pearls of wisdom to those wishing to enjoy a tipple with friends over formal hall.

When it comes to tasting and commenting on wine there is a tendency to descend into grandiose, universalising language. This is quite unnecessary as people have different preferences and tendencies. I have tried to select a few reasonably-priced and accessible wines that I have particularly enjoyed over my time at Cambridge. My own preference is the 'Old World' style as opposed to many of egregious antipodean 'New World' upstarts than can be found in many a supermarket. Monty Python's famous sketch 'Australian Table Wines' rather sums up my own attitude towards them! In terms of procuring wine I would recommend both the Cambridge Wine Merchants on King's Parade and Marks and Spencer in Market Square. The staff in the Cambridge Wine Merchants are particularly knowledgeable and are always on hand to offer some good advice.

If you are planning on hosting a few preprandial drinks in your college set prior to formal hall then I would recommend Marks and Spencer own-brand Prosecco. This usually retails at around £10 but is often on offer for around £7.50. It is best enjoyed chilled and as an aperitif; if you can launch the cork out of any window and land it on the manicured lawns of your college then you gain maximum marks. The prosecco in question is reminiscent of a Strauss Waltz – light, bubbly and hugely enjoyable in copious quantities. On the palate it is creamy with some nice hints of citrus and pear. This really is a great example

of the 'fashionable fizz' that has really taken the British market by storm as an affordable alternative to champagne. If you're looking for a musical accompaniment to any sparkling wine then I would recommend the Danish composer Hans Christian Lumbye's 'the Champagne Galop'.

From the hills of Northern Italy we now turn to France and the Bourgogne (Burgundy, to the unpretentious) region. I would recommend pairing up with a friend and bringing a bottle of white and a bottle of red wine to formal hall. For the starter it is worth investing in a versatile white wine. It is worth spending in the region of £9-12 on either a Petit-Chablis or Mâcon-Villages, and the Cambridge Wine Merchants should certainly be able to assist you in finding something appropriate for around this price. Jean-Marc Brocard Petit Chablis 2013 is a particular favourite of mine and is available at the top end of the price range specified. This is a very dry chardonnay with a superb palate of fresh pink lady apples and a wonderful but subtle chalky finish and fine minerality. This wine is within the price range specified and a good introduction to the more prestigious Chablis that are out there. The subtlety of the chalky finish of this wine means that it compliments many a fish starter or chicken liver parfait.

If you are looking for something at the bottom end of our price range then Mâcon-Villages is a good entry-level white burgundy. Marks and Spencer's 2014 Mâcon-Villages is particularly good and has duly received the Decanter International Trophy in the Decanter World Wine Awards for a bottle under £15. Unlike a lot of chardonnays from the Burgundy region this is not aged in oak barrels, despite the deceptive straw colour of the wine itself. Thus, like the Petit-Chablis this wine compliments white fish and light starters superbly with its lovely fresh citrus notes.

When picking a wine to accompany you to formal hall versatility is the order of the day, and my most frequent choice for the occasion was a bottle of Rioja. The Cambridge Wine Merchants have an embarrassment of riches when it comes to

this popular Spanish wine that is made predominantly out of the tempranillo grape. In fact, *The Telegraph* recently reported that within three years Britons will buy more Spanish wine than French. For around £12 the Navajas Reserve Rioja 2009 is a particularly good example of Rioja. Aged in American oak barrels for a minimum of three years this is a full bodied red wine with great tannins, hints of cinnamon and tobacco and a wonderful vanilla finish. This wine will really compliment any meat that you are having at formal and is particularly enjoyable with game or red meat.

What if you are a member of a clandestine political society and want to try and come up with some sort of elaborate political plot to oust a rival and need a bit of lubrication to get those creative and competent juices flowing? Smith Woodhouse Ruby Port is available at the Cambridge Wine Merchants for about £10. Port is a wine fortified in Cognac barrels which is commonly enjoyed as a postprandial. On the nose there are wonderful hints of raisins with a smooth finish. The high alcoholic volume and sweetness of port means that it's a natural partner to a lovely farmhouse cheddar on a cold and foreboding Michaelmas evening. I would highly recommend the cheese and pie stall located in Market Square for the perfect accompaniment to any glass of port.

It appears that my time as Chairman of the Conservative Association was not wasted, as the more disillusioned I have become about politics over my time in Cambridge, the more involved I became in CUCA in order to transform it into meetings more of 'sparkling wine enthusiasts' than political hacks. I am glad that an investigative journalist acting on behalf of this publication enjoyed the social setting of one of my legendary drinks events and I hope I have imparted some wisdom on to those who wish to learn more about wine while studying at Cambridge.

*Daniel Jennings*



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# TRANS FASHION

The fashion industry has recently witnessed a number of developments in the representation and discussion of trans issues. Caitlyn Jenner graced the cover of *Vanity Fair* back in June and trans-casting is becoming more frequent on the runway. The foundation of a branch of a trans-only modelling agency in Los Angeles, Apple Model Management, was announced in July and New York Fashion Week last month saw designer Gogo Graham stage a collection modelled by and exclusively created for trans women. What is the experience, however, of fashion for trans people off the catwalk? Here are a number of insights into the everyday realities of trans fashion:

"Trans people – especially trans women – face a lot of stereotypes when it comes to clothing and presentation. How many films or TV shows have you seen with a trans woman character, and how many of those showed a shot of her putting on lipstick, a dress, a wig, tights, heels? Scenes like these tend to reinforce a deadly myth; that trans people's genders are effectively costumes, and that without these costumes, we can't possibly be (and, therefore, be seen and treated with respect as) the genders we really are."

"For a non-binary person – someone who is neither male nor female – you'd think that these binary stereotypes would be there to be broken. However, non-binary people tend to come across a whole new set of hurdles when it comes to fashion. Pre-existing expectations of what it means to be 'androgynous' tend to centre white, skinny, physically abled, AFAB (assigned-female-at-birth) bodies, to the detriment of all other expressions of androgyny. 'Gender-neutral' clothes adhere almost exclusively to a masculine default. In addition, there comes the assumption that non-binary people will even want to dress 'androgynously', and that if we don't, we are failing at breaking down gender stereotypes – a job that none of us, in simply being who we are, ever signed up for in the first place."

"Hopefully, the following handful of trans students' experiences with fashion and gender will debunk some of the assumptions made about trans people, as well as representing some of the intersections – with class, and with sizeism, to name just two – that typical binary trans narratives often fail to take into account."

– Em Travis



"After seven years at an all-girls' school, the idea of being anything other than cis was alien to me. It's only recently that I have come out as a gender-fluid person and there have been few wardrobe changes. Sure, I have clothes that are 'gendered' for men AND women, but who's to say I can't feel like a guy and wear a pair of heels if I want? Or be a girl in a suit?"

than me in Britain. However, without name-dropping financial support systems or throwing around household incomes, I feel painfully working-class in Cambridge whilst also feeling deeply privileged at home. That said, the idea of replacing the contents of my wardrobe to better reflect my gender identity is intangible to me. I've never bought a new wardrobe – skirts and jumpers from my childhood still fall in and out of my personal fashion."

"If anything was to go, it'd have to be replaced. Within financial constraints, that leaves no room for transition – clothes become, rather than self-expression, a kind of personal inertia. When you can't afford it, there is no 'welcome to your real self' make-over, or late-adolescent flurry of personal reinvention."

"Clothes are not inherently gendered to me. I enjoy putting on a tight dress, smiling to myself and saying – 'look at that boy – isn't he pretty'. But on a level that pre-dates my identification as trans, I wish I had a choice in the matter. I eke out the gender fluidity in my wardrobe in the same way I've been re-imagining the same clothes all my life. 'Sometimes I just crave the freedom to throw old things away.' – Anonymous



DANIEL HORATIO AGOSTINI

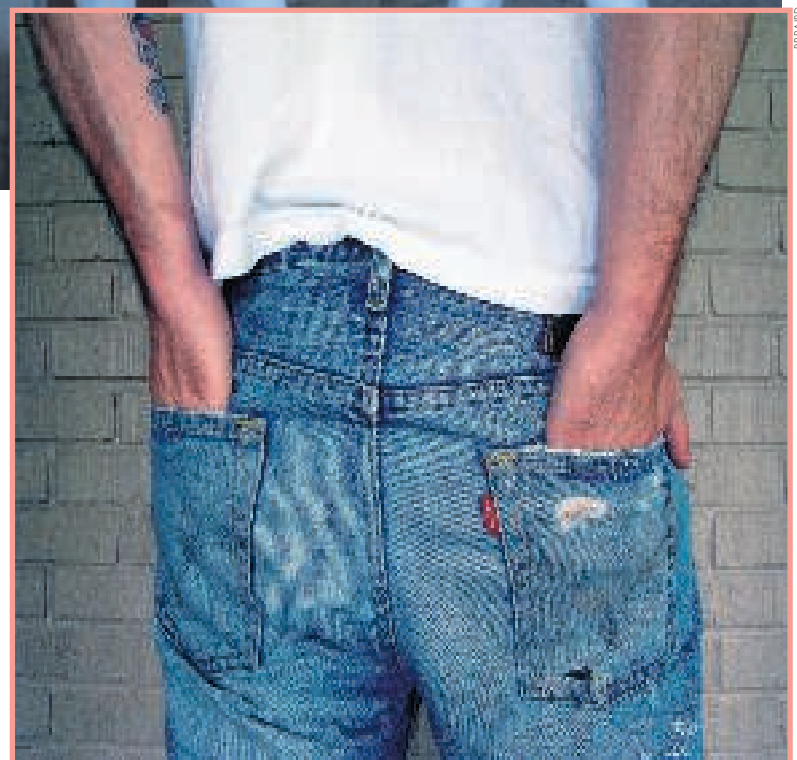
"I feel like I ought to preface this by saying that there are poorer people

"The most important thing I ever purchased was a good binder from eBay... suddenly I didn't have to have that sinking feeling of looking in the mirror and seeing a body that didn't belong to me. My only reason for more clothes was for self expression; I picked up pieces as I found them, ranging from second-hand clothes that had been repaired to a new lease of life (from eBay or charity shops), sale items, supermarket clothes, but best of all, the ones I made that not only fit me well (nigh on impossible for anything other than baggy t-shirts in the men's section) but reflected my inner quirkiness which had been hidden after so many years as a heteronormative person."

– Roisin Huskinson

"As someone who identifies as gender-fluid, I am often told by well-wishers that I ought to wear whatever I want and behave however makes me feel my most authentic self. It so happens that I prefer to wear masculine clothing, appreciating the fit of a suit jacket or argyle jumper, and have no desire to explore alternatives. Furthermore, I rather think that wearing high heels would be a nuisance on the smoothly-paved streets of New York, let alone the uniquely complex system of paving in Cambridge." – Nikolas Oktaba

"Before I transitioned I stomped around town wearing jeans, black band t-shirts and a leather trench coat. Nowadays I'm much happier and can regularly be seen stomping around town wearing jeans, black band t-shirts and a leather trench coat. What – you thought there would



REBAND

be some amazing transformation and I would be suddenly interested in dresses? While we're at it, please stop gendering clothes; they're just clothes. Wear whatever makes you feel comfortable." – Sarah Gibson

"I have never had an easy time clothes shopping, because I am fat, and even though quite a lot of people are fat, mainstream clothes chains don't want us in their stores. Either they don't go above a 16/L or the 'plus-size' section is tiny, frumpy, and hidden away in a corner. And I'm only a 'small' fat – some people can't shop on the high street at all. Dressing in a way that I'm comfortable with gender-wise has added another layer of difficulty."

"Being out-of-place in the 'men's' section (I shop in the 'women's' section too), is stressful, although much less than if I were a trans woman or non-binary AMAB (assigned male at birth) person in the 'women's' section, I'm sure. However, I've had a similar feeling shopping in 'straight size' shops for years. Online, clothes catering specifically to fat people tend towards the hyperfeminine -- I think 'curvy' is seen as more acceptable than fat, but that's not 'me' at all. And fashion blogs for trans and gender non-conforming people centre those who, on top of being transmasculine and white, are also skinny." – Frances Haynes





## Nine of the best-dressed characters in literature

Where fashion meets fiction, writers can browse and choose from a wardrobe of words to dress their characters. Whether we are seduced, haunted, repulsed, or merely underwhelmed by them, those that inhabit literature's many worlds are hugely defined by what they wear.

### Sebastian Flyte, *Brideshead Revisited*

The Oxford diva's outfits are always impeccably on point. From 'pillar-box red pajamas' to flawless white-tie, Flyte's look is at its height when armed with his teddy bear.

### Luna Lovegood, the *Harry Potter* series

Luna is the most aesthetically individual character of Rowling's series. Her eccentricity, quirkiness, and resistance to register to social norms is refreshingly culminated in a style fabulously realised in the films. Luna Looksgood.

### Dorian Gray, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*

Embodying "once you go black, you never look drab", the brooding Dorian oozes haunting seduction. Whether you find him to be "perfectly hideous" or someone "whose picture really fascinates" you, Gray tantalisingly tempts us to wonder what dwells within his un-ageing and sculpted exterior: "behind every exquisite thing that existed, there was something tragic."

### Cleopatra, *Antony and Cleopatra*

If lying under a "pavilion of cloth of gold tissue" doesn't scream fabulously regal then nothing else will. Cleopatra will forever be an unrivalled queen from across the pages, and her appearance does not disappoint; she is "more beautiful than any artist's idealised portrait of the goddess Venus." (Forever an ideal go-to

fancy dress option).

### Little Red Riding Hood

A predominant fairytale icon, Little Red Riding Hood pulls off a number that no one else could. Angela Carter boldly reminds us of this, as in her gothic short story collection *The Bloody Chamber*, lil' Red is used as a walking symbol of the female hymen. Albeit an illogically noticeable outfit choice for walking in an infamously dangerous forest, Red's coat is at the peak of fairytale couture and is nothing short of a symbol of adventure, individuality, boldness, and literary immortality.

### Arcite & Palamon, *The Knight's Tale*

Chaucer's knights are enough to make any medieval admirer swoon. Think James Bond, but the seven hundred year old equivalent. Dashing and chivalrous, few could throw down their gauntlet to challenge these knights' aesthetic appeal, "robed splendidly" with "glittering shields" and "marvellous armour." And yet, Arcite and Palamon are painful reminders of the male fashion of today – who is going to want to send princes of snap-

backs and high-top trainers to fight for your hand?

### Jordan Baker, *The Great Gatsby*

Commending Fitzgerald's titular character is too easy – his extravagant and somewhat farcical shower of shirts over Daisy is just one warning of how we should not mistake quantity for quality. It is the deliciously dark and unassumingly cool Jordan Baker who steals the spotlight. Her unrivalled poise sets her above the insufferably bland Daisy, and our literary eye is always drawn to the more quirkily and yet nonetheless sexily described Jordan: "she wore her evening-dress, all her dresses, like sport clothes - there was a jauntiness about her movements as if she had first learned to walk upon golf courses on clean, crisp mornings." One can only dream of gliding through 1920's New York high society with Ms Baker and her effortless fashion of aloofness.

### Ayesha, *The Satanic Verses*

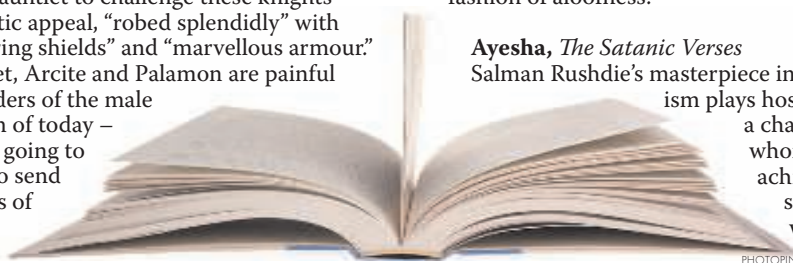
Salman Rushdie's masterpiece in magic realism plays host to Ayesha, a character in whom Rushdie achieves a supernatural wonder: "but-terflies had

settled upon her body in such thick swarms that she seemed to be wearing a dress of the most delicate material in the universe." The image is striking and celestial, and (getting one up on the pop-culture icon Effie Trinket) the girl with the butterfly dress appeals to even the most resisting of imaginations.

### Orlando, *Orlando*

Woolf's Orlando exhibits how "vain trifles as they seem, clothes have, they say, more important offices than merely to keep us warm. They change our view of the world and the world's view of us." Raised as a man but identifying as a woman, Orlando's sense of self is traced through the development of aesthetic. Woolf's recognition of the relationship between gender, identity, and aesthetic is presented as somewhat simultaneously fundamental but also eternally complex: "Never have I seen my own skin (here she laid her hand on her knee) look to such advantage as now. Could I, however, leap overboard and swim in clothes like these? No! [...] she wondered, here encountering the first knot in the smooth skein of her argument." This examination of what it means to think about gender and how it manifests in appearance is a powerful reminder of how we establish our connection with the world, and how we feel it should perceive us.

Oliver Yeates



PHOTOPIN

## REVIEW: LOUIS VUITTON SERIES 3

**Hannah Parlett** visits the renowned fashion house's new exhibition on the complete creation of its Autumn/Winter 2015 show at Paris Fashion Week, and is impressed with the range, skill and artistic merit found in all of the pieces.

Opposite the Royal Courts of Justice on the historical Strand sits a new immersive exhibition brought to London by the House of Louis Vuitton. *Series 3 – Past, Present, Future* is a stunning insight into the conceptual and practical creative processes involved in fashion design. Its principal focus is Vuitton's Autumn/Winter 2015 show staged back in March and the complexities of organizing a twelve-minute slot at Paris Fashion Week. We are taken through every stage of planning, from creative director Nicolas Ghesquière's initial inspiration from the Eden Project to the finished collection that features a metallic, futuristic aesthetic. Along the way, *Series 3* establishes the perfect balance between the past and the modern, blending a reflection upon the brand's nineteenth century origins with its role in the current fashion industry. In this manner, the exhibition forms a narrative, inviting us to witness Louis Vuitton's expansion as a story of progress, noting along the way changes in technology and production. The exhibition's

skillful appreciation of the past also allows us to appreciate the sanctity and luxury of Louis Vuitton's products in 2015. A particular highlight sees a Parisian artisan working on a small trunk, one of the brand's most popular pieces, featuring its distinctive brown iconography. We learn that her work involves the same details as the

artisans of nineteenth century Louis Vuitton working on the same item takes around to create and each production requires knowledge, it is attachment of the gold gluing each of leather. In familiar world mass

trunk. Each thirty hours stage of production specialist whether ing one locks or piece our of



COUTURE\_FREAK2

production, this relic of the past is testament to the sheer refinement of Louis Vuitton as a fashion house today. Three screens above the artisan illuminate a closer view of the different angles of her desk, demonstrating her work as a performance for us all to gaze upon. After all, these pieces are works of art and it is this 'savoir-faire' craftsmanship, not simply the look of the finished products that imbue them with such value. A walk-in wardrobe greets us towards the end of the exhibition, stating that the garments inside tell the woman 'tales of who she would like to become'. This articulates why what we wear demands this kind of close exploration; clothes have an intimate relationship with our bodies, self-expression and identity. Perhaps this is the most important reason to visit *Series 3* this month. It reminds us that the world of fashion is a world of fine art and that a seemingly transient event like a fashion show encompasses its own unique story.

180 Strand until 18th October.

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## POLICE NOW

I graduated from Gonville and Caius with a first in Natural Sciences in 2007. I joined the Metropolitan Police straight after and spent 2 years responding to 999 calls in Hackney. I then trained to be a detective and was promoted to being a Detective Sergeant in Lambeth, before working on the Trident Gangs Command. In 2013 became a Detective Inspector - working for a year as a

Neighbourhood inspector in Leyton and then leading a team of 40 detectives in Waltham Forest. I was promoted to Detective Chief Inspector and was lucky enough to be awarded a Fulbright Scholarship to go to the US for 5 months to conduct research into police training and unconscious bias. I returned this summer to lead the first 6 week Police Now Summer Academy. Being a police officer is a privilege, we are given significant responsibility from day 1 and it has been both rewarding and challenging - ethically, mentally, intellectually, emotionally. I have been lucky enough to be able to help people in some of the toughest moments of their lives and have learnt a lot from some extraordinary and compassionate colleagues.

There is huge opportunity within policing to innovate and improve - I set up the Commissioner's 100 - a group of frontline officers keen to change the met- and we persuaded the Met to launch Police Now in 2014-15.

This year seven forces from around the UK are participating in the Police Now 2 year graduate leadership programme. We will be recruiting only the best graduates onto the policing frontline where they will be measured on their ability to boost confidence and reduce crime in a specific geographical patch. This year most of the Police Now cohort wouldn't have considered joining the police if it weren't for Police Now yet 98% of them would recommend the programme to a friend. On the Police Now programme you will have a unique opportunity to make a difference & develop critical transferable skills and after 2 years we'll support them to pursue a career outside, or inside, the police. Policing, and more importantly communities, will get a further injection of tenacious, committed, innovative individuals to add to ranks of committed and capable officers who are trying to make a difference in communities through delivering quality policing.

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# “It’s all over... and it’s all about to begin”

*Ian Johnston reflects upon the life and impact of Brian Friel, one of Northern Ireland’s most celebrated playwrights*

“*And so when I cast my mind back different kinds of memories offer themselves to me.*”

Michael Evans’s closing monologue of *Dancing at Lughnasa* reached a new level of poignancy following the death of Brian Friel on Friday at the age of 86. Lovers of his work will summon up memories of the so-called ‘Irish Chekhov’, Northern Ireland’s greatest modern playwright, while others will remember the reluctant star, a quiet man devoted to his craft. For me, his stagecraft marks him out as a true great, a creator of exceptionally credible works. Set in rural Ireland, his plays embody that unique, undefinable concept of ‘Irishness’, but also address universal themes which transcend spatial and temporal settings and transport the audience into the realms of dream and memory. His often fatalist portrayal of Irish life, however, is offset by the warmth, humour and credibility of characters such as Madge in *Philadelphia, Here I Come!* and Aunt Maggie in *Dancing at Lughnasa*; individuals who stave off the boredom of their everyday existence with a laugh, a smile or a sharp quip. The wide thematic scope of his work would lead to international recognition, with the likes of *Translations*, *Faith Healer* and many others enjoying successful transfers to Broadway, and critical acclaim; he was the winner of multiple Tony Awards and an Olivier Award.

However, like the grounded individuals of his plays, Friel shied away from the limelight. As a boy, he attended St Columb’s College in Londonderry yet, unlike more effervescent alumni such as Seamus Heaney and John Hume, he rarely addressed the media and remained somewhat of a recluse despite his success and huge popularity at home and abroad. He was born near Omagh in County Tyrone and despite the impact of The Troubles on his hometown, such as the 1998 Omagh Bombing, his work rarely

addressed politics. Whereas Sean O’Casey’s *Dublin Plays* used characters as devices to present diverse ideologies voiced during the Easter Rising, Friel’s work examines people not politics, delving into the human psyche and addressing themes such as language, memory and mythology.

This character analysis would be performed in a very specific setting. Fourteen of his plays are set in the fictional town of Ballybeg, derived from the Irish Baile Beag meaning ‘small town’, and it is in this insular, claustrophobic place where his characters slowly unravel. Their relationship with their home is a difficult one; swinging from great emotional attachment to a loathing of its restrictions, as is the case in *Dancing at Lughnasa*. In it, the tensions created by the insular existence of the Mundy sisters slowly build to a wild climax, with the famous frenzied dance scene enacted by all five sisters. Yet this dance acts only as a temporary release from their mundane existences and is soon brought to a halt. Having recently seen the Lyric Theatre’s production of the play in Belfast, I pondered my own relationship with my home. Although nowhere near as rural, the slower way of life and family traditions of my home in County Tyrone have a similarly magnetic quality to Ballybeg. Even though, the hectic life of a Cambridge undergrad couldn’t be more different from my childhood in Northern Ireland, I will always have a desire to return home. This is also the case for Michael and Father Jack, who leave Ballybeg for England and Africa respectively, to return years later. This demonstrates the importance of ‘home’ and the difficulties of escaping your roots; of the power of memory and nostalgia to leave us with us an uncomfortable longing for something which we often never truly appreciated the first time around.

This is because Friel’s concept of Irishness resides in finding small morsels of satisfaction within an



IMAGE BFO15812: BOBBIE HANNEY/PHOTOGRAPHIC ARCHIVES; JOHN J. BURNS LIBRARY, BOSTON COLLEGE

often unsatisfactory existence. Other Irish playwrights such as Martin McDonagh and Samuel Beckett also play on a sense of dissatisfaction – *Waiting for Godot* reposes on the principle of unfulfilment; *Godot* never bothers to show up, yet Friel’s work differs from theirs in that it reposes on his characters’ passion for life, despite their often compromised positions. The aspiration of Gar O’Donnell to leave Ballybeg for Philadelphia in *Philadelphia, Here I Come!* is presented through two characters: the Private and Public Gar. Their imagining of Philadelphia as an El Dorado launches the protagonists and the audience into the world of dream, a dream which

is made ever more attractive by its unattainability. It is the dichotomy between the private Gar, who is removed from social constraints and talks only to the audience, and the public Gar, confronted with the reality of abandoning everything and everyone he knows, that drives the play. The final dilemma and doubt over whether Gar will leave or not has fascinated audiences and will no doubt do so for years to come. It is Friel’s ability to offer ‘the other’ as a tantalising, exotic prospect which draws us in, before we slowly question if we truly desire change; if reality, for all its constraints and blandness, is not more attractive than the unknown.

Following Friel’s death, it is the lines of Private and Public Gar who exclaim “‘It’s all over’... ‘And it’s all about to begin’”, which offer themselves to me. Aside from my personal appreciation of his work, the fact that actors such as Ralph Fiennes and John Hurt have expressed their desire to play his characters shows the huge esteem in which he is held. I can only hope that the Corpus production of *Dancing at Lughnasa* in December will do justice to the play and that, for all the difference between Ballybeg and Cambridge, students recognise the importance of Friel’s contribution to British and Irish drama and his status as a modern great.

## The Good, The Bad & THE CRITIC

*“Has anybody ever seen a drama critic in the daytime? Of course not. They come out after dark, up to no good.”*

I may be as criminally inclined as P. G. Wodehouse implies in *The Adventures of Sally*, I may be a vampire or a werewolf (I do have monstrously thick hair) or any number of those creatures that are chased with pitchforks by a baying mob because of their utter indifference to humanity. I lurch through the darkness, creeping my way into the ADC, rubbing my hands and cackling under my breath on the back row as I think of how vapid the lead actor is, how ridiculous the dance choreography is, how deliriously happy I will feel when I return to my dilapidated lair and destroy someone’s dreams in a maximum of 500 words.

Or, I could be an individual with a zeal for theatre, a desire to engage with Cambridge’s dramatic realm and share my experience. It doesn’t sound as thrilling as being innately evil, but unfortunately for those readers who were hoping for some spontaneous gothic fiction or a revelation about my secret life

in Cambridge’s seedy criminal underworld, the average profile of a theatre reviewer is simply a student with a curiosity in or a passion for the stage.

While we may not get to wear sable capes with a fabulously red inside lining and licence to speak with a shoddy Romanian accent, the ultimate perk of being a reviewer is two free tickets to any production being staged in Cambridge that is offered. Not only does it help to manage your expenses (some tickets can sell at £10, which is essentially two weeks’ worth of Sainsbury’s Basics shopping), it can also build foundations for friendships: a spare free ticket is unlikely to be refused, and perhaps the ‘Yawn and Reach’ technique will (finally!) work when they’re too engrossed in watching interpretive dance to techno music and strobe lighting.

Of course, it can be difficult within the Cambridge bubble to move as a critic without any repercussions: sitting next to an actor and fellow student in a lecture who I had recently criticised

was dizzyingly uncomfortable, to the extent that I was almost tempted to give him a false name (thankfully my mind stopped me before I uttered the immortal ‘Gladys’). Yet there is nothing to fear nor feel regretful about when your review has been honest and constructive. Completely disparaging a production or performance with vitriol is not the type of piece that will garner you e-mails from directors or producers actually thanking you for your comments, but it is the type that will force you inconveniently into hiding in the college buttery forevermore.

The turnaround time is hectic (reviews need to be submitted the morning after, which means even if the ‘Yawn and Reach’ technique worked, post-performance/celebratory ADC bar drinks will be cut short), but reviewing is non-committal, and a leisurely way to add to your portfolio, relieve yourself of the pile of books stacked upon your desk, and bask in the culture that Cambridge has to offer. We aren’t monsters, just misunderstood.

Sarah-Jane Tollan



**Film: High-Rise**

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eating – world.

Irons's character spends much of his time poring over architectural plans, trying to work out, as he puts it, "where he went wrong". But he misses the point: the movie is not about right or wrong. Morals are suspended in the high-rise space, and the tower instead presents a different binary – up or down. The characters are engaged in a game of snakes and ladders: in constant competition, some emerge as social climbers, and others slide down to the lowest level.

The film follows Dr Robert Laing (Tom Hiddleston) as he navigates the building's social jungle. The 'middleman' in every sense of the word, Hiddleston expertly portrays an indifferent observer: a guest of both the grotesque baroque revelries at the top and the screaming children's pool parties at the bottom. Hiddleston is unsettling in his self-sufficiency, relying on nobody. Immune to the erupting violence, his character refuses to play by the rules, fraternising sexually and socially with those above and below him. With his apathy towards community rankings, Hiddleston's Laing ultimately emerges as the victor of the building. Royal may be the architect, but with a sly wink to *Battle Royale*, it is Laing who finally makes it to the top.

Wheatley's ultra-violent adaptation ticks all the boxes. Its impishly demented comment on contemporary civilisation is a darkly hilarious *Lord of the Flies* for our modern city. A project branded 'unfilmable' and stalled for decades, Jeremy Thomas's slick production skilfully moors the chaos of a class system teetering over the edge of psychosis. *High-Rise* is a multistorey masterpiece – a film that works quite literally on a variety of levels, it is undoubtedly destined to become a cult classic.

Kate Wilson

**T**owering above its blockbuster competitors, Ben Wheatley's *High-Rise* is a cinematic masterpiece. Blending dark humour with a deep satire of the British class system, Wheatley brands J.G. Ballard's notorious novel with his distinctive psychedelic stamp. Brutalism is key to the film. Claustrophobically trapped within a concrete high-rise apartment block, the tower's soulless architecture provides the foundation for a stratified society slowly descending into anarchy.

Despite its star-studded cast – Jeremy Irons, Sienna Miller and Tom Hiddleston – the film is not about the people, it's about the building. A pillar of Ballard's *Concrete and Steel* trilogy of novels, the book is celebrated for its "psycho-geographic" bent: a focus on the relation between place and person. With a visual nod to Stanley Kubrick's *A Clockwork Orange*, Wheatley perfectly translates this seminal theme onscreen, crafting a distinct identity

for each individual through their relation to the tower.

Jeremy Irons is exceptional as the building's architect, Anthony Royal, who lives an elite existence in a farcically lavish penthouse with his wife and horse. After breathing life into the high-rise, Irons's submissiveness is chilling as the building exercises an autonomy beyond his control. As the tower lights flicker and garbage cans pile up in half-illuminated stairwells, the crumbling infrastructure mirrors the building's decline into chaos. Rape and torture become commonplace. The community withdraws into what Ballard coins the "archaeopsychic" – the impulses buried deep inside the mind that are revealed as layers of civilisation are peeled away.

Reduced to its primitive origins, the anarchic community is driven by urges and orgies. Amy Jump's snappy script anchors this disorder, deftly capturing the building's descent into a dog-eat-dog – and famously dog-

**Exhibition: Following Hercules**

The Fitzwilliam Museum's 'Following Hercules: The Story of Classical Art' is an engaging exhibition focused on a simple idea. Through a comprehensive selection of items, all featuring Hercules in some form or another, we are told the story of the depiction of form in classical art and its defining impression on the history of Western sculpture. The intimate octagonal space of the Fitzwilliam Museum's Gallery 10 provides a perfect setting for the whistle-stop tour that 'Following Hercules' treats us to. The diversity of the objects on display exemplifies Hercules' widespread representation and appeal – among others we have vases, bronzes, coins, seal rings, sketches, engravings, paintings and porcelains.

The items range from the classical to the modern, and show us that while ancient, classical art has always had relevance for artists that continues to this day. The exhibits themselves are very well-chosen. For example, the Farnese Hercules, an ancient statue discovered in Rome in 1546, was an important source of inspiration for many of the artists showcased in this exhibition; in the absence of having the actual statue, there are a number of sketches and representations on display to give a sense of it. The most impressive of these is Goltzius' 1592 engraving of the Farnese Hercules, which embodies the

majesty, fascination and presence of that portrait type, a wonderfully evocative substitute for the real thing.

The exhibition highlights the special relationship of Hercules with Cambridge itself, and with the Fitzwilliam museum in particular. In 1850, the museum acquired thirty plaster casts of Classical statues, of which the Farnese Hercules was the largest and most impressive. All of these casts, including the Farnese Hercules, now reside in the Museum of Classical Archaeology at the Faculty of Classics. It was nice to see the interplay here between the different museums in Cambridge, particularly with the current 'Beauty and Balance' display, which re-creates key arrangements from Kettle's Yard. Last but by no means least, the centrepiece of 'Following Hercules' takes the form of a colossal laser-cut polystyrene statue by Cambridge-born artist Matthew Darbyshire.

Darbyshire is certainly not lacking in ideas, but I felt that many of these were lost – ironically – through the medium of the polystyrene itself. One of the joys of the depiction of Hercules throughout the history of art is the sheer diversity of the ways in which he has been shown – the exhibition showcases this very well. From the vigorous expression of the vase painting, to the drunken, almost Satyr-like air of the Etruscan bronzes

and the wearied gaze of the Farnese type, 'Following Hercules' shows us that Hercules is a figure with which artists can experiment, to both serious and light-hearted degrees. It is a shame that the face of Darbyshire's Hercules seems to have little in the way of expression; polystyrene doesn't create shadows, and therefore the nuance that other materials are better placed to convey is lost. Also noticeably lacking from Darbyshire's Hercules are the muscles and toning of his back, again an aspect which has been a longstanding source of fascination for artists. Far from being an oversight on Darbyshire's part, these absences felt more like an unfortunate side effect of his choice of material.

Overall, I felt that the exhibition could have done more to explain the appeal of Hercules as a figure to artists throughout history, but in absence of this, the display ticks all the boxes. 'Following Hercules' does an excellent job in showing, through a small collection of items, that the dialogue between the contemporary and the classical has been an enduring and enriching one, one which has inspired, moulded and enlivened how we think about art today.

Emer O'Hanlon

*'Following Hercules: The Story of Classical Art' is on display at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, 25<sup>th</sup> September-6<sup>th</sup> December 2015. Admission is free.*

**Film: Macbeth**

**S**hakespeare is always a huge task for any director to tackle. The complexities and seeming inaccessibility of the setting has led directors like Baz Luhrmann to take these tales and make them into something far more modern. Justin Kurzel, however, has created an imperfect film with moments of true brilliance that embraces the chaos of the past. This is not James McAvoy's turn as Macbeth in a post-apocalyptic future. This is Michael Fassbender at the height of his acting power, a medieval lord willing to risk everything to claim power.

The film opens in a most unusual way for a depiction of Macbeth: the funeral of Lady Macbeth's lost child. Kurzel, therefore, immediately looks to stamp his mark on Shakespeare films. Gone is the well-trodden order of the witches' prophecy introducing the play. Instead we have a much more nuanced picture. The witches are still very present, and play an important

part in the hypnotic, supernatural chaos of the later film. But his willingness to change the source material allows Kurzel to create more compelling and fantastically rounded characters.

We see Marion Cotillard as more than just the scheming wife she is and as a mother, with grief pushing her towards demonic forces to ensure her husband succeeds. Her range in this film from whispered, heart wrenching sorrow, to diabolical willingness to see the prophecy fulfilled, is a ringing endorsement of the talent Cotillard brings to every film she is in. Equally, Michael Fassbender is a man of war, haunted by the corpses of both men he had killed and those he allowed to die. In interviews Kurzel has gone as far as to characterise this Macbeth as suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder – the terrible unsettling moments of Macbeth's last scenes in the film are a testament to Fassbender's Oscar-worthy talent.

It is in the cinematography and sound that the film really gets to the heart of the chaos and paranoia that eventually consume the Macbeth couple. The Scottish highlands are on stunning form, providing the sweeping





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**Game: The Beginner's Guide**

*The Beginner's Guide* is the creation of Davey Wreden, the singular talent behind indie gaming smash hit *The Stanley Parable*. While his first game was a masterfully scripted and stupidly funny satire of the basic tropes of pretty much every game ever, his new project is an altogether much more personal and menacing affair.

Framed as a collection of levels made by a friend of Wreden's, and with his helpful voiceover guiding the player through each stage, the experience is a deeply conflicting one. It isn't a virtual museum – instead, many different layers of the work shift and mutate through its course to reveal a far more intricate piece. Coda, the anonymous creator whose worlds you inhabit, has no real voice other than ludonarrative – the ideas communicated by the play itself – and he is constantly undermined by Wreden as levels are variously tweaked and butchered for the sake of 'curation'. As a character, Wreden himself becomes seriously unlikeable, showing both an alarming lack of empathy and a narcissism that throws his analysis into suspicion.

The shape of the relationship between Wreden and Coda is the central object of the game's attention, and it is an ambiguous and complex one, crossing between metanarrative and text, from one delivery mechanic to another. The result is an experience completely reliant on its particular medium, veering brutally between confused, melancholic and deeply distressing. Undoubtedly, though, it is astonishing to play; not wholly pleasant, but utterly necessary.

**Game: 80 Days**

Another triumph of storytelling is Inkle's *80 Days*, newly released on PC. As the title suggests, the game is a retelling of Jules Verne's iconic *Around the World in Eighty Days* from the point of view of the loyal valet Jean Passepartout, tasking the player with guiding the distinguished Phineas Fogg around the globe. The globe sits at the game's heart, with locations scattered over its surface and a web of routes between them, each a treasure chest of characters and stories to discover.

This vast scale, encompassing 150 cities and countless possible paths, is elucidated beautifully in text, creating an extraordinarily detailed and utterly engrossing steampunk reimaging of 1872. Meg Jayanth's writing ties neatly into the game's mechanics – each choice encourages the player, in a bizarrely natural way, to constantly adventure further.

Those adventures are themselves extraordinary. Gone is the novel's distasteful white-hero complex – instead there are intelligent discussions of gender, race and colonialism, and our uneasy relationship to our technologies. The world is one full of violent upheaval, and you have to navigate through small moments within these deep struggles.

Each moment requires a response though, and the consequences of your actions are shown completely transparently, both logistic and moral consequences becoming apparent to Passepartout's personal monologue. That richness makes *80 Days* impossible to play just once; it begs to be explored over and over. It is a generator of stories, spinning tales of daring escapes and crushing disasters, acts of austere calculation and daring impulse. Nothing has come close to matching its majesty.

Michael Davin

**Music: Fetty Wap – Fetty Wap**

Fetty Wap is the artist who sung 'Trap Queen'. For many, this is all Fetty Wap will ever be.

In light of this, there was always a chance that the recent release of Fetty Wap's self-titled debut album would be viewed as avoidable. Why listen to a twenty-track record when you can listen over and over to 'Trap Queen' describe "cooking pies in the kitchen with my baby"? Thankfully, this is not the case. *Fetty Wap* is a strong debut album, packed with songs that have genuine potential to be hits.

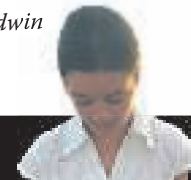
Fetty Wap the artist is in many ways the embodiment of the current state of American hip-hop. Sonically it is very easy for the listener to trace the influences that have inspired the album, with nods to the emotional earnestness of Drake and Kanye West's expressive embrace of autotune on *808s & Heartbreaks*. Despite hailing from New Jersey, the impact of Southern artists like Gucci Mane and Young Thug is palpable throughout. *Fetty Wap* feels like an album that is tapping into a sound to which America is incredibly receptive at the moment; as shown by the roaring success of Future, trap music is becoming an integral aspect of American pop music.

However Fetty Wap still remains difficult to categorize; I suppose that isn't surprising for a man who shunned a prosthetic eye in the name of individuality. Described by many as a rapper, he is really more of a rap-pop crossover. Returning to 'Trap Queen', this was undoubtedly the song of the summer. It was everywhere, blaring out in every club, bar, bedroom and car, reaching number two on the Billboard charts and earning him a place on Taylor Swift's star-studded '1989' tour. 'Trap Queen' starts *Fetty Wap* off with a bang, and the song is truly representative of the artist's greatest strengths and weaknesses. The hook is utterly contagious and uniquely his, but Fetty's attempts at actual rapping are clumsy and ineffective. It's no surprise that he leaves the majority of the rapping to fellow 'Remy Boy' Monty on no fewer than nine tracks.

'679' is another album highlight; its menacing, metro-nomic production perfectly complements Wap's heartfelt singing. More of the same comes on 'Jugg' and 'My Way' – there is no doubt that Fetty Wap has found a solid formula for commercial success which he milks throughout, and it includes Monty as a featured artist. A personal favourite is 'RGF Island', a track which is essentially a three-minute hook and showcases all of Fetty Wap's best qualities. Given time, it would be no surprise if 'RGF Island' usurped 'Trap Queen' as the album's signature song.

For all that is good in it, the album is not without imperfections. While the ability to create an excellent pop-rap hook is commendable, it does lead to some stretches becoming repetitive. Still it would be wrong to view this as an album in the traditional sense; this is a collection of singles, some of which have already tasted success, others which are surely destined for it. Ultimately, there is a strong chance that Fetty Wap will always be remembered as the artist that sung 'Trap Queen'. This album proves that he could be so much more.

Henry Goodwin

**Music Picks of the Week, from Margot Speed**

The World Is A Beautiful Place & I Am No Longer Afraid To Die. If such a name was not reason enough to include this band in this week's music picks, then the work on their most recent album, *Harmlessness*, is. The big indie band formed in 2009 and have gone through dozens of band members, each seemingly introducing new influences along the way. Their earlier work is fairly repellent, consisting of bland spoken word poetry spat over lacklustre instrumentals. This album swings in a new direction however, using softer acoustic sounds and reflective and, importantly, sung lyrics. Tracks such as 'Rage Against the Dying Light' contain some of the fight of their earlier work, but it is now supported by an immaculately-woven patchwork of walking bass lines, riffs and orchestral strings. Just as the Connecticut accent of the lead singer begins to grate, the beauty of his lyrics and raw nostalgia in tracks like 'Gig Life' and 'I Can Be Afraid of Anything' make it easy to forgive his emo twang. The album in its entirety is not much short of unmissable.

One that you probably could miss, though I would still say it is worth a listen, is the latest from Disclosure, *Caracal*. It would be too easy to let a review of anything by the duo slip into a rant about the sorry state of British dance music and the blurring of lines between pop, dance and EDM. But this is *Varsity* not *Vice*, so instead let's all just take *Caracal* on its own for what it is: easy to listen to, reliant on some interesting and bold collaborations, and probably what all Disclosure fans wanted. More interestingly, none of the tracks stand out as being too obviously ear-marked as club-fillers, with each instead

exploring neatly patterned synth lines and reassuringly tripping beats straight from the pop-house rulebook. It's still the vocals that really bring the album to life though, most notably those of Gregory Porter on 'Holding On', and up and coming R&B artist Kwabs on 'Willing & Able'.

Next up is another rising star, Angel Haze. The American rapper and singer appeared with their first releases a few years ago, and is now back with a truly sophisticated record, *Back to the Woods*. It throbs and fizzles with energy and soul-crunching vocals, especially at the moments Haze provides their own melodic interludes. Their lyrics are searingly honest and unapologetically furious, focusing on their own identity as non-binary and their experience of race, as in, for example, 'Impossible': "I flew out the states / Laid on a beach with a view of my face / Considered suicide, I do that these days... I got my middle finger up to white America / But tryin' to white-wash my blackness / Fuck you, you could never break me". Dark backing vocals and militaristic drum beats accompany most tracks, but it is those that break from these formulas that surprised and delighted me, not least the last, 'The Woods', and earlier, 'Moonrise Kingdom'. The latter is a truly beautiful track, especially juxtaposed with the harsher sounds of surrounding songs. The lyrics hold a fragility that complements the venom of other tracks ("They don't know nothing / Nothing about us / Nothing 'bout love or the fears that surround us"), especially when delivered with Haze's unbelievable voice and laid over such involving beats. The album achieves everything it set out to, and leaves me anxious for more from this artist.

vistas for the battles that define the start and end. The building redness of the very air surrounding Macbeth creates a sense of the imminence of Hell: his cries of "LUCIFER" alone on his throne is a startling image of the power of sin to destroy all. Indeed, there is a bit of Cambridge interest as well, with Ely Cathedral giving Fassbender a magnificent stage for Macbeth's triumph and his eventual fall to "the scorpions of my mind." But some of the most haunting scenes are defined by the score of Jed Kurzel. Its constant eerie quality unsettles the viewer, and solidifies our sense of Macbeth's unease over the future. In one particular moment Kurzel builds to a hollow crescendo as cries of "Hail Macbeth" ring around his coronation.

The film, however, is not the perfect masterpiece reviews from *The Telegraph* would have you believe. The surreal nature of the piece does leave it slightly unhinged, with the liberties taken with the text leaving the middle section of the film feeling somewhat stilted. As a result, the madness of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth are potent, but strangely short scenes, losing the power these monologues usually

have on a viewer. Indeed, it is important to note Fassbender and Cotillard do not define the film. Sean Harris is on scene-stealing form as Macduff. His final duel with Macbeth is filled with pure rage, creating this character on the brink of Hell, hooded and surrounded by flames to bring damnation upon Macbeth.

Ultimately Kurzel does a successful job at building a more nuanced and abstract image of Macbeth. By refusing to stick closely to the source material and focus instead on creating this hellish image of medieval life, he leaves certain scenes feeling loose within the overall narrative. It is a risk, however, that I think was worth it in continuing to develop how films explore character. This is more than just a warning of the forbidden fruit of power. It is about a man and woman stuck in a spiral of very tangible emotions. A mother torn apart by the loss of a child and embracing reunion in death. And then Macbeth: the warrior who eventually realises that the violence that got him his crown will wrench it from his grasp.

Alex Izza



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**Leitch is as passionate about medicine and science as he is about his sporting career**

Continued from back page

It is this self-effacement that plays into the infectious congeniality that constantly breaks through as the interview progresses. "What would you most like to be remembered for?" I ask, in a bid to force him into a Sophie's Choice between his academic aspirations and his sporting accomplishments. "I doubt I'll be remembered for anything!" he replies, grinning. The relentless modesty continues. "I'm not the most talented squash player in the world. I was a decent junior – a good international junior – I would back myself to be in the top fifty."

"Top thirty? Twenty?"

"Yeah maybe I could have made the top thirty."

"Higher?"

"No—not without incredible luck." This is all barefaced understatement. The "good international junior" was Scotland's best youth player in 2002 at a period in which the world number one was soon to be a fellow Scot. And which player isn't reliant upon luck in some form to reach the upper echelons of a professional sport?

The self-effacement bleeds into other areas of his life. In speaking of his work as a medical biologist, Harry is equally unpretentious in his assessments. "Again, I'm not the smartest, but I work really hard." When he speaks about science, the same sense of satisfaction surfaces that emerges as he talks about his squash career. "The little bits I've contributed to the world in terms of research, you can't get rid of that." He speaks of science with a hushed sort of reverence, a respect which leaves you in no doubt

that he feels how privileged he is to be able to say: "There is a little bit of biology that is mine".

Science, it seems, offers Harry a framework through which he can interpret his day-to-day life. He repeatedly informs me that, when making decisions, he “goes with his gut,” but in each case he leaves me doubting my own basic anatomical assumption that the gut is in the abdomen and not the head. For example, his decision to focus on medicine rather than squash seems entirely reasonable. “I’m a better researcher than I am a squash player,” he admits. The subsequent decision to turn his attention to doubles followed on from this realisation: competing in the doubles format allowed him to

Perhaps the closest he comes to resolving this paradox comes in his admission that he “didn’t have the ego” to pursue squash at the highest level.

International squash's loss was the University of Cambridge's gain. Despite his accomplishments on the world stage, Harry clearly values the sporting traditions that are part and parcel of Cambridge life. Ten blues down the line, he finds himself in the record books – a record that will almost certainly stand unbroken for many years to come. Harry loves the ritual of blues sport. He's a fierce advocate of the recognition of the 'on the day' performance of the blue and claims that he has become increasingly conformist in his thinking about this quirkier aspect of Oxbridge life – "it's actually one of the few areas where I am conservative". Even a claimed Scottish aversion to age-old conventions should not diminish the importance of the blue in his eyes.

That notwithstanding, his experience of the Cambridge sporting scene has not been an entirely happy affair: there have been run-ins with the blues committee and senior members of the university, a number of whom were reluctant to allow him to compete for his record-breaking ninth blue. In the end, "it took someone from Oxford to say I should play" – an incident which clearly had an effect on Harry and which he seems to view as a confirmation that the best interests of the sport can be maintained even in the face of a centuries-long rivalry.

Hearing this story and others like it, it feels like the university has wasted its opportunity to make the most of



Harry Leitch. Harry is, on paper, a model student: someone who recognises the distinction between education and qualification but who, in spite of this, has pushed hard to achieve academic excellence as a complement to his sporting achievements. The work ethic that enables him to accomplish this is undeniably phenomenal – three times during his university career he took time off to compete in Commonwealth Games. However, as soon as tournaments ended he was back ready to sit exams and progress his medical training to the next level. He is the walking-talking instantiation of the mantra ‘work hard, play hard’, busting the myth that gaining a Cambridge degree should come at the cost of any dream of sporting excellence. And yet the university has largely ignored him.

It's not simply that they haven't asked him for his advice – they

actively ignored it. He tells me how he tried speaking to those involved in the development of the Sports Centre on the West Cambridge Site (a facility in which there are five squash courts). "There was no interest there at all. I feel like I've got quite a decent perspective. But I felt quite under-utilised in that respect," he admits. It's clear that there is no bitterness here on Harry's part. What materialises is more a frustration that there is so little willingness by the university to engage with the untapped opportunities that are available to them. As we talk, a deeper point seems to emerge: perhaps it is the case that the increasing corporatisation of universities within the contemporary world has led to the occlusion of the 'extra-curricular activity' by the more marketable ratios of degree results and future employment opportunities. But this idea is never quite articulated because at this point our food arrives and we turn our mind to more pressing matters.

As we eat, I ignore the intense urge to congratulate myself that an international sports star might enjoy the same unhealthy diet as I do and ask him one final question: ever thought about giving it all up? He looks up. "I'd love to get a medal in the Commonwealth games." He catches himself here, almost shocked that the thought has been verbalised, before retracing his steps and raising the question again: "Do I still want one?" He pauses, momentarily. "Yeah I do." And that's that. In his matter of fact way he's suggested that he'll be there next time around. And yet the fire in his eyes leaves me in very little doubt.

“

HIS EXPERIENCE OF THE CAMBRIDGE SPORTING SCENE HAS NOT BEEN AN ENTIRELY HAPPY AFFAIR

continue to compete at the highest level and continue his academic studies. There was no Faustian pact here but rather a Pascalian wager – a measured response to the *prima facie* evidence with which he was presented. I am convinced that, had he wanted to, he could have been a highly successful senior singles player. But I am equally convinced that he couldn't have been.

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## Cambridge's greatest ever all-rounder?

Varsity's interview with Harry Leitch continues page 27



# Sport

# The golden boy that never was

Jon Mackenzie talks to Harry Leitch, ten-time Blue, who gave up sporting glory for medicine

**Jon Mackenzie**

Sport Correspondent

Harry Leitch is one of those annoying sorts of people. At an age where most people struggle to fill their LinkedIn profiles with what little they have achieved in life, he has a whole Wikipedia page devoted to his accomplishments. With a Cambridge medical degree supplemented by a PhD intriguingly titled 'Pluripotency and the germline', he is currently continuing his research in epigenetics and stem cell biology at the MRC Clinical Sciences Centre on the Hammersmith Hospital campus. He is also a Scottish international squash player and holds the honour of having represented his country at three Commonwealth Games (twice finishing fourth in 2010 and 2014), three World Team Championships and six European Team Championships. Worst of all, he is also eminently likeable.

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**WORST OF ALL, HE IS ALSO EMINENTLY LIKEABLE**

We meet at a bar in Shepherd's Bush which is precisely engineered to look as though it hasn't been precisely engineered; all the beers have names that could be titles of Don DeLillo novels. In between our first drink (Vagabond, since you're asking) and the third (the now satirically apposite Dead Pony Club), I entirely forget that I am supposed to be conducting an interview. For all the ease of conversation, I

could be out for a Friday night drink with an old friend. By the time we finish, I've stopped recording the conversation because the presence of the dictaphone on the table feels slightly incongruous.

This is not really an interrogation, but a conversation from which I emerge feeling enriched. At times it feels like Harry is interviewing me. Any pre-rehearsed line of questioning goes out of the window. We talk sports, politics, university, science, Cambridge life – each topic intertwining with another so that a discussion about the NHS ends up as one about Everton Football Club (Harry is a fan) via Andy Burnham and Hinchingbrooke Hospital (where Harry worked during his medical training).

The bar is full. We share a table with two men watching YouTube reruns of athletics events on their phones. Harry is a softly spoken Scot. He talks quietly, with that understated Edinburgh inflection evocative of Ewan McGregor's attempts at an English accent. Yet as he talks, his voice cuts clearly through the rumblings of background noise. Listening back to my recording, he is mostly drowned out by our tablemates' lengthy discussion of Katarina Johnson-Thompson. But in the moment I have no problem hearing him. He speaks with a quiet self-possession that conveys the curious combination of normality and yet exceptionalism that he exudes. Although he manages to blend seamlessly into the craft-ale background of the up-and-coming London clientele, at times the remarkable nature of his life breaks through and reminds me that I'm sat not with an old friend but with an extraordinary individual.

"I've seen this in Andy's game too." We're talking about the particularities of doubles racket sports. In the last



Harry Leitch representing Scotland at the Commonwealth Games

two Commonwealth games, Harry has been paired with Alan Clyne, a fellow Scot who is currently ranked thirty-first in the world. Alan, it transpires, is a quiet guy and Harry finds himself toning down his self-confessed 'boisterous' nature on court in order to prevent it having any negative repercussions on Alan's game. "In doubles," he says, "you're not playing for yourself – you're playing for the other person too." This leads him into his anecdote about Andy. The Andy in question is Andy Murray who, as Harry views it, was careful to dampen his natural animation on court out of deference to

Laura Robson, his playing partner for the course of his mixed doubles silver at the London Olympics.

Something about the normality of the first-name-terms 'Andy' makes me enquire further. It soon transpires that, as a youngster, Harry's talents were not limited to squash but extended to racket sports in general, a circumstance which led to his attending the same junior tournaments as the Murray brothers.

Looking back, Harry recounts the general feeling of scepticism that attended the decision to send Andy, the younger brother, to Barcelona to

continue his sporting education. "It was seen as a big gamble. There was no guarantee that he would make it at that point but it was easy to forget how good he really was. He was playing opponents three years his senior and was still winning." And yet, even in the wake of this disclosure of famous acquaintances, Harry retains his air of normality. "I've spoken with Judy (Andy's mother and the boys' coach) since then," he tells me. "She remembered me. I've thought about getting in touch with Andy but I'm sure he's forgotten me."

*Continued on p. 27*

## Is the TMO just TMI?

**Adam Woolf**

Sports Correspondent

The opening game of the Rugby World Cup - England vs Fiji - took over two hours from start to finish. Over the course of the match, six incidents were referred to the Television Match Official (TMO), and this set the tone for the rest of the tournament.

In this World Cup, any decision relating to a try that is anything short of

absolutely clear-cut is referred to the TMO as a matter of course. That's before we even factor in the crackdown on "neck-rolls" in the ruck, and other dangerous play, which sees even greater use of video technology.

The TMO can intervene in a total of four extremely broad scenarios, giving it the power to advise the referees on virtually any decision involving points being scored, or yellow and red cards being issued. There is also the problem of any of the match officials being able to refer an incident to the TMO, including the TMO themselves. As such, the TMO, the two assistants, or the referee may stop play at any time to review an incident.

When it was first introduced, the TMO could only adjudicate on what took place in the in-goal area. Was the player in touch? Was the

grounding good? More importantly, they could only intervene when asked specifically by the referee. They could not speak to the referee at all before being asked a question. This was a better system because it avoided referees being undermined and having their decisions reversed. This leads to confusion after tries are awarded, because any such intervention by the TMO must take place before the conversion is kicked. Owen Farrell recently commented that he would rush a conversion to prevent the possibility of the try being reviewed, if he thought it was suspect. It seems ridiculous that a try can be given or not given depending on the speed of the conversion. Once a referee makes a decision, it should stand, be it right or wrong.

Referrals for dangerous play can

take place at any time in the same play as the offence, but some plays can last 2 to 3 minutes. This leads to the farcical scenario of taking play all the way back for a penalty occurring an age ago – the time spent playing in the interim being effectively wasted.

Top international referees are an elite group, both physically and mentally. They have many years of experience, and are rewarded handsomely for the work they do. It is the crux of their job to make tough decisions under huge pressure, and to get them right 95 per cent of the time. Decisions where there is genuine doubt from the referee or their assistants should of course be checked, but far too many calls are made easily and correctly first time and then sent upstairs to be formally rubber-stamped.

One way to cut down on lengthy

stoppages would be to have the referee make an instinctive decision/ first, before asking the TMO to find evidence to the contrary. If they can't do so in a timely fashion (say one minute), the referee's 'instinctive' decision stands. No more looking at every angle twice. Dangerous play should only be looked at within 20-30 seconds of the offence taking place. Failing that, it should be left until after the match.

At some point, a compromise has to be made between getting some decisions wrong and slowing the game down too much. Pick your lesser evil. Nobody wants to see grave injustices at any level of rugby, or sport in general, least of all at an international level, when so much more than mere pride is at stake. But a line must be drawn. The pedantry has gone too far, and it just might ruin this World Cup.



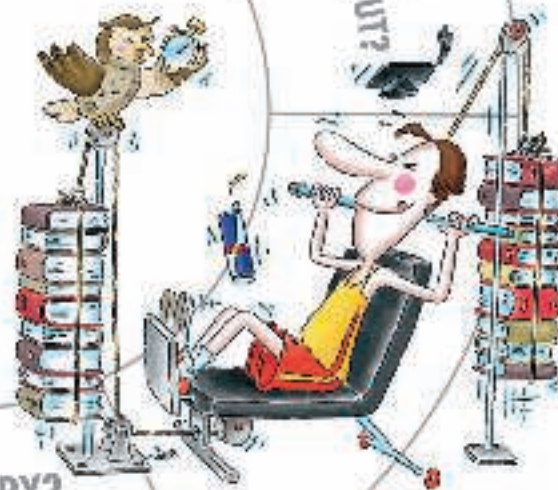
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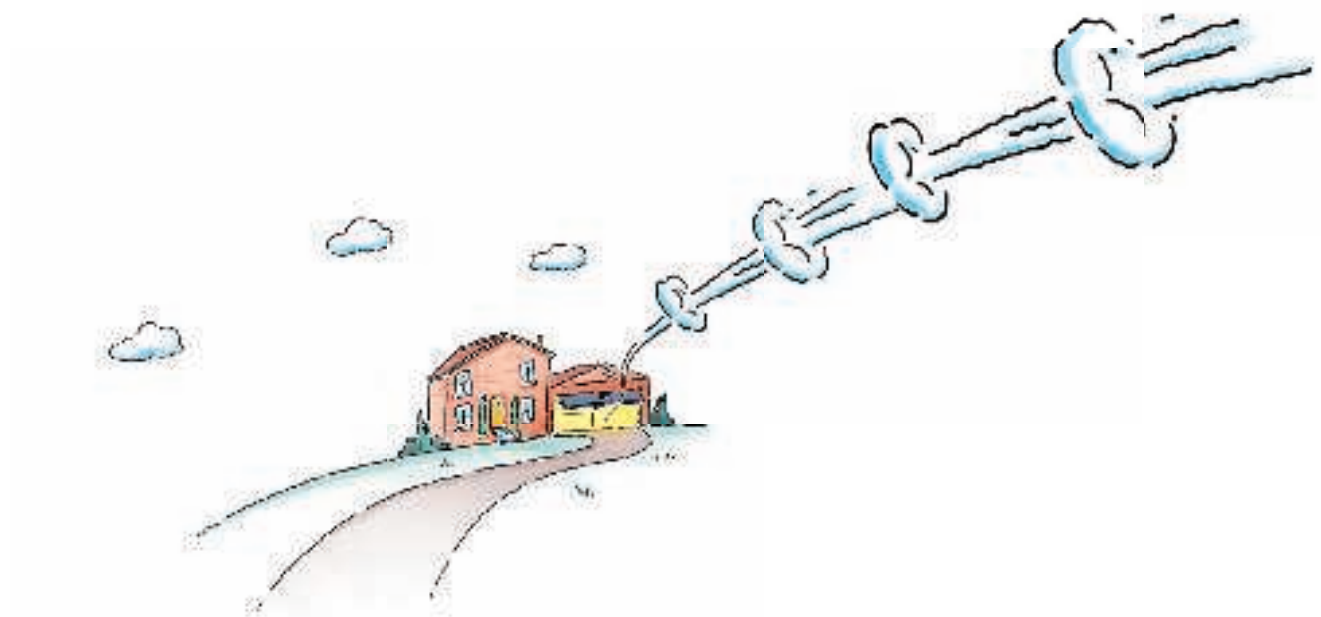
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