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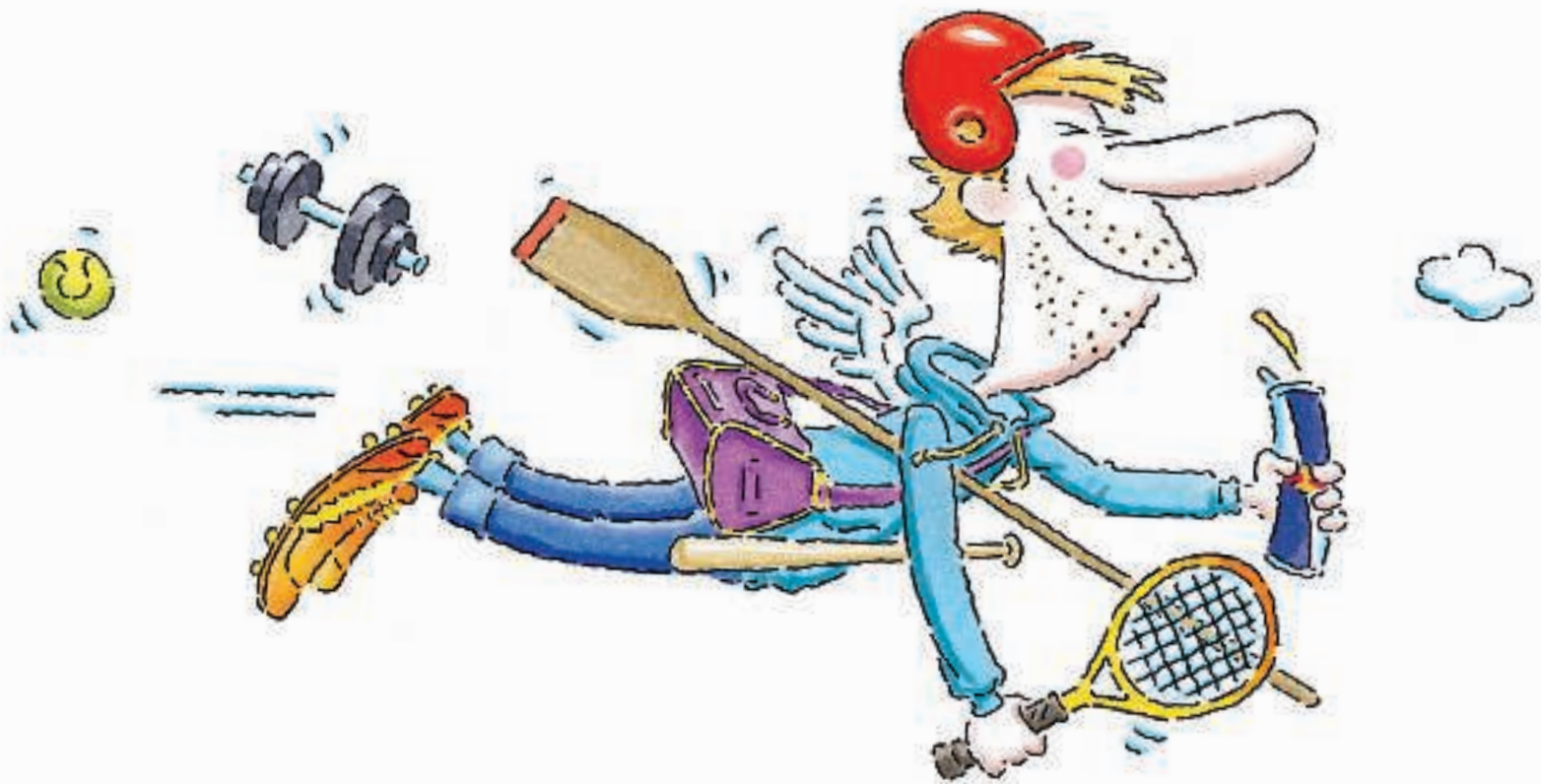
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VARSITY

Issue 795 | Friday 23rd October 2015

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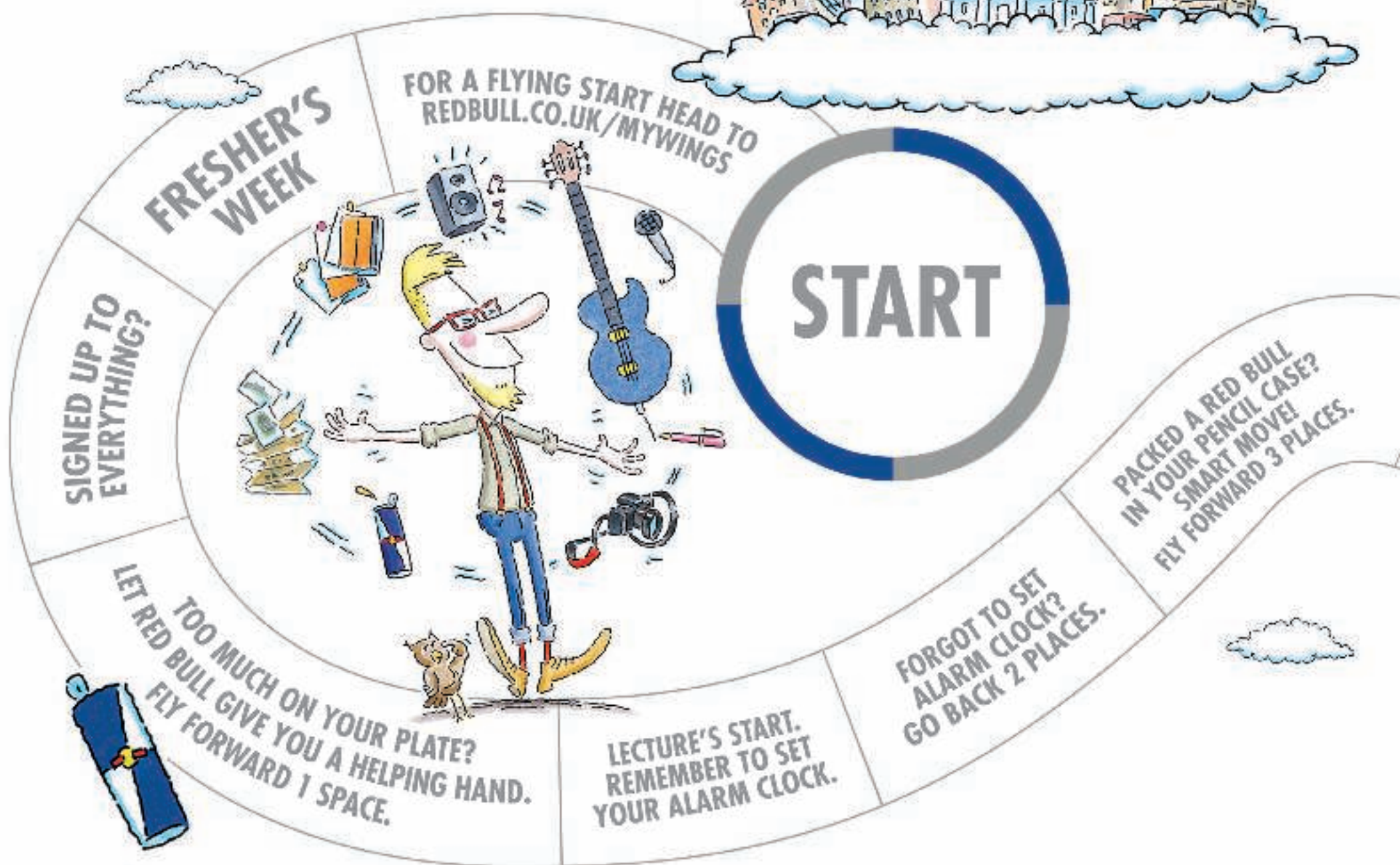
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VARSITY

Issue 795

Friday 23rd October 2015

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£1bn build in disarray

University takes action after damning audit blasts projected £75m overspend on North West Cambridge development

Tom Wilson
Senior News Editor

The management of the University of Cambridge's North West Cambridge development project has been strongly criticised for comprehensive, "systematic" failures that have led to projections of overspend on its first phase totaling up to £76.2 million.

The North West Cambridge project was first conceived in the late 1980s and aims to "provide the facilities and accommodation that will allow the university to maintain its position as one of the world's leading universities", as well as provide for the local community.

It is the largest capital project ever approved by the university, with overall budget estimates of the completed project expected to be in the region of £1 billion, jointly funded by the university and outside sources.

The plans include development of the site to be home to 3,000 new homes, split between university workers and residents, 2,000 collegiate accommodation units and 100,000m squared of academic and research space to be divided between the private sector and university faculties.

The site also includes a primary school, shop units, nursery, community centre, hotels and facilities for senior living.

However an audit committee was set up by the university's Finance Committee in July to investigate the project after the Vice Chancellor "expressed his concern about the governance and management structures" he said had "enabled" costs to escalate without coming to its attention or that of senior officers and bodies, with the aim of reporting back with a series of recommendations to bring the project back on track with initial projections.

The Audit Group sought to establish an account of the "substantial" forecast costs overrun for Phase 1, analysis of current budget setting and cost monitoring processes, and recommend a set of remedial actions to prevent further cost escalation and any other urgent changes required to the management or implementation of the plans.

The damning report, released on Wednesday, reviewed previous increases in projected costs for the first phase of the project, with the initial underlying construction cost estimated at £224 million in January 2013 rising to £315 million in July 2014 and these subsequent overrun projections raising that total to £378 million in July 2015.

The most recent projected cost increases have now breached "financial parameters set by the university", particularly its borrowing limit.

Continued on page 4



Tickled pink: Corpus Christi College's Chronophage was illuminated on Wednesday night

Corpus goes pink for breast cancer

Louis Ashworth
News Correspondent

The Corpus Clock on King's Parade was lit up pink on Wednesday evening, marking the 13th anniversary of the 'Wear It Pink' campaign for Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

The clock, which depicts a giant locust (the 'Chronophage') eating time, joined 18 of the country's finest architectural landmarks in support of Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

The HMS Belfast, Selfridges in Birmingham and St Michael's Mount

in Cornwall were among the UK landmarks which were lit up pink to raise awareness for breast cancer in advance of 'Wear It Pink' day, which is taking place today.

'Wear It Pink', organised by the charity Breast Cancer Now, is the leading fundraising campaign for Breast Cancer Awareness Month. The campaign has raised over £27 million since its inception in 2002.

The charity supports 450 researchers across the UK and Ireland, and hopes that by 2050 everyone who develops breast cancer will survive.

Breast cancer is the UK's most

common cancer — responsible for around 1,000 deaths a month. One in eight women in the United Kingdom will face a diagnosis, and the UK has one of the lowest survival rates among European nations.

Dr John C. Taylor, the clock's designer who studied engineering at Corpus in the 1950s, stated: "We are delighted to be supporting this fantastic event in aid of Breast Cancer Now."

"Breast cancer is a devastating disease... The people of Cambridge are keen to help raise as much awareness and money as possible in order to one day put a stop to it."

INSIDE:

ASSANGE, HEIDI ALLEN, COST OF LIVING, ADDENBROOKE'S INVESTIGATION

When can't a newspaper report a story?

EDITORIAL

There comes a point in term when stress can threaten to overwhelm you. Perhaps it's the threat of an impending deadline, or an unexpected crisis that arises just when you need to get on and work in the few weeks that Cambridge sets aside for its terms.

But what do we do when that threshold gets crossed? Sometimes, sat in front of your laptop screen for hours in the library, the inspiration does not come despite that essay deadline looming ever closer. Sometimes your emotional state and the requirement to produce a piece of work do not collide. What happens then?

Sometimes the people who should be the most forgiving in such circumstances – the DoSes, the supervisors – can make the situation that much worse. Recently this newspaper saw a supervision guidance sheet sent out from a supervisor in MML

to their students that was unhelpfully strong in its tone – supervisions could not be rearranged if students were ill, students would be charged if they missed supervisions for any circumstances other than a medical reason signed off by a qualified doctor, all written aggressively in a stream of boldface type and capital letters. Indeed, so crudely was the message hammered home that the very students who brought the document to our attention were so afraid of repercussions if they let us report how it had affected them, even anonymously, that they were unwilling to contribute any testimony to the story.

This puts a newspaper in a dilemma. Failure to report the story means those students may now have to spend the year with a supervisor whose initial tone they found so intimidating they felt unable to raise the issue with their colleges' and the university's support structures. But what if

reporting the situation provided no redress, and simply turns a supervisor-student relationship that was intimidating for the latter actively hostile for both?

Perhaps in such a situation abstraction is the only advisable approach. Shefali Kharabanda this week writes very eloquently on why we, as patchwork people, with our own desires, wishes, interests and passions, need to try and rise above the pressure that this institution puts on us so as not to lose sight of the fundamental questions. What do I want out of my time at this university? Am I working for my supervisor, or myself? What about life afterwards?

There is nothing like the pressure of an eight-week term to discourage such thinking. What a radical step it would be if we were to join together and make that leap.

INVESTIGATION

Addenbrooke's: In intensive care?

Julius Haswell speaks to medical students affected by the difficulties at the hospital (page 7)



SCIENCE

Techwatch: Eyes in the sky

Technology columnist Charlotte Gifford takes a look at the latest drones (page 9)



INTERVIEW

Claire Parker

Varsity Introducing talks to former *The Big Painting Challenge* contestant and MML finalist at Clare (page 12)



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More than religion

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Preview: Frankenstein

The cast of next week's ADC main show explain how they are bringing the monster to life this Halloween (page 27)



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House of Windows

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Varsity will be holding meetings for aspiring writers, photographers, illustrators, designers and sub-editors every Monday in our offices at 16 Mill Lane at 6:30pm.

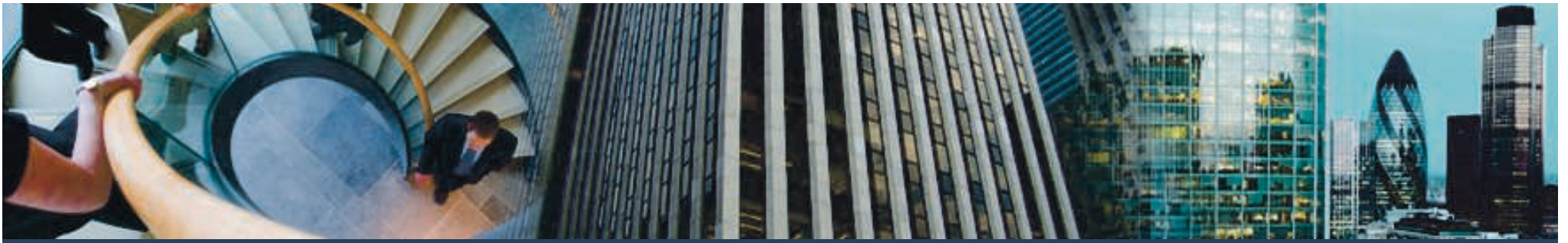
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Union debates Assange as referendum result looms

Dermot Trainor
News Correspondent

Julian Assange blazed to worldwide notoriety in 2010 when he released a huge trove of politically sensitive documents supplied by Chelsea Manning through his organisation, WikiLeaks. The debate then was one of Assange's threat to national security, triggering a US government investigation still thought to be ongoing. In 2011, charges of sexual assault came to light, brought against Assange by women in Sweden. Assange subsequently applied for and was granted asylum by the Ecuadorian government in June 2012. However, Assange's time within the Ecuadorian Embassy in London has not reduced his profile. He has hosted a Russian talk show, been on *the Simpsons*, and has played host to a queue of notables, including most recently Lady Gaga. Over the course of his three-year self-imprisonment in the Embassy, Assange has also appeared writ large for multiple public occasions, usually via a weblinked screen. His latest invitation to do so is from none other than the Cambridge Union Society.

Despite having hosted Assange several times before, the Union's Standing Committee has on this occasion faced an unprecedented backlash from its own members. In particular, the resignation of the Union's Women's Officer early in October sparked national press coverage and precipitated yesterday's referendum debate on whether 'This

House should host Julian Assange.'

Union President Oliver Mosley has been on the defensive, insisting that it would be wrong to talk of the Cambridge Union being 'in turmoil'. "We have 50 people working at the union," he said. "Following Helen Dallas's resignation, we still have 49."

The Union's debate last night reflected the way in which the focus is now almost entirely on Assange's alleged sexual crimes. Over the course of the debate, only one fleeting mention was made of Assange's controversial past as the editor-in-chief of WikiLeaks. Instead, the debate centred on the "legal grey area" of a man who is technically innocent because the statute of limitations on the charges against him has expired, but whose "running away from the law" in the words of one debater, condemns him with an aura of implicit guilt. Debate raged between speakers who either promoted Assange or his potential victims. Opposing the motion, speakers James and Eleanor railed against a man "who had refused to co-operate in law enforcement" and for whom the Union "was providing yet another platform", potentially contributing to "the glamorisation of Assange" at the expense of women who claim to be victims sexual abuse.

The proposition debaters instead focused on "providing Union members value for their money", claiming that the Assange invite "practically only impacts people who are interested" and even provided an opportunity to hold Assange "to account". They



Assange's main public appearances in the last 3 years have been via video link

added that this referendum could set a bad precedent for the future, noting that the "Union had a long history of controversial speakers" and that deciding not to host Assange would put the Union "on a slippery slope," such that "all future standing committees will fear what will happen" if they try to invite contentious figures.

A statement from CUSU's Women's Officer, Charlotte Chorley, was read

out during the debate, in which she criticised the Union's initial move to invite Assange as a sign that the institution is "so pre-occupied by the tired narrative Assange offers that they are turning back on their promise to update their structure and their substance." Chorley claimed that by inviting Assange, the Union was visibly "struggling to remain interesting", but risked threatening "fair debate". The

statement was met by a momentary pause for thought in the chamber, before general debate resumed.

Following a further two speeches, Union President Oliver Mosley drew the debate to a close, reminding all present that the 24-hour referendum period on whether to extend the invitation to Assange was then officially open. The voting window closed at 10pm last night.



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Punt Wars: the council strikes back

Joe Robinson
Deputy News Editor

Competing punt operators in Cambridge city centre could be banned from touting for business if the council adopts restrictive measures currently under consideration.

Cambridge City Council is considering implementing a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) that could ban punt touts from certain areas.

The proposed measures come in the wake of 'punt wars', where the increasingly aggressive tactics used by punt touts have led to complaints from shoppers and local residents.

While acknowledging that the sheer quantity of punt touts in the city centre poses a problem, punting companies have defended their actions by arguing that such behaviour is necessary to succeed in Cambridge's competitive multi-million-pound punt market.

One independent punter even told members of his group he was seeking advice over whether the Cambridge punt market breached competition rules, and was considering raising the issue with the Competition and Markets Authority.

There is already a bylaw in place through the Cam Conservators that regulates

aggressive touting, while those operators at registered stations are only allowed to tout for business within a certain proximity of those stations.

A report in December by Mal Schofield of Cam Conservators made reference to "unauthorised punting" and a "punting monopoly" as the second and third biggest issues facing the River Cam.

Speaking to *Cambridge News*, the council's Safer Communities Manager Lynda Kilkelly said they were "looking at what evidence we have".

“THANK GOODNESS
THESE GUYS ARE BEING
CRACKED DOWN ON”

The council says that most people who are picked up for punting near Great St Mary's and along King's Parade tend to punt with operators working at Garret Hostel Lane, which is not a recognised punt station.

Dave Prinsep, the city's Head of Property Services, stated that the touting situation "used to be more aggressive than it is". He stated that the problem

was now "very much the higher number of touts".

On the issue of the number of touts, he argued the problem was "the sheer number" and that was "spoiling the quality of walking round the city, as you're being stopped so much".

A King's College student said: "Thank goodness these guys are being cracked down on."

"It's so annoying when you're trying to walk to college from King's Parade but you can't get through because a tout has stopped a big group of tourists to try and sell them a ride on a boat."

Another student echoed the sentiment, telling *Varsity*: "It's a bit annoying when they block your way and you're in a rush."

"But I also feel sorry for the touts, who have to be out there all day in the cold."

John Milne, a Tour Manager at Visit Cambridge, said: "A lot of people either don't take the time to complain or don't know how to – and go away with a bad impression."

He continued: "You can't quantify what effect it's having because these people who complain [are] probably the tip of the iceberg."

Earlier this year, the City Council brought its first PSPO to try and remedy the issue of street drinking around Mill Road.

Students urged to avoid fraudulent accommodation firm

Louis Ashworth
News Correspondent

Students at the University of Cambridge and Anglia Ruskin University have been urged not to use City Rooms Cambridge after concerns were raised about the company.

The status of the accommodation provider, which has been reported as fraudulent by the City Council, was raised on the ARU Accommodation Twitter account on Monday.

City Rooms Cambridge's website has since ceased to function and the company's internet presence has disappeared.

Those who attempted to contact the company, which appeared to offer attractive prices for accommodation, were asked to pay a deposit fee in addition to a month's rent in advance without seeing the room.

Those who investigated further found that the room on offer actually belonged to an unspecified college.

Julie Darsley, from the University of Cambridge's Accommodation Service, said that "City Rooms is well known to us as a fraudulent company" stating that "[t]here has been a rise in scams relating to accommodation and we advise all our members to be careful when searching".

She added that students ought to always make sure to "meet the landlord face-to-face" and "never hand over money" or "take a property" without having seen it firsthand.

Accommodation scams are common in Cambridge owing to the high demand for student rooms in the city and the high proportion of international students, some of whom are not

able to view accommodation in person before signing agreements.

In October 2014, Trading Standards and the universities' officers issued a joint statement to students living in Cambridge, warning them of a growing trend of rent rip-off and raising awareness of "bogus advertisements" on legitimate websites.

Cambridge is a hotspot for scammers due to the rapidly increasing prices of local property. A report by Cambridgeshire Insight earlier this month showed that Cambridge had seen the highest annual house price increase in the country, ahead of Oxford, Bristol, and even London.

Earlier this month, the University of

“

THERE HAS BEEN A RISE IN SCAMS RELATING TO ACCOMMODATION AND WE ADVISE ALL OUR MEMBERS TO BE CAREFUL WHEN SEARCHING

Cambridge also warned all staff about the dangers of online flat scams.

The university's Accommodation Service has confirmed that several university members and visitors had lost considerable sums of money in these scams.

The Accommodation Service encouraged room-hunters to avoid using unfamiliar sites, and advised students to always arrange their housing through the university itself.



Students are encouraged to use college accommodation

Anyone looking for a room is advised to never hand over any money until they have proof that the room is actually available for rent, and to avoid using money transferral services that can make payments difficult to trace and reclaim.

Dr Sophie Van Der Zee, who moved to Cambridge in 2013 to undertake postdoctoral research with the Computer Lab's Security Group, nearly fell victim to such a scam.

She said that she "found a beautiful and affordable place on Craigslist", and although the flat "seemed a little too good to be true", she contacted the landlord. Only when he asked her for a "deposit via Western Union" did she definitely know she was "dealing with a scammer".

Viewing the experience as an

opportunity for research, Dr Van Der Zee and two colleagues examined how such scams operate, submitting their findings to an academic journal.

“

A LITTLE TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE

Users of online forum site Reddit raised the alarm in late September. To avoid getting tricked, users suggested copying and pasting parts of the room description into a search engine in order to see if they match up with existing, more reputable listings.



"my girlfriend is looking for rooms, came across this. They want to make you transfer a deposit + 1st months' rent to them. She had a feeling it was a bit too good to be true and checked one of their rooms out – it's college-owned accommodation."

– WolfThawra

"its a scam. The local couchsurfing group warn about it all the time."

– FMBiochem

"I feel sorry for the people who get stung by these kinds of things. The people doing the stinging are usually so remote they are pretty much unreachable and untouchable. However... this one might not be."

– darth_pingu

"I saw their ads. I reverse-searched the number and it was definitely for a different business."

– 8__

Study finds quarter of students spend £15 or less a week on food

Jack Higgins
Deputy News Editor

A recent study has found that nearly a quarter of students are spending less than £15 a week on food.

This figure represents less than half of what students should be spending on food, according to advice from the University of York and University of Reading. They suggest students should be spending between £32 and £44 a week on food to eat healthily.

The research – conducted by Voucherbox – also contained other troubling findings, with 24 per cent of students cutting their spending on books and study materials in order to eat.

The University of Cambridge's website says that most weekly kitchen facilities charges – levied at some colleges – are around £13-£19, which doesn't include the cost of around £3-£6 for individual meals.

A third-year student at Emmanuel College told *Varsity* that catered halls were both a "blessing and a curse". If cheap, they can "liberate students from hassle and monetary worries", but equally if expensive they can "leave little other option" when there are often poor self-catering facilities.

Students surveyed also claimed that they would have to cut down on heating and medicines, as they could not otherwise afford to eat.

70 per cent of students surveyed



The Sainsbury's Basics range is, crucially, cheap

also revealed that they had eaten an "unhealthy or strange meal" due to constraints on their budget. Bananas with baked beans and cereal for each meal of the day were given as examples of such "strange" meals.

The study mentions other "horror stories", such as having stale tortilla chips for all meals of the day, or living off baked beans for an entire week.

One student at Anglia Ruskin who survives on the low figure of £15 a week said: "I'm not concerned about my health, just price. I don't mind

eating the same thing all week – it's cheap, it tastes good and makes me feel good after."

Voucherbox manager Shane Forster said that students having to cut back on other "important amenities" was "very concerning" and highlighted a "very real, grim reality."

The findings echo research by Student Money Saver earlier this year, which found that 40 per cent of students have gone without food due to concerns over money and that nearly a third have considered dropping out due to financial insecurity.

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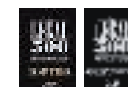
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VC “concerned” as project’s management slammed

Continued from front page

These additional costs had been produced by multiple late design changes, increases in scope of the first phase, increases in allowance for inflation costs, and other factors the committee was unable to identify due to “lack of granular and consistent information in the data provided”, totaling £24.7 million. These changes were approved by the Finance Committee.

The report also highlighted failures across a broad range of areas, primarily regarding “project setup and planning”, “project leadership”, “risk management” and “cost reporting”.

In regards to the project setup, it was found that the project’s success criteria conflicted and were poorly defined, and that “development contingency was not adequately defined” with “no delineation or ring-fencing of the component of the contingency that was reserved for risk”.

This lack of clarity regarding budget set aside for contingency meant that by April 2013 that 45% of the contingency budget had already been allocated, this figure rising to 85% by December the same year.

By the time risks began materialising in subsequent years, “the contingency had largely been depleted”.

The report notes that this contingency money was primarily allocated to significant design and quality enhancements, something that was “not normal practice”.

The project’s leadership and oversight was also heavily criticised. The Executives, including Project Director, Deputy Project Director, and Financial



The Vice Chancellor cuts topsoil at the North West Cambridge development site last month

Director, were found to be working part time, the Project Director working “approximately one day per week” while spending the rest of the week on wider roles within the university and the Finance Director retaining many previous responsibilities and thus “effectively performing two roles”.

The Syndicate, an oversight body responsible for the “management, development, and stewardship” of the North West Cambridge Development, was also subject to criticism in the report.

The auditing committee said that instead of acting exclusively as an oversight body, the Syndicate was spending so much time on “minor project decisions” that it limited “its ability to provide objective challenge to, and scrutiny over, the Executive”. This was

compounded by an “apparent lack of clarity within the membership of the Syndicate as to its responsibilities”.

In regards to risk management, the report criticised the simplistic way risk was reported, the accuracy of its assessment and the lack of a “consistent and rigorous assessment of risk” in calculating financial estimates.

Finally cost reporting was condemned for the lack of consistency and comparability in budget estimates and cost forecasts, and inconsistencies of costs appearing in the budget estimates but not forecast costs, as well as of overall budgets themselves, with different budgets appearing in different reports. The Executive report defined the construction budget as £223 million while the original construction budget approved by Regent House had

this at £277 million. None of these inconsistencies were explained.

These failures took so long to come to university attention, the report stated, as increases in construction costs were offset by reductions elsewhere in the budget, such as in development contingency, and so resulting in a net zero effect in the reported cost forecast.

In response to these problems, the Audit Group gave 17 recommendations, including the appointment of full time directors, a comprehensive overview of objectives, success criteria, first phase costs and contingency plans, as well as an overhaul of the membership and composition of the university’s Syndicate.

Despite these significant setbacks, the university’s Director of Finance

emphasised that even on the basis of the worst extreme of projected cost overruns, that there remained “substantial headroom” before the project ceased to be of a positive net value to the university.

A university spokesman told Varsity that “North West Cambridge has been confirmed as a financially sound project that is on target to be self-financing and will deliver on its strategic objectives”.

“Some difficulties have recently arisen with the development, mainly down to inflation in construction costs and problems with the timely installation of the site-wide infrastructure. The University commissioned a review of the project to understand the projected cost overruns and why the full financial implications were not reported sooner. As a result, we are making some adjustments to elements within the overall development, tightening up governance and management structures and ensuring that sufficient investment is made in key skills for delivery to the current timetable.”

The spokesman confirmed that the university was seeking to appoint a full time Project Director and CEO, would improve financial and risk reporting, and that the university has not yet incurred any additional costs.

“The review made it clear that no single factor was responsible and difficulties in the early stages are not uncommon with projects of such scale and complexity. However, the University is committed to learning from this for North West Cambridge and future projects.”



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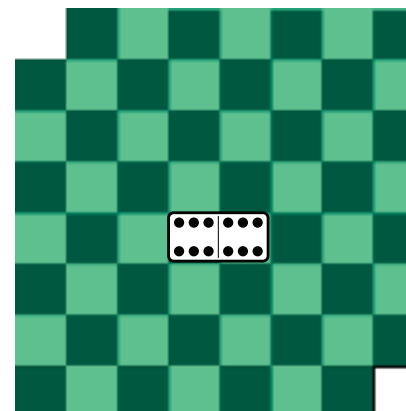
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Is Addenbrooke's in intensive care?

Julius Haswell uncovers anger among medical students following the Care Quality Commission report that led to the trust being put into special measures

“Addenbrooke's puts patients 'at risk'”. “Addenbrooke's hospital put into special measure”. “Serious staff shortages at Addenbrooke's.”

These were the headlines that greeted us on 22nd September as a report by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) branded the Cambridge University Hospitals as overall inadequate. The sheepishly apologetic response from the Chair of the CUH NHS Foundation Trust read: “I would like to say sorry to our patients for a lack of effective systems and processes across our trust...”

However, this failure had been showing signs of coming to a head well in advance of the recent report. Although within it staff were praised and rated as excellent, it has become apparent that those same staff had been very unhappy with the management at the hospital for a long time, with an anonymous insider indicating that every major managerial resignation was “not unexpected”.

Monitor, the organisation that placed the trust in special measures, predicted a budget deficit of £64 million for 2015/16, but more shocking perhaps was the report that the hospital had been overspending by £1.2 million a week. This led to the resignation of the Chief Financial Officer Paul James in anticipation of the report.

This is not the only major resignation the hospital has seen. Insiders report a few members of the trust's board resigning since July, with the final nail in the coffin coming from Dr Keith McNeil, previous chief of Addenbrooke's, who resigned in mid-September. The same insider at the hospital also said that his resignation had been on the cards for some time before he finally stepped down. It is rumoured that Dr McNeil's family moved back to his home in Australia in anticipation of his resignation.

Yet for all of the reports on the hospital and its failings, little consideration has thus far been given to the impact the developments will have on those students who receive their medical education at the hospital.

A survey of 46 medical students studying at Cambridge carried out by *Varsity* found that a remarkable 71

per cent felt that the CQC report was damaging to the hospital, and while many commented on the great levels of care they see at the hospital, the management was often the target of criticism.

Medics receive a great deal of practical teaching from the hospital in their clinical studies, and of those surveyed, 30 per cent agreed that their education at Cambridge had been undermined by the report, with one student even telling us some of their contemporaries were considering not staying on because of the report.

The Cambridge Medical School has declined to comment on the report.

The lack of trust uncovered by the report is very disturbing, and may well prove to have lasting damage on future students training to be medical professionals. Considering the medical profession relies heavily on junior doctors, any kind of lack of confidence in their medical education may well be detrimental to any medical practice in the future.

“

THE SYSTEM CAN'T COPE

Just under 50 per cent of the people surveyed also felt like the CQC report undermined the University of Cambridge directly; a damning statistic given Cambridge's aim to be the best university at which to study medicine. For any potential students coming to study at the university, the report is hardly a fitting welcome.

Furthermore, the findings of the report are not isolated cases in Addenbrooke's history. Earlier in the year, it was revealed that Addenbrooke's A&E department was the worst performing of its kind in the country. Only 75.2 per cent of patients were seen in the standard four hour waiting period, with the national target standing at 95 per cent. In light of this, the interim Chief Executive, David Wherrett, insisted: “Our services continue to be recognised nationally and internationally for their safety and patient outcomes.”



Addenbrooke's was rated as one of the worst A&E departments in the country

However, by far and away the biggest concern the report raised was the lack of funding and staffing at the hospital. One medical student commented: “The CQC report is absolutely meaningless as all it highlights is that there is a lack of funding but the care given by the doctors and nurses is outstanding...the politics side is what needs sorting out.”

Another student made the point that the hospital isn't getting enough funding to keep up with changing times: “They don't have enough money to supply adequate resources so Addenbrooke's is of course in need of more staff...there aren't enough resources for an ageing population and the system can't cope.”

The lack of funding for Addenbrooke's is an area that has been addressed before, more recently by Daniel Zeichner, Cambridge's Labour Party MP. Commenting on January's inadequate A&E figures, he said: “The latest figures, showing that a third of people are waiting over four hours are deeply disappointing – and at a hospital in the constituency of former Health Secretary Andrew Lansley should be a source of deep shame for the coalition government.”

Speaking about the CQC report, however, Zeichner also noted: “The Conservatives promised extra for the health service. We haven't seen it.”

This was also a point widely addressed by the medical students surveyed, with many citing the NHS

funding cuts as an aggravating factor.

In light of the recent student protests against the government's proposed changes to junior doctors' contracts, this report only confirms some people's view that the NHS is being cut too deep to function properly. As one student put it: “[The report] seems just a small part of the wider issue of an increasingly underfunded NHS which is hurtling towards the edge.”

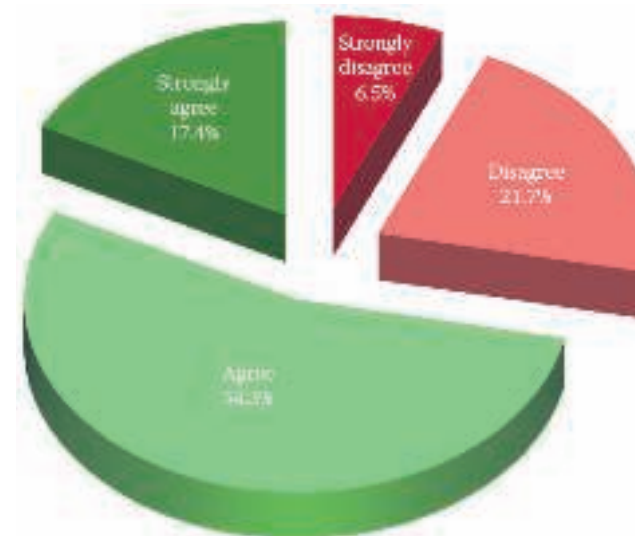
The reasons behind the trust's difficulties are generally agreed to be financial and managerial. Addenbrooke's was ordered to switch to the American eHospital system, the first hospital in the UK to do so. Having faced issues when first implemented, it led to a 20 per cent drop in A&E performance, as well as having cost the hospital £200 million. These changes were being made at the same

time that the government was ordering the NHS to cut £2 billion from its effective budget.

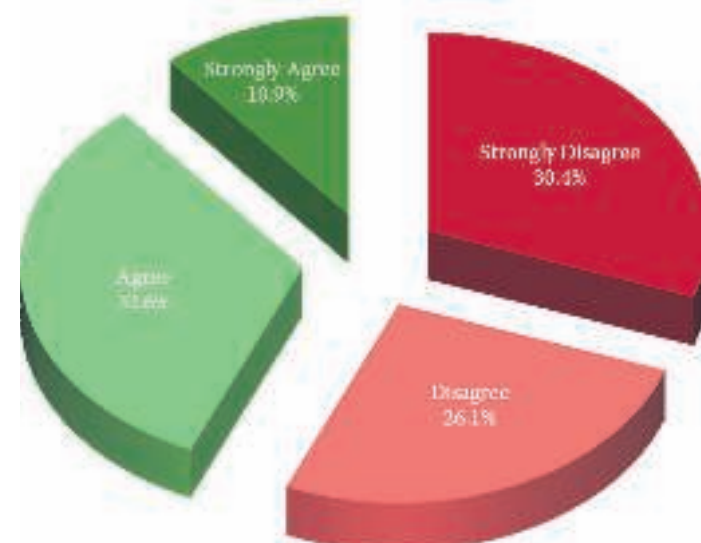
While it is still clear that the level of overall care and ability of the medical staff at Addenbrooke's is very good, the lack of trust in the hospital among medical students is worrying. Even though the majority of students did not think that the report would make them lose faith in the medical education they are receiving, the fact that this is a prospect for 30 per cent of those surveyed is itself cause for concern.

So while the interim chief of the hospital, David Wherrett, may praise the “success” uncovered in the CQC report, for many medical students that may not be enough to regain their trust at this difficult time.

To what extent do you agree that the recent CQC report is damaging to the hospital?



To what extent do you agree that the CQC report undermines the University?



Report into Addenbrooke's “paedo doctor” released

Tom Freeman
News Correspondent

An investigation into how a paedophile doctor at Addenbrooke's Hospital was able to abuse his young patients has found clues were missed and that he manipulated rules to avoid detection.

Myles Bradbury was jailed for 16 years in December after being convicted of 25 offences including voyeurism, sexual assault and the possession of more than 16,000 indecent images in the period 2009-2013.

The report by Verita, a consultancy specialising in public sector investigations, found that the paediatric haematologist, who had worked at the hospital for five years, manipulated the system to perform “criminal, intimate examinations” on his patients.

The 42-year-old from Suffolk had taken advantage of the hospital's appointments system and chaperone

policy to commit his crimes on 18 patients.

Bradbury also used a “spy pen” to take photographs of his victims during consultations.

All of Bradbury's victims, some of whom have since died, were suffering from haemophilia, leukaemia or other serious conditions.

The report, which was commissioned by the hospital, found that clues to his offending had been missed by colleagues, including phoning families on his personal number to make appointments and seeing some children more than necessary without recording the consultations.

Other missed warning signs included one nurse thinking Bradbury was “bending over backwards” to see his patients out of hours.

The report also notes his use of “excessive” puberty checks to assault his patients.

Bradbury was also able to befriend patients, grooming his victims by

taking an interest in their outside lives. He also relied on the fact the department was busy to hide his crimes.

When colleagues did query his behaviour, the report notes how they were always given a “plausible” and acceptable excuse. Staff could not therefore be blamed for failing to raise the alarm over his behaviour, it notes.

However, Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust was praised in the report for acting decisively after concerns were raised in November 2013.

A woman complained after her 11-year-old grandson was asked to strip naked and touch his genitals. After she informed the paediatric day centre, Bradbury was suspended, and only returned to the hospital for formal interviews.

Bradbury was described by the trial judge as one of the worst paedophiles he had ever encountered.

NEWS IN

BRIEF



I've had the slime of my Life

Cambridge's moistest club has announced plans for its 20th birthday celebrations next month. The club, which first opened its doors on 20th November 1995, has become (in) famous among Cambridge students for its dank Sunday evening embrace. Robson and Jerome were at the top of the charts when primordial Life first appeared in Cambridge.



Syren song as restaurant closes

Syrens, a Mediterranean restaurant next to the Corn Exchange, has closed after just one year of business. The former owner, Ab Attia, thanked customers for their support, but explained that he has now sold the business in order to focus on running Stazione.



Books bonanza as uni receives benefaction

The University has announced that it has received a benefaction of 22,000 art history books and catalogues from Sir Alan Bowness, former director of the Tate Gallery and founder of the Turner Prize.

Cambs Tory slams tax credit cuts

Harry Curtis

Senior News Correspondent

Heidi Allen, the Conservative MP for South Cambridgeshire, used her maiden speech in Parliament on Tuesday to criticise the government's plans to cut tax credits.

While conceding that "tax credits do need to change", she stated that "too many people will be adversely affected" by the current proposals.

The speech, which was described by Labour MP Roger Godsiff as "remarkable" and "excellent", came during an Opposition Day debate that moved to call the government to reverse its decision on tax credits, the cuts to which are scheduled to come into effect in April 2016.

Allen, who represents students at both Homerton and Girton Colleges, said that the proposed changes, which will see the government aim to cut £4.5 billion from the tax credits bill, were not in keeping with Conservative values.

She claimed that "true Conservatives have compassion running through their veins" as she drew attention to the "many" for whom "choosing whether to eat or heat is...the reality."

The MP accused the government of a "single-minded determination to reach a budget surplus."

“

"TRUE CONSERVATIVES HAVE COMPASSION RUNNING THROUGH THEIR VEINS"

While Allen eventually voted with her party to reject the opposition's motion, she argued that the government's proposals fall short of passing the 'family test', a criterion introduced



Heidi Allen said that she has been "trying flipping hard" to avoid delivering her maiden speech

by David Cameron last August under which new domestic policies are evaluated according to their impact on the family.

Allen made her case on the grounds that "cutting tax credits before wages rise", "showing parents will be better off not working", and "sending a message to the poorest and most vulnerable in our society that we do not care" all stand in opposition to this test.

The government plans to counteract the impact of tax credit cuts with the creation of the National Living Wage. However, in saying that these changes are "not concurrent", the South Cambridgeshire MP joins a growing list of Conservative MPs voicing

concerns about the transitional period once the changes come into effect.

David Cameron defended the government's approach to tax credits at Prime Minister's Questions, while Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn challenged the Prime Minister to tell the House which part of Allen's speech he disagreed with.

This is not the first time that Allen has criticised plans put forward by the government, having previously condemned housing plans.

In September, she said that the government's right-to-buy plans, which she argues will see local authorities "forced to sell their high-value council houses without keeping the full

financial reward", will not work for Cambridge.

Allen, who holds a degree in astrophysics, was elected as MP for South Cambridgeshire in May's General Election with a majority of 20,594 votes. Prior to entering parliament she was a businesswoman, with experience working for organisations including ExxonMobil and Royal Mail.

She was selected as the Conservative candidate for the seat, held by the Conservatives since its creation in 1997 by former Health Secretary Andrew Lansley, after missing out on the Conservative candidacy for South East Cambridgeshire months earlier following a miscount of votes.

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'Yours, Cambridge' receives \$25m gift

Sarah McCullagh

News Correspondent

The 'Yours, Cambridge' fundraising campaign, which launched last weekend, has received a \$25 million donation from two alumni. The gift will fund a new partnership to work towards a resilient and inclusive global economy.

The University and Queens' College have announced that the \$25 million gift, from Mohamed A. El-Erian and Jamie Walters, will support the work of both the College and the University's Faculty of Economics by establishing the El-Erian Institute for Human Behaviour and Economic Policy, as well as funding studentships, research and a professorship at Queens'.

Dr El-Erian is co-Chair of the £2 billion campaign for the University and Colleges of Cambridge, which has raised £538 million so far. The donors have expressed their "delight that [they] can contribute to expanding access to high-quality learning and research, as well as its reach and impact."

The Institute aims to narrow the gap between economic policy and how

people actually make decisions and respond, as opposed to how theorists believe they should. Working alongside academics, practitioners and researchers, the Institute will adopt a multidisciplinary approach, benefiting from Cambridge's expertise in economics, finance and behavioural science, as well as in neuroscience and psychology. The work is seen as more important now than ever, in the context of financial crises and growing inequalities all over the world, and envisages an improved quality of life for all.

The gift will also provide a Fellowship at Queens', for the Chair of the El-Erian Institute, as well as linked PhD studentships at the College and an outreach fund.

The Cambridge Vice-Chancellor, Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz, has expressed his delight at the donors' "strong commitment" to Cambridge.

"This gift will help us support the students and create the understanding we need to build a resilient economy in the globalised era" said Borysiewicz.

El-Erian graduated from Queens' in 1980 with a first-class honours degree in Economics. He is now an Honorary Fellow of the College, serving

chair of President Obama's Global Development Council, chief economic advisor at Allianz, and the former CEO and Co-Chief Investment Officer of Pacific Management Company (PIMCO).

El-Erian and Walters' donation comes after a year of careful planning of the unique collaboration between the donors, Queens' and the Faculty of Economics. In forging a partnership between a Cambridge College and a Cambridge Faculty, Lord Eatwell, President of Queens' College, says El-Erian "has stimulated the establishment of new college-university relationships – a new way forward for the collegiate university."

However, the promotional video for the 'Yours, Cambridge' campaign, featuring the Fitzwilliam College alumnus David Starkey, has drawn criticism from CUSU's BME Campaign for purportedly "racist" remarks Starkey has made in the past.

The BME Campaign, in a statement released online, claimed that Dr Starkey is "not a suitable representative for a university that should be welcoming students from diverse racial, social and economic backgrounds" for such a promotional video.

Cambridge Women's Equality Party celebrates policy launch

Auriane Terki-Mignot
News Correspondent

The Cambridge branch of the newly-created Women's Equality Party held an event on Tuesday evening to mark the national party's policy launch.

The event, held at the University Sports & Social Club, celebrated the launch that had taken place earlier in the day in London.

The Women's Equality Party, known as WE, was founded in March last year by Sandi Toksvig, a Cambridge alumna best known for her work as a writer and television and radio programme host, and Catherine Mayer, a journalist who previously worked for *TIME* and the *Economist*.

The current party leader, Sophie Walker, is a former *Reuters* journalist and a current Ambassador for the National Autistic Society.

The party is described on its website and Facebook page as non-partisan: while its founders and leader have stated their intention to stand candidates, of any gender, in both local and general elections, they add that candidates would be free to vote on issues not directly pertaining to WE's policy and core goals as they wish.

This method has recently drawn criticism, notably with respect to WE's decision not to include policies on tax credit cuts and tax and benefit reforms in their policy document, as some argue that these will disproportionately affect women. Commentators have questioned the extent to which the party stands for all women, including



The event was run entirely by volunteers

the economically disadvantaged.

The party's policy suggestions were first made public at the London conference chaired by Sophie Walker on 20th October.

The 35-page policy document, available on their website, outlines propositions including lowering the fee for issuing employment claims from the current £250 to £50; ensuring that 66 per cent of the candidates replacing retiring MPs and 66 per cent of the other candidates are women; achieving balanced boards in all listed companies by 2025; introducing state-funded childcare for all children from the end

of paid parental leave at 9 months, with the first 15 hours free; implementing an equal system of parental leave; making age-appropriate relationships education compulsory for state-funded schools from the start of compulsory education; and criminalising the purchase of sex while never prosecuting women for selling sex.

The Cambridge launch event, organised by one of the current 62 local branches of the party, was entirely chaired by volunteers.

Laura, one of them, introduced the evening with a summary of the Cambridge branch's work since its

launch last June, expressing her satisfaction at seeing that over 80 people had registered to attend on Eventbrite – double the number that had attended the branch's first meeting.

Laura briefly mentioned the newly released policy document to state that WE's central aim this year would be equal pay in the United Kingdom and emphasised that members' input during the branch's first meeting in June had been "fed back directly to the headquarters and a lot of it went into the policies launched today".

“

“WE ARE NO MORE EQUAL THAN WHEN I WAS BORN IN 1956, AND IT'S APPALLING”

As a reminder of the party's self-professed non-partisan stance, she jokingly ended her introductory speech with the words: "We are going to work with the Left, with the Right, with the middle, and, despite what a lot of people are going to say, we want to work with men as well!"

A group quiz on feminism then followed, including questions such as 'what was the Suffragettes' motto' and 'when was rape in marriage made a crime in the UK?'.

Rather than being designed to discuss policy, the evening was rather a celebration of the launch, with

attendees encouraged to form groups and meet each other by volunteers who went from table to table throughout the evening to encourage discussion. Topics discussed included WE's latest statements and attendees' reasons for getting involved in WE, with the mention of bringing up girls in the face of current sexism coming up frequently.

The evening ended with a prize draw for a book on the suffragette movement: the winner mentioned that her great-grandmother had been present in New Zealand in 1893, when the country became the first state to officially grant women the vote, in a short emotional speech that ended with her stating: "I have to say we are no more equal than we were when I was born in 1956, and it's appalling" to applause.

Before the audience disbanded, Laura encouraged attendees to join the party if they had not done so already, reporting that the current party membership figure of 45,000 was higher than UKIP's.

When asked how she had started volunteering for the party, Siobhan Hattersley, who currently works as a teacher, replied that she had been involved in feminism as a student and had immediately sought to become involved with WE when she relocated to the Cambridge area for work.

Hattersley said she would strongly welcome members of the Cambridge student community joining the branch to ensure that the city's strong student presence is represented on a local level.

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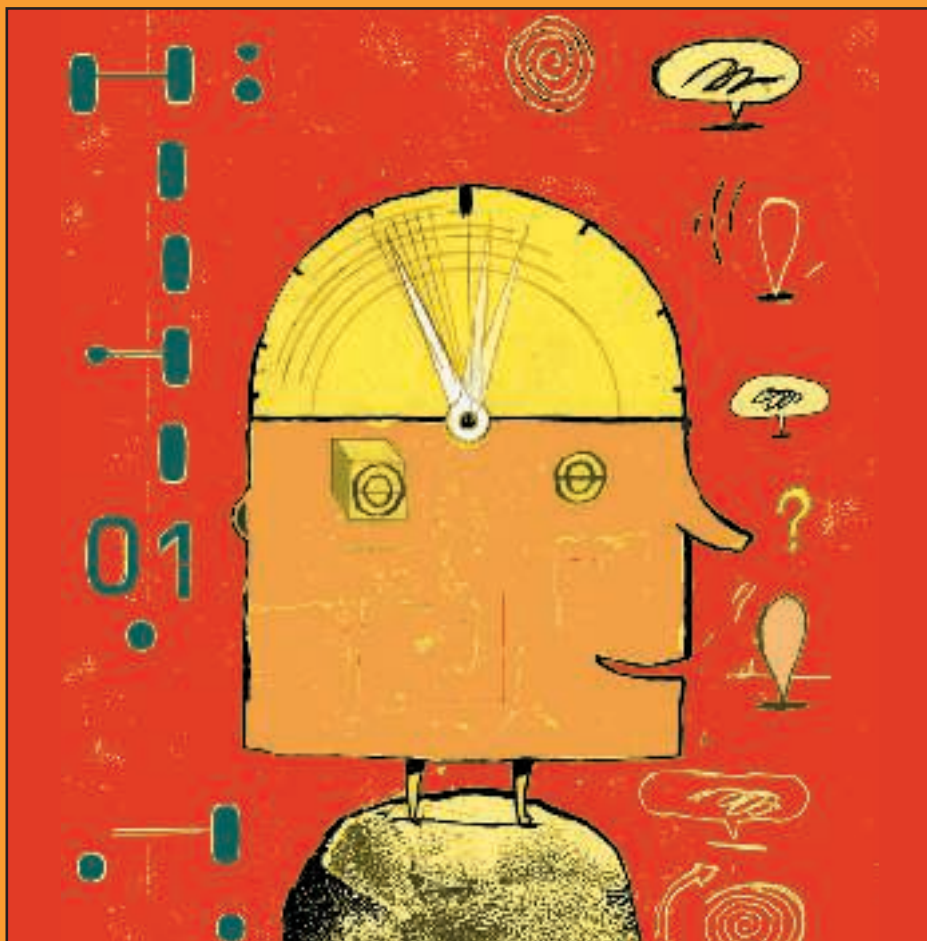
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Cambridge's Open University centre to close

Keir Baker

Senior News Correspondent

A number of the Open University's regional centres, including the Cambridge branch, look set for closure under plans designed to improve efficiency for students.

A restructuring programme will see the centralisation of student support services into the institution's headquarters in Milton Keynes, and its two biggest regional offices: Manchester and Nottingham. 500 members of staff have been told that in order to keep their jobs, they will be required to relocate.

The 7 named centres – Bristol, Birmingham, Leeds, Cambridge, Gateshead, Oxford and London – follow the closure of an Open University's office in Sussex last year. A spokesman explained that these regional centres were not providing regional services and were not frequently visited by students, but have been responsible for certain curriculum areas.

The plans emphasised the fact that the Open University's (OU's) national centres in Belfast, Cardiff and Edinburgh remain unaffected by the proposals, and the small sub-office in Dublin is also expected to remain open. The OU is also considering maintaining centres in London, albeit a smaller and "more appropriately located" presence.

The proposals have been poorly received amongst OU employees, with 50 employees signing an open letter to *The Guardian*, in which they argued

that the loss of the regional centres signalled the failure of the institution's "historic mission to be open to people and places everywhere in the UK".

The letter's signatories argue that "cheaper alternatives to the current building (the lease of which has come up for renewal) have not been properly explored."

The unions representing the 500 members of staff facing redundancy – a number equivalent to around one in nine of the institution's employment roll, excluding tutors – are considering strike action, with a recent senate meeting seeing members vote by 41 votes to 31 in favour of a motion which described the closures as "operationally and reputationally very high risk." The motion also warned that the proposal "fails adequately to support the academic mission of the university", and called on the university to explore other options.

Pauline Collins, the branch president of the University and College Union (UCU) at the OU, speaking to Times Higher Education, stated that UCU's members felt they had "little alternative now but to ballot for strike action." She highlighted the logistical issues in the plans, pointing out that staff in the Gateshead office would have a five-hour round trip of 250 miles if they were to relocate to their nearest centre, in Edinburgh.

"Axing over 500 staff across seven centres would be catastrophic to The Open University's ability to provide the kind of support that students need," she said. "We hope the university will now see sense and work with



The Cambridge branch of the Open University, on Hills Road, is set to close

us to find a better solution for staff, students and the future of The Open University."

Peter Horrocks, Vice Chancellor of the Open University, said that the changes were aimed at providing students with the "best possible experience".

"With developments in technology

changing how we work, the student's experience of the OU has not been limited by geography for some time," he said. "This is a difficult decision and I fully recognise the impact it will have on many of our staff, but we cannot afford to stay still."

"This recommendation, if approved, would allow us to enhance student

support in a way that's simply not possible in our current office network, and offer our students the sort of support they expect and deserve."

A final decision on the proposal will be made by the OU's council in late November, with February 2017 the earliest date for the new structure to be in place.

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Climate change: old dog, new tricks

Fighting global warming starts at your table

Kaz Strycharczyk

Science Correspondent

Carnivory is getting a bad reputation. A growing awareness of the animal welfare issues, and increasingly the environmental impacts, of rearing animals for meat on a mass scale has led to a backlash by media and consumers with even the vaguest of ecological consciences. The most recent manifestation – Netflix’s documentary *Cowspiracy* – advocates moving to an entirely plant-based diet. Certainly most current farming methods, livestock-rearing and arable, are not ecologically benign processes. The environmental challenges of intensively farming livestock are abundant and serious: disposal of huge amounts of slurry; deforestation of land for direct grazing of livestock; the supply of soya for animal feed, much of which is grown on denuded rainforest in South America; pollution of waterways; greenhouse gas emissions from machinery and livestock; injudicious use of so-called ‘critically important’ antibiotics leading to resistant strains that then subsequently colonise human populations; the use of vast quantities of water in rearing livestock; and finally, the seemingly perverse inefficiencies of rearing animals on grain that could be fed to humans when nearly 800 million people globally are estimated to ‘not have enough food to lead a healthy active life’ by the World Food Programme.

Extensive free-range and organic systems don’t get off scot-free either – they have issues with waste run-off and soil erosion. Animal manure is, as good gardeners understand, rich in nutrients (especially an element called phosphorus) and when it leaches into rivers or estuaries it can result in ‘algal blooms’, which are not as pretty as

they sound; rather they choke aquatic life. In addition, organic and free-range regulations generally make no demands of on-farm diversity, so vast areas of single-species crops, or ‘monocultures’, still abound. With this catalogue of grievances, the environmental outlook for livestock farming looks bleak. But amongst the gloom is there hope for an environmentally sound livestock sector?

The ruminants make a good proposition on the face of it, so long as they are mainly pasture-reared rather than grain-fed. In this system they convert a source of energy inaccessible to humans (grass) into one that is (meat and milk). While they may not do it quite as efficiently as a field of potatoes might, they can be left to do it on land too infertile or topographically awkward to cultivate. In contrast, industry and automobiles release carbon otherwise locked as fossil fuels. So-called ‘silvopastoral’ systems, where animals are grazed on trees and shrubs as well as grasses, thus minimising carbon release while also being more productive than conventional grazing, seem to have a more solid evidence base.

The second group are potentially more problematic, primarily because of the need to bolster their diet with something more substantial than grass to get them to grow fast enough. Most popular protein sources – grain, soya, or even fishmeal – carry significant environmental costs, exacerbated by the fact they are frequently cultivated far from the livestock that consume them. But there are alternatives – some producers are looking to exploit food waste. There is an ongoing debate over whether food designated as ‘catering waste’, which has entered a commercial or domestic kitchen, should be fed to pigs. Campaigns like ‘The Pig Idea’ advocate the feeding of such catering waste again, reducing the reliance of the European pig industry on soya, but with centralised sterilisation procedures in place to avoid further animal disease disasters.

Globally about one third of the food we produce is not eaten – enough to feed a further 3 billion people, with a

surplus generous enough to feed the global population with 130 per cent of their nutritional requirements according to Feedback, an environmental organisation that campaigns to end food waste. Such work may be more fruitful than blindly increasing production.

It seems reasonable to suggest that our planet can sustain some level of meat production – although the currently dominant methods are not likely to provide it in an ecologically safe way. Giving up animal products entirely is one option and would absolve us of having to fix the meat sector. But surely the exodus of more educated and compassionate consumers will only remove the impetus for the industry to change?



CAMBRIDGE ECO RACING SOCIETY

Cambridge Eco Racing in the Australian bush

Madeline Kavanagh

Science Correspondent

Hot sun beating down, the smell of dust heavy in the still air. A lazy midday haze rises slowly off the vast expanse of red sand that stretches unbroken, towards an endless horizon of obscene blue. The silence of this panoramic vision is unbroken as a snake of electric cars speed their way across 3000 gruel-

ling kilometres – powered only by the sun. In a feat of engineering brilliance and sheer perspiration, 46 teams representing 25 countries from across the globe are currently competing to become champions of the World Solar Challenge 2015. The World Solar Challenge is a biennial race across the Australian outback, from Darwin to Adelaide that showcases some of the latest innovations in solar technology and energy efficiency for transport applications. Twenty-five will be the 4th consecutive time that the University of Cambridge Eco Racing (CUER) Team has represented the United Kingdom in the Challenge, which is being run between the 18-25th of October. This achievement is a testament to the inspiration, dedication, and technical expertise of the 50+ team of students who have worked tirelessly over the past 2 years to bring their newest car ‘Evolution’ to peak racing performance.

Evolution is truly space age, both in appearance and technical specifications. The unique teardrop-shape of the car is unlike that of typical solar vehicles; which have flat-topped, box-like structures to maximise the surface area available for solar panels. Instead, Evolution relies on having aerodynamic superiority to give it a competitive edge. As Programme Manager Aurelia Hibbert commented, “the benefit of our concept is that we are minimising the energy usage of the vehicle, rather than specifically maximising solar intake”. By optimising other design features of the car, such as aerodynamics, the Team hopes that “the fuel type can [be] changed, but the car will still remain very efficient”, an aspect that will hopefully contribute to the more rapid introduction of solar powered vehicles for general use.

Evolution has been updated in a number of ways since the previous CUER vehicle ‘Resolution’, which unfortunately was withdrawn from the 2013 World Solar Challenge only days before the race commenced because of instability problems. The 2015 Evolution model is wider, has a lower centre of gravity and stiffer tail-section.

One aspect of Evolution’s design that has not been altered since 2013 is the driver’s seat. “The first thing you notice when you get in is just how small the cockpit is! I’m only 5’5-5’6 and it was very tight...” says Richard Morris, a history PhD who was specially recruited by CUER to test-drive the vehicle. There is no room for creature comforts in eco-racing, with every ounce of weight increasing the demand for power and reducing speed. Three talented students (all under 5.5 ft!) will be guiding Evolution over the epic 5-6 day journey across the Australian interior. Regular rotation between the students is required to cope with the physically and mentally exhausting task of the race, which is not helped by the lack of air-conditioning or other luxuries in the cockpit. As daytime temperatures in the outback are forecast to hit 38-41°C for the duration of the race, I for one, am certainly not envious to be in the driver’s seat!

During the lead-up to the race, the Cambridge team were close with the 2 other teams representing the United Kingdom from Durham University and Ardingly College. However, it was the generosity of race favourites, the Dutch Team Nuon, in lending the CUER team a “very valuable spare part” last weekend that Hibbert cites as most memorable. This demonstration of team-spirit clearly exemplifies that the World Solar Challenge is not just a race, but an opportunity for people to work together to combat the global challenges of energy production and usage that affect all of us.

Over the weekend, the CUER Team successfully passed their final pre-race “scrutineering” assessment and completed a qualifying lap to position Evolution 30th on the starting grid. The race commenced on Sunday the 18th of October and 46 incredible cars are currently speeding their way towards Adelaide, while many of us here in Cambridge follow the progress of Evolution with bated breath. *Varsity* strongly supports the CUER Team and encourages readers to follow the Team’s progress at their website and join them for the 2017 Challenge.

The future of drones: eye in the sky?



TECHWATCH
WITH
CHARLOTTE GIFFORD

Drones are the must-haves of 2015, right up there next with selfie sticks. This year has seen an explosion of drone-related incidents: spying on

neighbours, accidental excursions into military airspace, and flying too close to aeroplanes. A world swarming with drones is fast-approaching, but is this a high-tech vision of the future, or is it in fact the last thing any of us want?

Superflux are the minds behind an intriguing R&D project called Drone Aviary, which envisions how drones could one day influence our lives. The project showcases five types of drone. Before you read on, please don’t have a panic attack thinking that these drones are currently roaming our streets. They’re just a projection of what the near-future could look like, but the technology behind them does already exist.

One of the drones is a Traffic Management Assistant called Routehawk. It zips up and down roads warning drivers of oncoming hazards, and also logs traffic violations. Another is the FlyCam, a drone that can fit in the palm of your hand. Equipped with a camera, it could well be the social media tool of the future;

a way of having your own personal cameraman, except without having to actually force a cameraman to endure the boredom of documenting your day-to-day life.

But others are a little more ominous. Madison, the Flying Billboard, is an advertising drone that uses facial recognition to target consumer graphics, tailoring its ads to those

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IT SEES THE WORLD PRETTY MUCH HOW THE TERMINATOR DOES

around it. That’s right – this is an advert that follows you. No “Skip Ad” button, no way of opting out. Just you running down the street pursued by a flying billboard until you collapse onto the pavement in exhaustion,

promising through floods of tears that, yes, you will visit Ikea later.

Next up is Newsbreaker, the Media Drone which films and streams news in real-time. What’s more, it then writes the reports itself, using story-writing algorithms to get a piece out there faster than any human could. If this drone ever makes it out onto our streets, it could mean death of the news correspondent. So enjoy the friendly human faces of *Varsity* while you can. It won’t be long before every article is written by drones ominously circulating Cambridge on the lookout for stories.

But creepiest of them all is Nightwatchman, the Surveillance Drone. In Superflux’s short promotional film about its drones, Nightwatchman definitely comes across as the most unnerving. It sees the world pretty much how the Terminator does, patrolling city streets amassing vast amounts of data, scanning faces for criminal records in order to detect civil offenses and terror threats. At the moment

we tend to see drones as, at worst, a bit of a nuisance, but Nightwatchman highlights the more menacing side of their potential for privacy-invasion.

Drone Aviary raises some interesting questions about the future of drones. The US transport secretary has just recently called for a nationwide registering of unmanned aircraft. It seems regulators and law enforcers will need to act quickly to impose restrictions – this is a craze that’s not going to die out any time soon.



VARSITY INTRODUCING

Claire Parker

MML Finalist Claire Parker, who is at Clare College, brushed up her painting skills on her Year Abroad and then put them to the test on national television.

Can you tell me about your TV appearance?

I took part in BBC One's *The Big Painting Challenge*, a sort of *Bake Off* for amateur artists which was broadcast back in April. It was amazing but I don't think I'd do it again. Always having a camera crew in front of you, being told to resolve a painting in under three hours, and being subject to constant criticism without tuition does not necessarily make for good art. That said, I am really proud of a pastel drawing of a Flamenco dance that I did from memory.

Did the constant pressure help you to develop as an artist?

TV cameras make surprisingly good mirrors and even if I didn't learn how to put things into perspective on the canvas, I certainly learnt to how to do so in my own head. I also learnt how to stand up for myself – if you try to follow a narrative someone else has written for you, you just end up

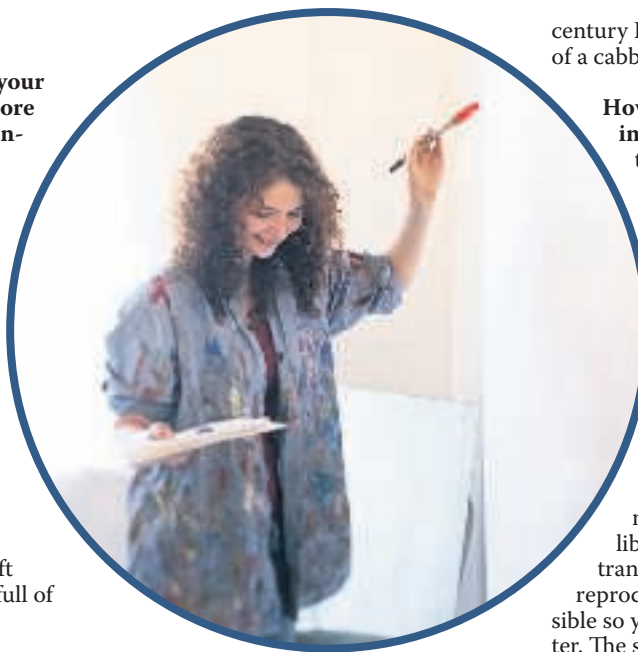
losing the plot entirely.

What were you doing on your year abroad? Were you more creative away from the constraints of Cambridge?

I'm ashamed to admit that, though I spent some time in galleries and on painting courses while studying in Paris and Verona, I spent a great deal more in pizzerias and cheese shops, losing Euros and gaining quite a few pounds. I stopped myself over-indulging by going on a "still-life diet"; painting the food I bought stopped me snacking on it because otherwise I'd be left with nothing but a canvas full of crumbs!

How will being back in Cambridge affect your creativity?

Cambridge is a strange place where it's possible to feel at your most exhausted, stressed and creative at the same time. The city and my college are undeniably beautiful but, as a portrait painter, I'm most grateful to



Cambridge for its sheer quantity of quirky characters. I've even stopped bemused strangers on the street to ask them to sit for me. It's also nice to be able to bring art history into my essays which I've done, it has to be said, with varying degrees of success. I once wrote an essay comparing 17th

century French theatre to a painting of a cabbage.

How do your translation skills inform your approach to translating ideas into art?

Painting or drawing with only a photo for reference is a bit like putting great literature into Google Translate: each part might be translated accurately but the feeling and mood are lost and you lose the relationship with what is in front of you. But drawing from life seems to have the power not only to capture but to liberate. In my first French translation class, I was told that reproducing the original is impossible so you might as well make it better. The same goes for art. It sounds impossible but that doesn't matter; it's the aspiration itself that's exciting.

I really like your abstract seascape painting. Why did you choose abstract art for the final BBC challenge?

I still don't know whether it was a

protest, a white flag of surrender, or whether the turpentine fumes had finally got to me. After making it to the final of the show, we were taken to Dartmouth Royal Navy College which, as a 21-year-old languages student with a striking disinterest in boats, left me completely cold. My 'artistic response' was a single white rectangle on a grey background which I claimed in crazed sincerity encapsulated Britain's sea-faring heritage. But weirdly, in an hour-long show which literally involved watching paint dry, it was something that people remembered, and was the first of my BBC paintings to sell. I'm still glad I took the risk, if only to have seen the judges so completely lost for words!

What are your plans for the future?

I'm doing some talks and demonstrations throughout the year and am hoping to exhibit my work next summer, but for the moment I'm just doing the odd painting and running a life drawing society at my college, Clare. I'm also saving up to rent a studio so that I have somewhere to make a proper creative mess!

Claire was talking to Jade Cuttle.

Bemused by his own ability to entertain

Stand-up comedian **James Acaster** speaks to **Eddy Wax** about falling into comedy, The Rock and why he gave university a miss

James Acaster has the air of a man in control.

With a handful of recent *Mock the Week* appearances under his belt, the thirty-year-old comes to Cambridge this week with the show which won him his fourth consecutive nomination for Best Show at last summer's Edinburgh festival.

His blend of neurotic, observational whimsy sees him talk about cheese graters and ready-to-eat apricots on stage, mining the smallest aspects of daily life for comedy gold.

Indeed, for the Kettering-born comic it seems no topic is too small.

"This is certainly the persona of someone who believes that everyone else thinks the way he does and that it's a normal way to be thinking."

His sheepish demeanour and drab, jarring clothes make it immediately clear to the audience what Acaster is about.

His persona is that of a socially awkward over-thinker, bemused by his own ability to entertain.

But how did he develop this alter-ego and is it really that far from how he is in real life?

"I do think it's about finding who you are as a person", he says.

"I wasn't really aware of it as I started off but as I was writing I realised that I tend to over-analyse little things so it was a good fit to go into that for stand-up."

I wondered if that meant he felt doubly pressured in normal life, agonising over whether every observation would make good comedy.

"When I started off I was definitely

doing that all the time because I didn't know what I was doing.

"Everything was quite frantic and I'd worry that I was ruining comedy for myself because I'd be analysing everything that happened in my life, wondering if I could make it work as stand-up."

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I'VE ACCEPTED THAT EVERY YEAR I'M GOING TO DO BADLY FOR A WHILE

"But a filter emerges in your head so that as things happen to me in the day, every so often a light will come on and I'll think I could do something funny with that. It could just be one word but I'll then go and try it out at a gig."

But what is it about the observations that do filter through that makes them stand out?

"Every so often you feel that you've found something that people can relate to but that goes under the radar a lot of the time."

"That said, sometimes you just want to talk about Yoko Ono on stage so one year I just did that."

Interestingly he cites The Rock as a big inspiration in informing his bemused onstage persona.

"I think it's one of the best comic creations ever and it is a big influence

on me. He's this guy who takes himself so seriously but is really an absolute joke. When comedians find themselves funny I am rarely able to get on board with it unless it's genuine laughter."

Talking more broadly, it seems to be the slow process of whittling down his material that Acaster most enjoys and this is what makes him the consummate comedian.

"It's about gradually piecing a show together, figuring out what it is, so it's like you're dusting off a dinosaur skeleton, trying to find it all."

"To be honest it's more like you're discovering it sometimes than creating it yourself."

Acaster is philosophical about the trials and tribulations a touring comedian faces, especially in those early stages when you're trying out a lot of material for the first time.

"I have bad gigs all the time and it never stops. I used to get moody about it but now I've accepted that every year I'm going to do badly for a while before I figure my show out. And a lot of people in the audience will think that I'm very unfunny and find me very tedious and annoying. But that's okay."

"Comics being the neurotic people we are, if we were getting nothing but good responses from an audience, night after night, we'd start worrying that we were doing something boring and middle of the road."

Having grown up in Kettering, Acaster left school during his A-levels, sidestepping a path that is familiar to so many successful

comedians, especially those from Cambridge.

"I've never felt like I've missed out on it. I didn't want to go to university because I knew that all I was going to do was get in debt. I wanted to do something creative and that was being in a band. I'm glad that I took the opportunity to do something completely uncompromising for five years. Even though it didn't get anywhere and wasn't a success I really value those years as it means I'm coming from a different place with my comedy."

I wondered what made it so uncompromising.

"It was not music that anyone else liked apart from me and my friend. It was experimental stuff, really difficult to listen to because we'd have lots of different melodies going on all at once."

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COMICS ARE NEUROTIC PEOPLE

"I learned that it's a good idea [to] try to meet an audience halfway so I think I found a middle ground that has informed my stand-up."

It was while he was still in the band playing drums that he did his first few comedy gigs, initially as nothing more than an adrenaline boost.

"But when the band stopped I was 23 and that was the only thing I knew how to do."



I ask him what he would have done if he had never done those gigs.

"I think I would have either started another band or moved to Kenya."

From Kettering to Kenya? "Yeah, just going down the alphabet really. I was nearly going to go but then I ended up doing stand-up instead."

In his new show *Represent* he talks about his time doing jury duty on a double murder case and dishes the dirt on his fellow jurors.

Is it a true story?

"Well, that is for the audience to decide."

James Acaster brings Represent to The Cambridge Junction on Friday 23 October.

Comment

Sorry, Emma, but you are a white feminist



Vidya Ramesh

White feminism isn't inherently bad, but it's also just not enough

Emma Watson is of Caucasian ancestry and she lives in a multiracial society where the Anglo-Celtic ethnic group was historically the dominant one. Ergo, she is “white”, with all of its loaded socio-logical connotations. And if she does really believe in “the theory of political, economic and social equality of the sexes”, then I’d say that makes her a feminist too. Cue a Twitter Q&A in which she neatly sidesteps the blunt question “Are you a white feminist?” with a rambling panegyric to intersectionality. What’s wrong with that? Or, on a more serious note, what is wrong with that...

Firstly, it’s that she gives white feminism an unduly hard time of it. Castigating it as the “exclusion of black women from the [feminist] movement”, she then proceeds to distance herself from the label by declaring that her bosses “(and the people who gave [her] the job) are two black women”

There is nothing inherently reprehensible about white feminism. It does not try to actively exclude women of colour, like me. It legitimises itself through campaigning for the eradication of an existing social ill. But the problem with white feminism is this: legitimisation extends to the racial inequality that it in itself embodies. Think of the excessive airtime that the Suffragists (sorry Newnhamites)

gave to prominent men such as John Stuart Mill in their campaigns. The political capital it potentially earned is undeniable, but in terms of combatting the male paternalism, the effect was most likely counterproductive. Put simply, no matter how hard it tries, white feminism can never really include ethnic minorities unless they enter the movement in a filial, subordinate capacity.

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ACTING AS A MICROPHONE IS POOR SUBSTITUTE FOR LISTENING TO THE VICTIMS THEMSELVES

Equally we can’t go to the other extreme of venerating all feminists of colour whilst demonising the Emma Watsons. This means that we can’t just countenance Watson’s appointment as Goodwill Ambassador because the women she was hired by were black. Acting as a microphone “to amplify the experiences of other people” is poor substitute for listening to the fighters and the victims themselves. We have no excuse – translators and

technology allow us to create a visceral bond with a woman on the other side of the globe. But perhaps it’s all too close for comfort. Perhaps we need an intermediary, a Watsonian ambassador with a pretty face and tinkling voice to relay the suffering of other women without the gory details, in a manner that is slightly easier to stomach.

Out of Watson’s entire speech at the United Nations, only two sentences explicitly referenced the struggles facing other women across the globe (child marriage and lack of access to secondary education), as opposed to her own experiences with gender-based discrimination (such as being called “bossy” for wanting to direct a play).

That is not to trivialise Watson’s personal struggles; on the contrary I feel a great deal of empathy towards her, as many other educated young women living in the occident do. The dregs of institutionalised misogyny still swirl around in the underbelly of Cambridge life: all-male drinking societies, a disproportionate investment in male rowing and rugby clubs, not to mention The Tab’s coveted title for ‘Rear of the Year’.

But unlike the world of Model United Nations, the real United Nations and all her subsidiary campaigns do not have unlimited funding. That is something that the First World

generation need to fully comprehend the gravity of. We cannot waste time with niceties: the most severe of crimes against women need to be articulated. We should neither become desensitised to words like menstrual rape, intimate partner violence (IPV) or flogging, but nor should we feel squeamish about educating and discussing these issues with those of the opposite sex. That is what HeForShe purports itself to be about.

In sum, an apologist approach will not work in the battle against gender inequality. Watson already vacillated in excusing “[her] own luck/good fortune/privilege something like five times in [her] UN speech”. We simply don’t have time for this. We need to hear stories from the horse’s mouth, not through the lens of inevitable condescension that comes when Children in Need or Comic Relief pay for a celebrity to go to Africa to cuddle the impoverished children there.

It is the same with Watson. She might be the perfect candidate for an ambassador: smart, sharp, witty and articulate. But diplomacy doesn’t always work. If the prospect of tackling crimes against women need to be packaged in an “invitation” for men to pay attention delivered by an attractive “white feminist”, then there is a serious problem. And that problem doesn’t lie at Emma Watson’s feet, but at our own.

Why the Pope has something to say to all of us



Dominic Cawdell

Pope Francis’ recent encyclical ‘Laudato Si’ addresses issues with which we should all be concerned

In May this year Pope Francis issued the most astonishing document to come from the Holy See in centuries, an encyclical called ‘Laudato Si’. In this remarkable document, the Pope addresses every human being in the hope of beginning a revolution to preserve ‘our common home’ currently under threat from climate-change, a disregard for the poor and the dominance of ‘the market’. In perhaps the most striking sentence of the encyclical, Francis says ‘the Earth, our home, is beginning to look more and more like an immense pile of filth’. This is increasingly hard to deny and it is for that reason that I believe ‘Laudato Si’ has something to say to every human person, however uncomfortable the message is to receive.

Francis begins with the premise that there is a mutuality inherent in nature - we need nature, he says, and we need each other. Of course, he’s right in this and the world is increasingly waking up to the fact. However, he goes further than most in his conviction that there is a fully ‘integral ecology’ - protection of the environment or the most vulnerable are to facets of the same moral imperative; our flourishing is intimately related to the flourishing of others and of the earth.

From this premise, the Pope

rightly goes on to attack the false and treacherous appetites of modern capitalism, arguing that the consumerist understanding of nature is fatal both to the planet and also to the poorest and most vulnerable members of the human race. He may understand the benefits of capitalism and advances in technology: who can deny, for example, the improvement to living conditions? But the Pope issues a stark reminder: technology gives to those with knowledge and economic resources “an impressive dominance over the whole of humanity and the entire world”. Francis reminds us of how dangerous this concentration of power is. Living under this ‘technocratic paradigm’ dominates the economic and political life of our society, which means it is skewed in favour of those with money and knowledge. It is skewed in our favour, we cannot deny that we benefit from this skew, and so we often fail to recognise that, by itself, the market cannot guarantee human development or social inclusion. In the existing paradigm we are largely complicit in damaging not only ourselves but also our common home.

However, the reason I believe the Pope has something to say to all of us is because he does not only attack the excesses of the market, but he also breaks from the liberal, optimistic

consensus of the consuming-world. He is emphatic in his belief that the capitalist system under which we live will not break the cycles of environmental degradation; no technology can fix the problem of unrestrained appetite which, Francis argues, dominates our culture. Francis invites us to dramatically ‘change direction’ - criticising the weak response of the majority of liberal-minded people who, like the majority of us in this country, live in a state of complacency and cheerful recklessness. Yet

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WE ARE LARGELY COMPLICIT IN DAMAGING NOT ONLY OURSELVES BUT ALSO OUR COMMON HOME

the Pope’s most scathing criticism is levied at what he calls the ‘ecological debt’ which we are accruing. In our world, the poor pay for the greed of the rich and future generations will pay for our indulgences now. There are inalienable rights and these are non-negotiable, yet at the moment these human needs are ignored so

that the few can satisfy their insatiable appetites.

Whether you agree or disagree with Pope Francis, and people have ardently done both, we can’t ignore his message. The way the consuming-world lives is destroying the environment and degrading the lives of millions of people, not to mention the threats to the rest of nature and biodiversity. Francis is characteristically critical of the ineffective global response to this apocalyptic-crisis, highlighting the many international statements which have led to very little action. Pope Francis also calls individuals to reconsider their part in these systems which exist to satisfy our need to consume and to find a means of peace and fulfilment which does not exploit the world’s poorest and damage the ‘common home’ on which we all dependent. Of course, all this has an undeniable spiritual dimension for the Pope; the world is not, for him, the result of a random chain of events but the beloved creation of a loving Creator, who has bestowed on creation a dignity which ought not to be violated. The Holy Father’s final cry is simple: we must abandon the self-centred consumerism which has led us here, in order to stop the degradation of our fellow human and the whole created world.

All I can say is amen; let it be so.



Academia is just one square of the blanket



Shefali Kharabanda

We succeed as individuals when our self-worth depends on more than just grades.

A friend of mine recently told me about a professor in her department, a kind soul, to whom it seemed that the best prediction of the coming term you could give to a fresher was: “If you haven’t broken down by week 6, you aren’t working hard enough.”

Clearly, this is problematic. But I think, perhaps, the best thing to do when faced with remarks such as these is to try and understand exactly why they are problematic. Once we can decode them, we can begin to disbelieve and disregard them with conviction. I understand that, in a place like this, it can be hard to disregard hurtful or potentially hurtful comments. We are young. We are always at risk of elevating those older than us, those who we may instinctively feel to be better than we are – whether

emotional sensitivity.

For me, this professor’s comment touches upon a fundamental issue which I feel that many students here, and many students in general, struggle with. And I feel that the stance that this comment demonstrates is potentially really dangerous. Stripped down, at the heart of this comment lies a correlative: an indicator of a particular level of emotional wellbeing (“if you haven’t broken down”) being dependent upon academic pursuits (“working hard enough”). The problem is not that they are associated: the problem is that they are interdependent.

The interdependence suggested here, that levels of happiness are inextricably linked with work, is what needs to be challenged. We’ve all been there. A supervision where an essay gets torn apart, and feeling extremely demotivated as a result. Not doing as much reading as we wanted to before writing an essay, and feeling confused if it goes well. But there is a distinction between who we are and the work that we do. And that needs to be remembered, perhaps now more than ever, as we start to settle into weekly essay deadlines, so that we can prepare ourselves and be better equipped for dealing with this assumption – whether it is self-imposed, due to our own high academic standards, or imposed upon us by others.

We need to remember that our self-worth exists independently of

our work. It is not that we should not allow ourselves to feel good when we do well academically; rather, we need to remember to try to not allow self-worth to depend wholly upon, or become too bound up with, our work. Because the incontrovertible and beautiful truth is that we are not our work. We are patchwork people, with interests and passions which are far more wide-ranging than the name of the degree we will leave this place with, with friends to invest time and

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PERHAPS WE MIGHT, IF WE FEEL READY TO, BEGIN TO CONSIDER OUR PATCHWORK SELVES; TO REMEMBER ALL OF THE THINGS THAT MAKE UP WHO WE ARE

energy and effort into, with people to love and to be loved by.

I understand that this can be a difficult thing to implement. After all, it is hard to have an awful supervision, with possible feelings of inadequacy or thoughts of hours of work being wasted, and not feel bad afterwards. It is not invalid to feel this way. But

perhaps we might, if we feel ready to, begin to consider our patchwork selves; to remember all of the things that make up who we are. For instance, being a kind friend, or being someone who made everyone laugh last night instead of doing that bit of extra reading, is an achievement. I do not mean it requires strenuous effort, I mean that making others happy and making oneself happy is a worthy accomplishment. Spending time doing things which make us feel good and happy, whether that be rowing, yoga, or Wednesday night Cindies, is worthwhile.

The emotional wellbeing and academic achievement correlative can be quick to take centre stage, to render other activities that we enjoy less significant, making them peripheral. These activities can be demoted from their own position of value, viewed only as a reward for working. But we are not our work. The great thing about patchwork is that there is no hierarchy. Each fragment is the same size and just as important as the rest. A patchwork knitted blanket would be incomplete if any of the coloured squares were removed. Work is only one knitted square, and it is no bigger than, say, spending time relaxing, or spending time with friends getting ready to dance until there is nothing else that matters. We are patchwork people, so much more than our work, and we have the right to all of the brightest colours.

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THE INCONTROVERTIBLE AND BEAUTIFUL TRUTH IS THAT WE ARE NOT OUR WORK

they are older students, staff, parents: anyone. And maybe they are better in some ways. But older does not necessarily mean wiser, and academic intelligence is often very different to

Our curricula are white, and they shouldn't be

Lola
Olufemi



When we study a white masculine mode of thinking, we forget those oppressed by it

The CUSU BME Campaign recently held an event asking the question “Why is my curriculum white?”. We invited Adam Eliot-Cooper, a PhD student at Oxford studying black resistance to police brutality and co-founder of a Facebook group of the same name, to examine what it means to have our curricula dominated by white men. This is a question that becomes more pertinent as the years go by. As a person of colour studying a subject dominated by white faces, the euro-centric curriculum often acts as just another reminder that what we value as literary critics, as historians, as scientists, are the works shaped by the oppressive nature of society. And this is an institution that claims to possess some of the highest standards for acquiring knowledge through research.

When I, as an English student, cannot formally study a single person who looks like me for the first two years of my degree, what I am being subjected to is a violent form of erasure. People of colour, women, and trans people are quite literally being written out of history, our contributions ignored. This becomes so normalised that our invisibility is not even discussed, not addressed, laughed off in lectures. That you are considered a silent nuisance if you insist on reaching for queer or postcolonial texts, or refuse to ignore the oppression evident in them in your weekly essay, speaks volumes.

There is the maintenance of power and structural disadvantage in being

made to constantly study the work of white men without any critical framework that allows us to question why that is. This kind of thinking is so insidious that our idea of ‘high culture’ is often defined by how many white male writers we can rattle off at parties. Well, have you read Foucault? Do you like Auden? What do you think of Proust and so on?

This isn't to say that white men have not contributed anything to our understandings of the world, but it is ludicrous to treat their works as if they are the only seminal texts. Cooper argued that if the clothes we wear, the desks we sit at, the institution to which we belong, if all of those things have been made through the exploitation of former colonies and the global south, then we have a moral duty, at the very least, to treat the ideas of those people with dignity. We should consider them robustly and in place of standard European texts. This is about more than tokenism – it is not enough to throw *Things Fall Apart* onto the reading list. We have to first address the ideological reasons behind this institution's insistence to rely on a singular form of white knowledge and then radically reform our curricula in order to deal with this.

We do this not only by including a diverse range of voices and experiences in our study but also by expanding our idea of what is worthy of study. We must do away with the snobbery attached to “lower forms” of literature and art; what is needed is serious

critical engagement with them. How do the real life experiences of grassroots scholars impact academia? Is there space for political and feminist readings of YouTube videos, blogs and everything that exists outside of the white male paradigm?

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PEOPLE OF COLOUR, WOMEN, AND TRANS PEOPLE ARE QUITE LITERALLY BEING WRITTEN OUT OF HISTORY

If we continue to only study one kind of knowledge, our ideas exist within a paradigm that refuses to admit the differences between us. At the very least, there should be some recognition of the racism, sexism and other forms of oppressions evident in the texts that we study. It is useless to pretend that Dickens “spoke the language of humanity” or that white male authors can articulate any other experience than one that is white and male. The effect of the white curriculum is such that we have imbued white male writers with the power and authority to speak for everyone; minority students often try and find themselves grasping at texts that were not written for them in an attempt to

find a shared humanity that is based on their exclusion. We must rid ourselves of the idea that there is an inherent value in studying texts that are violently misogynistic or racist without acknowledging that they do great harm to the readers. If we are asked to study aestheticised depictions of violence against women, from domestic violence to rape, but refuse to look at such texts through a critical framework and instead insist on seeing it as “art for art's sake”, we contribute to a society that privileges masculinist ways of thinking whilst ensuring the continuance of rape culture.

What we study and how we study it is important because it shapes the lens through which we see the world. If we only view the world through the eyes of the structurally privileged, if our curriculums continue to rely on the ideas of white men, that lens is clouded and becomes harmful to other people. There are scholars at grassroots levels, working in community centres and hospitals and youth groups doing the same kind of intellectual work as those trapped in the ivory tower; it is just that we are better able to recognise an article or a peer-reviewed journal than we are the merits of practical work. We should be able to study anyone and everyone who is not a white cis heterosexual able-bodied man in and out of academic settings. But it must not just be done in a way that means stepping aside to let their voices in: they must be afforded the entire stage.

Are catered Halls really that great?

This week, Lana argues that the food is vile and overpriced, while Rosie claims that it's a necessary part of our lives

Rosie Best

Lana Crowe

After the library, Hall should be every Cambridge student's favourite place. The structuring of our catered hall system has saved many of us from near starvation when the choice between making our own food or sleeping might have been a tough one. The opportunity this affords us to socialise with our peers and enjoy formal meals in a place frequented by Cambridge students for centuries should be snatched up quicker than the waffles are at brunch.

Hall is a useful alternative for those of us who either can't or won't cook for ourselves.

Perhaps you've been in the library for nine hours and the idea of cooking for a further hour before eating is a prospect you simply can't stomach. Maybe you've just returned from a particularly exhausting rowing outing or from an especially traumatising supervision. Maybe you're just lazy. Catered halls are a blessing in any of the above situations. Studying here is time-consuming and leaves little time for leisure activities, such as feeding yourself.



But instead we are provided with a hearty meal of meat and three types of potato, guaranteed to fuel a further 3-4 hours in the library.

The subsidisation of meals is also a benefit of our catered halls. The average meal cost is extremely low at £3 and the use of Cam cards in canteens even allows us to effectively ignore these costs until the end of term – why cross a bridge before you've got there? Instead of questioning these seemingly low prices we should be grateful for them; even a Big Mac meal is more expensive than Hall. Think on that (although maybe not for too long).

Formals are also a benefit of our catered Hall system. The opportunity to dine on a three course meal in a 14th Century Hall is not something you would find at every university and formal can be a perfect way to celebrate a birthday or to show visitors a glimpse of how the other half live. The extremely reasonable price of around £10-£15 means that formal can be attended more than once a term, and allows us to socialise in an environment which, in true Cambridge style, is both ostentatious and wild at the same time.

While it is true that the functioning of our catered Halls is not perfect, stale waffles are better than none – especially when smothered in the sweet syrup of value for money.

Bland. Cheap. The same as last week. No, I'm not talking about the contents of the Tab. Food served from the college hall or buttery is not a key part of university life, but an unnecessary burden carried by the wallets of the student population. It allows us to avoid learning one of the most basic skills needed for survival: provision of food. Real life remains but an illusory shadow on the wall of the Cantabrigian cave that we all find ourselves chained to.

Hall – if you'll pardon the pun – does not cater for everyone. Vegetarian dishes are wanting, and vegan options are non-existent. Anyone who eats Halal or Kosher will struggle to eat well from the canteen. As someone whose diet is restricted by allergies, I often find myself stuck for choices. The accommodating service that one would expect from such a supposed centre of community falls flat: I pay my college almost £200 per term to produce food that I am physically unable to eat. There is a significant minority who are not properly provided for, not including those who would simply prefer to cook for themselves.

A buttery provides an unsatisfactory solution to several college problems. Some people become so swamped with work that they are unable to find time to cook. The answer to this should not be to make meal-times quicker: it is hardly over-demanding and self-indulgent to be allowed enough time to eat. Most kitchens are under-equipped, meaning that cooking

proper meals is impossible for some: making the Kitchen Fixed Charge (KFC) an opt-in payment, which still serves but charges higher prices to those who do not pay it, does not seem to be pushing the boundaries of logic too far.

The compulsory KFC epitomises this institution's ability to bully its residents. Cambridge students are constantly aware that resisting university authority comes at a price. Like naughty children, we are kept in line with the threat that our degrees will be confiscated. The paternalistic administration of Cambridge University needs to become more flexible, to accommodate for our increasingly diverse demographic. I thought that they would have developed a more sophisticated method of keeping control than stealing our lunch money.



ROSIE + LANA

Society is changing, but Labour can keep up



Chris Waugh

There is a place for Labour in the future, but it needs to remember where it's coming from.

On Monday morning, Lord Warner, a Labour Peer, quit his job and issued what the press called a “damning” indictment of Jeremy Corbyn’s leadership. He cited the “calamitous decline” of the Labour leadership quality, and claimed Corbyn’s approach would contribute to Labour’s further decline. However, being a nice man, he vowed to fight for “progressive” causes, which he felt able to do much more efficiently without Corbyn’s Labour. Warner’s resignation was a masterclass in rethinking the meaning of words and phrases - the “calamitous decline” now redefined to mean “landslide election of a Labour leader with a bigger majority than Blair,” and Warner’s “progressive” causes now meaning “introducing a paying membership scheme for the NHS,” (as Tuesday’s *Independent* reported.)

The fact is, every (right-wing) man and his (presumably further right) dog have had it in for Corbyn since day one, and doing so has involved a lot of language redefinition. Corbyn is “unelectable”, now meaning “has won seven parliamentary elections, and over 60 per cent of the leadership vote”; Corbyn is “unpatriotic,” which means “he went to a constituency surgery and therefore missed a Rugby match.” Corbyn is an “extremist,” i.e. “advocates policies which would be fairly centrist Labour ideals in ‘45.” But the point of this article isn’t about the ridiculous amount of nonsense thrown at Corbyn, but more about

what it means for Labour. It means a change, certainly, but is that a good thing?

Change has really hung over Corbyn’s victory. New Labourites have claimed that a Corbyn-led party will be trapped in the past, arguing for the politics of the past. That argument has some sense in it - Corbyn has more in common with the Labour of Attlee and Bevin than Blair or Brown ever did - but the fact is that this kind of politics is relevant today. The Coalition and the Tories after them have set about dismantling the

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LABOUR WAS PULLED APART BECAUSE IT HAD BECOME INDISTINGUISHABLE

welfare state. Time and time again, we have seen government measures cause suffering among the weakest members of society. Over a million people relied on foodbanks in 2014-15; recently, we saw the government cut tax credits, despite personal promises by Cameron that this wouldn’t happen. The NHS has been subject to stealth privatisation, and as the recent Junior Doctors demonstrations showed, our health services are being run into the ground. In light of

this, the kind of politics advocated by a Corbyn Labour - committed to free healthcare, to protecting and rebuilding the welfare state - is really what we need. These ideas aren’t old, they aren’t the ideas of the past. If anything, Tory attempts to marketise education, healthcare and the like are dragging us back into the past; Labour, really, is having to repeat itself.

Labour is changing and for good reason. I find it hard to understand why people hark back to the days of Blair - there’s a four letter word that seems to undermine everything Labour did and that’s “Iraq” - but I strongly suspect the reason Labour won three elections under Blair wasn’t because the electorate approved of Blair, but because we wanted to keep the Tories out, because we knew the risk a Tory government would bring. And here lies the crux of the matter: Labour needs to change because it cannot rely on a core of working class or left votes to keep it in power. Ed Miliband didn’t lose the election because he was too left wing - it was because he’d lost sight of Labour’s base, which is unions, working families, the oppressed. In the last election, Miliband’s “bit of this, bit of that,” left/right manifesto didn’t really ring true with anyone, apart from whoever made that God-awful stone. Left voters, like myself, voted Green, or SNP, or Plaid. Much as I hate UKIP, they did manage to build on working class anger to siphon votes away from Labour. Labour was pulled apart

because it had become indistinguishable. It had become hollow.

The world really hasn’t changed that much; we still face the marginalisation of the working class, skyrocketing inequality, discrimination towards LGBT+ people, involvement in costly and pointless wars - these aren’t new threats. The same issues arise time and time again with new faces. And Labour’s greatest failing was that it wasn’t willing to admit that its founding principles - minimum wage, social housing, free education and healthcare, the values of community and compassion - aren’t old fashioned or timeless. These are principles that matter regardless of the age, regardless of the economic climate, because they are about basic human decency and respect for our fellow citizens. If Labour’s “change” is to put those principles into the foreground of its politics once more, to fight against austerity, to defend the welfare state and so on, this can be no bad thing.

Will it “work”? I can’t say. Who knows where we’ll be in 2020; our man Jezza could be walking into Downing Street. We could have left the EU. We might even get another season of *Firefly*. I don’t know. No one does, and trying to determine now what’s going to happen five years from now is pointless. But what I do know is that if the Labour Party is going to remain relevant - in any world - it needs to be the voice of the voiceless.

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.

22nd October Dawn Literally just awoke to the smell of freshly mown grass, new parchment and spearmint... toothpaste? OMG Hugo, what like totes fresh breath you have!!! #AllTheBetterTo-MakeOutWithYouWith. So like as I’m opening my eyes I feel the wind caress my cheek like a feather festival headdress, but before I can actually like process cultural appropriation Hermes litro zooms in through the open window on his RyanAir heelys. I’m all “Budget cuts?” and he’s like “#AusterityIsAnInconvenience.” So then he like totes drops a scroll on the bed with ‘#TheActualLikeCambridgeFuckingUnion’ wax seal on

it. OMG, like what could it actually be?!

So like I open the scroll and I’ve litro been invited to like speak at the Union for an event called “This House Litro Believes That Like This House Should Have The Freedom To Like Debate Free Speech In This House And Also Offer Julian Assange Cake Like It’s Only Cake #ChatterDon’tMatter” I’m like SO TOTES up for this, like, I’m such a sucker for a bargain but FREE speech?! Litro #Winning any day. I swear ever since Whatsapp started charging me an annual fee and like Facebook Messenger started actually tracking my every move (like, even when I buy shoes on sale or blow my nose with loo roll instead of a tissue) like my literal ONLY communication outlet is #Insta. SO #Oppressed. It’s like I’m actually totes publishing my diary to like the literal world (OMG how embarrassing would that be?! LOL!) So then Hugo’s all “You’re so successful I’m litro like intimidated by you now, LOL!” and so I’m like “Teehee so you know like in Rugby... what’s a knock-on?” and he pats me on the head #Equality.

Midday So like major prep for the #Bop tonight is like totes fully swinging like a sexually starved middle aged couple on a Wednesday night in Barnsley Town Hall #Metaphors. So like this week’s theme is

‘Meta Meat’ which is obviously totes hilar ‘cause like ‘Meta’ is an anagram of ‘Meat’ #Funagram. But it’s also like totes serious as well ‘cause it’s an actual charitable theme to like raise awareness for like cruelty to animals. So like now I’m in a massive Branstons Pickle ‘cause I don’t know whether to dress as an ermine in a fur coat, a mouse chemist, a bunny Naomi Campbell, Peter the cannibal dog, or just like take my snake skin handbag ‘cause it’s litro so #Rare #Vintage?!

Tea-time So like I litro just gracefully collided with Olivia and she just told me that like all of the proceeds for tonight’s Bop are litro going straight to FFS (Fashionable Females Soc)! Litro so #Pumped we can like FINALLY replace our fur collection with synthetics and then like totes donate the fur to like really cold animals in like Manchester or somewhere super far away from the equator! Olivia’s like “I’m in like such an Organic Pickle now ‘cause my crochet dress is litro still in Miami... like, my crochet-dile outfit is SO totes ruined!” I’m like, “HOLD YOUR THOROUGHbred #Whinnying! I’ve got like two actual spare outfits!” Oh My Instagram, chilly animals and now THIS?! I am literally a saint!

Eventide So like Hugo and I are like litro just snacking on some

actual free-range nibbles in a candlelit archway at the edge of the Bop when a guy litro drenched in honey and covered in oats runs into us and like totes knocks a scotch egg like actually out of my hand. Hugo’s like “Are you like having a chortle mate?!” and I’m all “Hugo like totes don’t it’s like SO not #NetWorth it!” and then I’m all “This Bop is called ‘Meta

MEAT’ not ‘Meta OATMEAL!’ Where’s your humanity?!” Litro before we can even say #ToffOff the stone archway like totes starts revolving and Hugo, the sticky man and me are like litro plunged into like actual darkness...

OMG so, like, litro just wait for everything to be unveiled #NextWeek...



#entz #bops #Hugo #hair #mad1



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PETAR ON FILM

Petar Lekarski
unpicks the latest
releases

EVEREST: THE TURD THAT GLITTER MADE SMELLIER

Dear reader, I may be running out of strength. I'm tired of Hollywood patronising me with garbage. I'm tired of movies that make completely untrue assumptions about me. I'm tired of false advertising that tricks me into giving up my time and money. I'm tired of film critics setting the tone of the conversation by writing as though they can speak for anyone other than themselves. Is it obvious yet that the new film about the big scary mountain ruined my 22nd birthday? No? Well, it did.

Let me be clear about this: *Everest* (2015) IMAX 3D—or whatever—is garbage. It tells no particular story, nor does it hold any suspense. None of the people involved in its creation appear to care in the slightest about how films communicate ideas and emotions to their audience. A film is not worthwhile unless its framing, editing, use of sound, and manipulation of colour can be read as deliberate and interpreted accordingly. I have to assume every choice exercised by the filmmakers is intentional because otherwise meaningfully talking about film becomes impossible. Allow me to illustrate with the example of *Gravity*, an imperfect film which nevertheless avoids so many of the mistakes *Everest* makes, and takes a much more cinematic approach.

So, in *Gravity*, the long disorienting take at the beginning and sparse use of music aids the viewer in empathising with Sandra Bullock and strongly hints at what feeling trapped in space with her must be like. In *Everest*, every jarring cut away from the mountain and back to Keira Knightley snivelling in extreme close-up on a 60ft screen just made me roll my eyes and sigh. Relating to characters is about how interesting they are to the audience. This can be achieved through dialogue but in a visual medium like film that's perhaps not the sharpest tool for the job. Having said that, filmmakers must also exercise care in how they use the unique grammar of film to avoid unintentional humour. For instance, just showing the camera in the face of a crying actress with a runny nose, snot slowly dripping towards her parted lips does not exactly read as gravitas. Mandatory empathy of this kind is like an unsolicited hug from someone you really don't like because they wrongly thought you needed it but never stopped to ask.

This is exacerbated by the fact that although *Everest* IMAX 3D is based on an expedition that really happened, it focuses on a bunch of people whose stories really didn't need to be retold. We already have plenty of films about straight white men overcoming (although exactly what is never clear). What about Yasuko Namba? She was a Japanese businesswoman, aged 47, who had climbed six of the Seven Summits and was attempting to become the oldest woman to summit Everest before she died in the disaster. She gets all of five minutes on screen before making way for all the interchangeable bearded guys to yell incomprehensibly at each other and not-so-triumphantly overcome. Making her a focal point of the experience would have made the film more engaging because the audience might have been able to relate to her unique purpose that day. Instead, we have generic men in indistinguishable costumes. Worse still, the camera lingers over the rest of the women snivelling and fussing (in IMAX! in 3D!). That kind of message is impossible to ignore when it's being yelled at you. Men: strong; women: weak. Give me a goddamn break. All I wanted was to spend the day feeling twenty-two. Hollywood, take a look what you've done 'cause now we've got bad blood.

The procrastinator's treasure trove

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While Netflix is a wonderful online institution, facilitating students' procrastination on a daily basis, it does at times feel like an unsolvable labyrinth of opportunity. With hundreds of films and TV shows to choose from, combined with the world's most confusing recommendation system (which only recently recommended I watch a documentary on the Ukrainian civil war having just finished a rom-com), it's no wonder people spend more time scrolling through the various options than actually watching something. However, fear not – after a long of summer of having nothing better to do, here are *Varsity's* alternative picks, so that you can chill with ease. –Will Roberts

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Comedy *Obvious Child*

The abortion rom-com perhaps isn't the most persuasive way to sell a film, yet with wit and poignancy *Obvious Child* pulls off just that. The film centres on Donna, a New-Yorker who has a one night stand which leaves her pregnant and subsequently chooses to have an abortion. I think the reason that *Obvious Child* is so enjoyable is the fact that it's so grounded; most rom-coms are still set in alternate universes, with cardboard cut-out characters that only exist in Richard Curtis films. Yet *Obvious Child* is an exception; it has interesting, flawed and relatable characters, whose company you more than enjoy, allowing the film to have a dialogue about an important issue which for the most part cinema has completely ignored. Oh, and it's really funny.



Drama *A Separation*

It really is such a shame that more people haven't seen Asghar Farhadi's Oscar winning drama *A Separation*, despite all the media attention it got (and deserved) from critics when it was released. As suggested by the title, the film follows a recently divorced couple who must make the difficult decision between whether to leave Iran to improve the life of their child or to stay and look after a deteriorating parent who has Alzheimer's disease. With an Oscar-nominated script to its name, a rarity for a foreign-language film, *A Separation* is a truly beautifully written film. Farhadi, with his skilful and subtle direction, treats of all of his characters equally and fairly, giving the viewer a wonderful cobweb of perspective by the end.



Horror *American Horror Story*

After a long day of work, there's nothing better than sitting down and watching something fun and ultimately stupid, a service which *American Horror Story* (AHS) provides with relish. From *Glee* Creator Ryan Murphy, this anthology series focuses on a different horror story every season, ranging from mental asylums in the 60s to present day witch covens. If you're not a horror fan don't put be off; AHS's seasons range from the genuinely creepy (Murder House) to ridiculously camp (Coven), so there's something for everyone. It also has a fantastic sense of its own ridiculousness, a breath of fresh air in an era of TV that's desperately trying to be important. Top all this with the gamest cast out there, led by the ever sexy Jessica Lange, AHS will entertain you in ways you never thought possible.



Thriller *The One I Love*

Attempting to be constantly aware of plot spoilers makes *The One I Love* an almost impossible film to write about. The plot follows a couple whose marriage is proving problematic. However, after this seemingly normal introduction, the film takes a turn for the weird after the couple discover strange goings on during their holiday retreat. It is first and foremost a fantastic film to watch when with friends; the film script is cleverly written, containing many twists and turns which leave you gagging to discuss the film once the credits have rolled. And while its main concept is ultimately subversive and sci-fi-esque, much like *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*, it still manages to say something profound and unique about marriage and relationships.

Bands you should be listening to: Deerhunter



I first encountered Deerhunter when my oh-so-cool sister felt the need to tell me that the transition between the first two tracks on their 2008 album *Microcastle* was really, really good. Being such a cool sister, she only felt compelled to do that because she truly believed it. Honestly, she was completely right.

Formative bands are not just hand-me-downs though; they can only achieve that mythic status when they instigate a dialogue. There has to be a reason to keep listening as the novelty of discovery wears away. Deerhunter's power lies in the humanity they've demonstrated in plying their craft. A lot of that has to do with frontman Bradford Cox's own vulnerability, as a sufferer of Marfan syndrome, which leaves him looking lanky, fragile and demonstrably weak (as shown by the outpouring horror and sympathy when he was involved in a car crash last December), and as an icon of queerness, hovering somewhere between asexual and gay and obviously exhibiting an acute degree of anxiety over it. Despite that, he still has an utterly compelling physicality, twisting gender and sexual expression in a truly unique way. Imagine Bowie with crippling self-doubt and a congenital disease.

That vulnerability makes their music extremely accessible on an emotional level, each seeming to find a new way to investigate and deal with trauma – through Cryptograms' stoic placidity, Microcastle's violent self-obliteration, Halcyon Digest's radiant, cracked nostalgia and Monomania's swaggering collapse into screwball Americana. Obviously no band achieves their level of acclaim without fundamentally good songwriting, but their ability to describe in broad gestures, often grand and risky ones, deeply volatile and unstable emotional states, is fantastic. They constantly exhibit a streak of damage and pain, maybe even self-harm. But that is their medium, their unique way of tackling the world.

The reason that transition at the start of *Microcastle* works so effectively is how it slams from a woozy, drugged introduction to a neurotic, spinning, clockwork-pop track with nothing so much a breath. That is what Deerhunter do: find the most visceral, messy parts of the human experience, take ownership of them, and explain them back in a truly beautiful, novel and cathartic way.

Michael Davin

Read Varsity's review of the new Deerhunter album, *Fading Frontier*, on page 29

A guide in five tracks:

Octet (Cryptograms)

Bridging the album's post-rock first half and psych-pop second, Octet is really the first hint that the band had the range and dexterity to turn pop tracks into monstrous poetry.

Twilight At Carbon Lake (Microcastle)

The most direct, viscous and angry slice of noisier shoegaze they have ever released. A faultless end to a faultless album, go listen to it now.

Helicopter (Halcyon Digest)

It's their biggest ever single, and still one of their most tragically fatalistic.

Sleepwalking (Monomania)

A shift into lowslung Southern rock, getting dirtier but no less melancholic, and alongside T.H.M. forming the emotional core of a very damaged album.

Breaker (Fading Frontier)

The second single of their new album hints at a more resigned and melancholic feel.

The Mays: breaking the mould

Emily Bailey-Page and Shefali Kharabanda discuss the latest edition of the Oxbridge anthology



Each year, *the Mays* is released as a compendium of student writing from Oxford and Cambridge, showcasing young talent in poetry, fiction and visual arts. The anthology's most well-known alumna is Zadie Smith, oft-repeated in *the Mays* promotional material, and the idea behind the collection is to help propel the careers of these writers to similar heights. Here, culture editors Emily and Shefali consider *the Mays* as this year's editorship pushes an Oxbridge institution into new, uncharted and interesting waters.

This year represents a break from past editions: instead of separating pieces into distinct sections of poetry, prose and visual arts, editor Emily Fitzell and her team have woven all the works together in a structure that does not restrict the pieces to their traditional categories, but instead encourages readers to make their own connections between works and find their own path through the collection.

Anthologies can be dusty places. This is the proclamation which begins Fitzell's editorial of *the Mays*, and which explains why it is shaped so unconventionally, to revitalise the medium. If there is a question of whether editorship in itself constitutes the creation of an art form, then *the Mays twenty-three* tackles this question unflinchingly. In its entirety, it represents a headstrong attempt to baffle the legacy of anthologies, favouring works which 'deal hard and straight with the reader' yet acknowledging that they may be 'fraying around the edges'. Perhaps *the Mays twenty-three* in its final form is an anthology of works curated on criteria of

unconventionality rather than quality. Certainly a flick through or skim-read might make you believe that. Even the editorials are aesthetically unconventional.

But the unconventionality of many of the pieces is by no means a replacement for quality. *The Mays twenty-three* is brave; it is constructed from pieces which are good but proudly divergent from what we are accustomed to. In this sense it is not just avoiding complacent work: it challenges complacent readers to put down their preconceptions and expectations and to stand to attention.

There is another question, however, which remains the elephant in the room: is *the Mays* accessible? Leafing through the pages in Heffers, where short stories written in Scots dialect sit in silent proximity to Dante-inspired sonnets, you might feel like it's not for you. Perhaps its placement in the bookshop alongside the John Greens and Lee Childs is a ruse, and you are not in fact qualified to read it. You need to have been to that arty party, spoken to that professor in a dimly-lit cafe about the relevance of poststructuralism on a gloomy Tuesday afternoon in order to be truly worthy of appreciating the work inside. In a world in which access to culture can still be so limited, and literature and especially poetry so opaque, is this desirable? Does bringing the work of student creatives to a wider audience really only mean the limited one of an existing cultural bubble?

This reading may not be entirely fair. Yes, *the Mays* is a collection that takes itself seriously, pitches itself hard and aims far. It is far from an

exercise in populism or an appeal to the masses, although there are more light-hearted works, like a particularly funny piece by Emma Levin about two bemused young advertising execs.

The Mays' priority seems not to be to open up Cambridge literature to the world, but to launch the careers of these young writers onto a high platform of notoriety. The varied collection of pieces is perhaps a reflection of where these different writers may end up, whether in a more academic or literary context. And you do really get the sense that they will end up places. There is a real sense of excitement in perusing the collection, in which ambition and talent are given the space to flourish.

Quentin Blake, one of the guest editors alongside Alison Turnbull, notes that there is a tendency to move away from introspection: "we are presented with something acted out". Perhaps it is introspection that we might typically, or even stereotypically, expect from a collection of student writing. And the lack of it seems to lend the collection a cold, detached feel. Such a tone is set by the opening quotation from Simon Critchley; ending with the words "We need to welcome the void, embrace the void"; this inevitably provokes some uneasiness. Fitzell says the Critchley quote serves to introduce the idea of the book as a productive blank canvas; indeed, the anthology seems more concerned with an inherent meaninglessness itself than finding anything redeeming out of it. This appears to suggest that the anthology is more a serious exploration of artistic theme and concept than a work driven by humanity and feeling. However,

there is a lot to be said for a structure without this kind of agenda or unifying theme, as the works contained within the collection exist in their own right, not as parts of a broader message imposed upon them.

It also does not mean that the collection is without emotive force. Two pieces in particular stand out in this respect - *Kinaesthesia I & III*, and *Helen Is Other People*. Both of these are not introspective, they do not expound and elaborate. But their emotiveness is delicate, simply a shadow of the action, and that is why they are moving.

What is clearest about *the Mays* is the amount of time and thought that has gone into producing it. The work has truly been written and edited by people who care about promoting good art and providing a platform for good artists. Fitzell is keen to stress that many fantastic works did not make it into the collection, and that all those who applied should look out for this year's mentoring scheme, being set up with the purpose of supporting promising talent. *The Mays twenty-three* was not looking to fill its pages with works that are comfortable to approach. It's an engaging, sometimes disconcerting, rollicking experience. But it is also creatively liberating, because reading this anthology makes it impossible not to see that there are no limits to what art can be.

THE MAYS TWENTY THREE is currently available from select bookshops in Cambridge, Oxford and London, as well as The Mays online shop:

<http://mays.varsity.co.uk/purchase/>

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VARDAGS

What am I doing here?

Molly Stacey



Although beginning the week as the insincere caption to all matriculation-day Instagram posts – black and white, undoubtedly featuring King’s, nonchalantly (read: knowingly) posed in a “they’ll probably use this photo when I win a Nobel Prize” kind of way – the past nine days has seen this phrase persistently return to the forefront of the fresher psyche. Prompted by delight and fear, the painfully pretentious existentialism of the question seems the only fitting way to process the first few weeks in Cambridge. It has been shouted bewilderedly at Cindies, accompanied by self-consciously ‘ironic’ dancing, as ‘The Circle of Life’ plays triumphantly over the sound system; it has been aimed irritably at Facebook posts of friends having ‘flat roasts’ while you coax the uncooperative WiFi into letting you Google “how to make pasta in a microwave”; it has flashed across

your enthusiastically nodding face as your supervisor calls on you to say something, anything, other than the ‘namesubjectcollege’ mantra you’ve been chanting at fellow freshers.

This is not to say my first days of university have been anything other than amazing. In fact, the overwhelming eagerness of the university as a whole has been the main cause for our giggly expressions of incredulity, as well as the cracking of already-tired Hogwarts jokes. But I cannot deny that the experience has been smattered with ebbing waves of imposter syndrome (see, we really are all like Harry Potter).

My own sense of awkwardness did not come as a surprise. In the long wait following results day – a day of tipsy relief followed by a two-month hangover of panic, regret and rapid emotional attachment to my own bed – I was solidly convinced that my

acceptance was a fluke. More terrifyingly, I was certain that the unidentifiable magic I had gained this place with – seemingly a slap dash concoction of luck, cramming and gross verbosity – would fizzle out as soon as I stepped through the academically immaculate doors of college.

But, to my relief, I have not yet been smitten by the intellectual wrath of the Cambridge gods. The *Wizard of Oz* de-masking moment of my nightmares, despite almost 250 hours of pretending I know what I’m doing, has not yet transpired. What’s more, in the conversations I have had in Cambridge, intense in both their speed and their incisiveness, each one sentient of the need to squeeze fully formed friendships into a four-day Freshers’ ‘Week’, it seems I am not alone in this feeling of fraud. Although not quite so naive as to imagine that my own year

group was somehow immune to the anxieties I was feeling, their presence in long-standing Cantabs was a shock. Second-years, third-years, tutors, fellows, supervisors: the eagerness of these people to talk to me, let alone admit to me that they, too, felt like they were winging it, was a completely alien reality, especially in comparison to the small-minded ‘self-righteous-state-schooler’ narrative I had concocted, which imagined everyone else as trained from birth for Oxbridge success.

So while fear was hardly an unexpected part of my university experience, its openly admitted presence in those who outwardly appear adept at navigating ‘the bubble’ was undeniably a shock. Witnessing someone at the top of their field describing Cambridge as somewhere they still see as an elusive epicentre of academia that they are never quite

in the right place at the right time to be a part of is perhaps exactly what potential applicants put-off by the mythical status of Oxbridge need to hear. Of course, whether they thought that after two or even twenty years I will feel no more like I know what I’m doing is difficult to say. But the relief of discovering that your peers, teachers and tutors are not all prodigies, luminaries or BNOCs brimming with an “immeasurable sense of self-entitlement” (as one *Guardian* article helpfully published before last year’s interviews) has definitely been helpful to me in my navigation of Week 1.

So if my first weeks at university have taught me anything, fellow freshers, it is this: Cambridge veterans are just like us, but with additional knowledge regarding the location of Sainsbury’s, Cindies’s proclivity for Disney anthems, and how to write an essay without crying.



SEXIQUETTE

A USER’S GUIDE

Sex may not be the most common pastime among Cambridge’s student body. Nonetheless, for the small proportion who are ‘getting some’, intercourse still manages to cause havoc when living in college accommodation. Room balloting can become contentious when one finds oneself living next to, above, or below someone who is ‘getting some’ in a very vocal way. I do not begrudge them; if anything, I find their work awe-inspiring. The determination of colleges to try and hinder us from engaging in a perfectly natural activity, namely intercourse, is causing a university-wide problem. One has to navigate the single beds, dodgy springs and foot-thin walls, all while trying to keep the neighbours happy. With this in mind, I produced a guide, a Sex Etiquette if you will, which ensures satisfaction in all corners of the corridor.

Like the Modern Moses, I beseech thee to follow these Sexiquette commandments:

I.

THOU SHALT TURN UP THY VOLUME

It’s 8pm and you’re sitting down to catch up on *Bake Off*. There’s a bass kicking somewhere, a thumping – perhaps a neighbour into their deep house? As you realise what is happening above you is far from a Spotify session, tap that volume ‘+’ button like there’s no tomorrow and sink into Mary Berry’s dulcet tones.

II.

THOU SHALT CLOSE THY CURTAINS

Considering that colleges insist that their accommodation blocks be built opposite to one another, a simple yet effective way to avoid your personal life becoming college gossip next morning is to close your curtains.

III.

THOU SHALT BUY A BLOW-UP MATTRESS

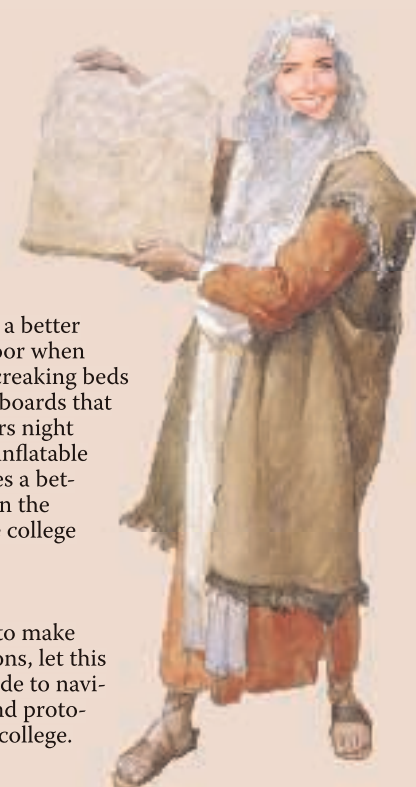
The solution to all these angsts – the blow-up mattress. In my third and final year I have decided to invest in a blow-up mattress, for my emotional welfare. Tried and tested, I have found it to have a variety of purposes. In its first week of use it acted

as a very effective sound proofer – for those dear friends that think of themselves as porn stars, the blow-up mattress, when up against the wall, leaves me to sleep in peace.

Secondly, the blow-up mattress is a better alternative to the floor when trying to avoid the creaking beds or the bashing headboards that give one’s neighbours night terrors. In fact, the inflatable version actually gives a better bounce back than the fun-suckers that are college mattresses.

Freshers looking to make those first impressions, let this be an invaluable guide to navigating the pitfalls and protocol of having sex in college.

Alice Durrans



JAMES TISSOT



Amy Hawkins

The thing about graduating is that once you’ve done it, you’ve done it. What comes next?

One of my enduring memories from school was when in Year 7, my English teacher told us that – as with the enigmatic Joss Grey of *A Greengage Summer* – we would be our most beautiful at the age of 16. Reader, I was pumped. Unfortunately, and perhaps in hindsight, predictably, 16 came and went with a disappointing lack of earth-shattering beauty. After I dried my tears and petrol-bombed said teacher’s house, I moved on and set my sights on a far greater mythologised literary icon: unay.

Such cycles of hope and realisation (read: disappointment) were characteristic of my adolescence. With the future being set out in bite-sized chunks, I could always identify the next milestone at which everything would Become Amazing. Arriving at Cambridge was obviously going to be the start of the three most romantic, intense and fulfilling years of my life. I was going to have multiple handsome boyfriends, a few girlfriends, spend most of my time in smoke-filled rooms of heated discussion or having sex on rooftops, and also probably get a First. The future beyond graduation was less clearly conceptualised, but after such a roaring initiation into adulthood, post-uni life would surely sort itself out.

Fast-forward three years, and here I am at the same desk on which I studied for my A-Levels, writing a self-indulgent and ultimately immaterial article for a newspaper servicing a university that I am no longer part of. “Move the fuck on, Amy!”, I hear you cry, but to such naysayers I reply: I’m getting a byline out of this; you’re the one wasting your precious youth reading it.

The most troubling part about graduating is that the “what’s next?” question that so dominated my youth is no longer answerable. Some of my friends have gone into grad schemes or stayed in education, so bully for them, but for the majority of us, there is a distinct lack of an idea about what the fuck is going on. I count myself lucky that I have a job that I quite enjoy, and I am even luckier – financially, at least

– that I have a home in London that I can stay in for a bit to avoid sinking my measly salary into extortionate rents.

But on a more existential level (and really, what other levels matter??? Don’t look at me – I’ll see myself out), I now suddenly and unprecedentedly have no idea what I am working towards, no idea how to find out what that is, and no idea what to do to get there. My biggest fear is that I will wake in in fifty years time in much the same position I am in now, except even fewer people will care, and I will wonder why I didn’t change the world, or at least my bit of it, etc. etc., sob sob, tiny violins.

There is also the issue that in having the wholly undeserved and unearned benefit of a place to live that has central heating and a mostly full fridge, I find myself regressing into my 16-year-old self. Obviously, I now have a bit more financial independence and a social life beyond Hampstead Heath and overly lavish 18th birthday parties (R.I.P.), but certain habits that do not befit a young working woman remain: I am far too liberal in my use of expensive olive oil, and I still have never paid my own utility bill.

There are upsides, though. Upside number one: I am no longer at Cambridge. Glorious as it can be, I do not miss the bizarre veneration of self-flagellation, the archaic traditions or the wankers. Wankers are everywhere, but they are much harder to avoid in Cambridge.

Upside number two: I am not that far away from Cambridge. Everyone does something a bit different after graduating, but many of these paths were started on at university, including my own. I truly believe that Cambridge gives you an unprecedented opportunity to start anything for yourself, do something new, and meet interesting people. Graduation is just a continuation of this. Life on the other side is daunting and amorphous, but being able to witness the initiatives like the Ain’t I A Woman video series, or the Immoral Sciences Club – remind me that our generation isn’t always as powerless as we feel. Suddenly, not knowing what you are doing next doesn’t seem like the worst thing in the world.

TRANSNISTRIA UNIVERSITY

Oliver James

In late September I took advantage of Cambridge’s leisurely term dates and gate-crashed another university’s Freshers’ week. Alcohol, music and the usual shenanigans – a chance to catch up with friends and celebrate the end of summer. The only complication was that they study in the breakaway region of Transnistria’s State University.

Transnistria broke away from Moldova, a grindingly poor former-Soviet Republic, more than 20 years ago. The ‘republic’ isn’t internationally recognised, but it’s bankrolled by Russia whose peace-keeping soldiers are visible in the ‘capital’ Tiraspol. It’s also known as the last remnant of the Soviet Union, complete with hammers and sickles adorning the streets and buildings, and a jolly statue of Lenin outside the government building.

This breakaway region rarely makes the headlines, except when its stockpile of Soviet-era nuclear resources catch the attention of organised criminals, Middle Eastern extremists and the US. I’d heard horror stories about Tiraspol’s hotels, with armed thugs ransacking hotel rooms during the night. Eager to avoid that debacle, and to get the true Soviet experience, I opted to stay in dorms with my hosts in the centre of the city.

The guest policy of Transnistria State University is relatively strict, and thus I was given the option of pretending to pass off as a local or climb through the window after curfew. Despite the once-stellar reputation of the Soviet Union’s gymnastics team, I was reluctant to be flung from the second storey window at midnight and so took my chances with the front door.

The university’s infrastructure was completed over 40 years ago during the Soviet era and there have been few upgrades since the war. Tap water in Tiraspol is safe to drink, but the pipes have corroded to the point where students filter the water through cotton makeup pads before drinking it. The university also offers a buttery, with disgruntled serving staff plating unrecognisable mush in a darkened cafeteria. Fortunately

for the students of Tiraspol, the price is only a tenth of what Churchill College charges for the same experience.

Unsurprisingly, eduroam was nowhere to be found, but loitering around the library to connect to its free WiFi is an international pastime also common in the breakaway republic. The hospitality of my guests and new acquaintances was unrivalled. Like any good freshers’ week, there were drinking games and music blaring until the early hours.

Instead of VKs or whatever vino Sainsbury’s has on special, the drink of choice was home-produced wine or the village’s finest home-distilled spirit. In place of the cheesy tunes in Life or Cindies, Moscow’s Russian pop was the go. And just like after a few drinks in any given college bar, the topic of politics bubbled. In a region that is so reliant on Russia’s support, I was undoubtedly curious to ask about the perception of Putin.

“What do you mean you don’t like Putin?” they chorused.

The music stopped, the lights turned on and the crickets stopped chirping in disgust of my disloyalty. Among the dozens of students I met at Transnistria State University, Putin was seen as a defender against the corrupt and aggressive Western powers.

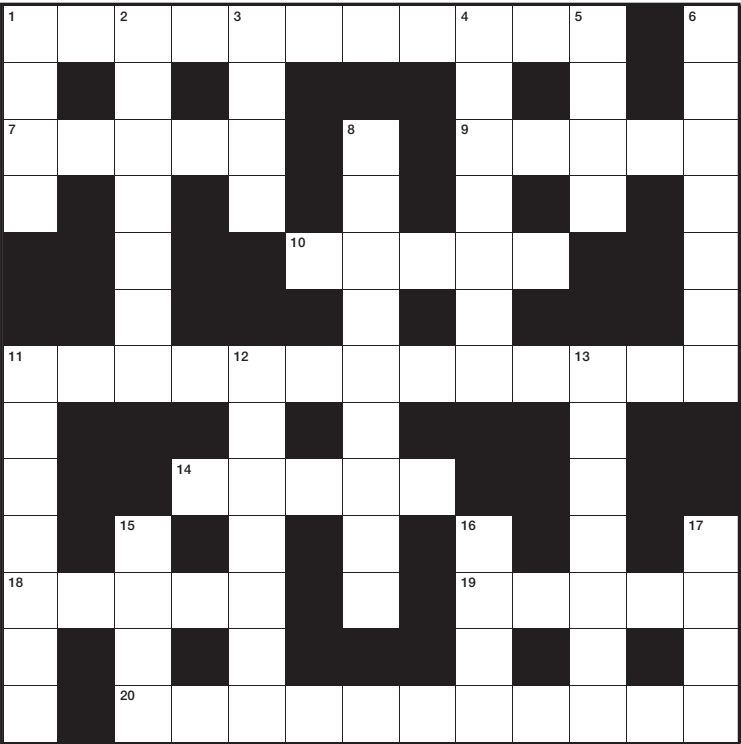
“If the EU is so good, why is Romania still poor?”

“Everybody knows the US started the war in Ukraine.”

“America controls the media.”

Much like the rusty taps and crumbling roads, the media culture in the breakaway republic also bears the hallmarks of its Soviet past. Russian channels dominate television and Soviet textbooks still line the reading lists. Far away is the world of ‘microaggressions’ and ‘safe spaces’. From the Sheriff Company’s near-universal monopoly to the diplomatic Siberia where the region is stranded, the situation in Transnistria is bleak.

Although the guns have long fallen silent, many of my comrades described living in an unrecognised region as a battle. For a generation born after the war, the sense of injustice and the arbitrary nature of the conflict are clear.



THE VARSITY CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

Set by Matthew Lim

- Across
1. Writer brandishes extended weapon (11)

7. Racehorse sounds audibly like a non-starter (5)

9. Married male though muddled makes theorem (5)

10. Pilfered church garment (5)

11. Beaten cadet must hurt to meet expectation (3,3,7)

14. Good lass, it’s clear (5)

18. Bestow open window (5)

19. Offspring is female (5)

20. Destroy old flame with fire (11)

4. Copies found in antiparallel escalators (7)

5. Trees have the Spanish degenerative disease (4)

6. Held up, the engine’s gone! (7)

8. German is sounding hesitant over exploitations of strips of land (9)

11. Trim a piece of metal over cold water (7)

12. Partly clever, mostly stupid (7)

13. Masters home in summery area (7)

15. Wait for new deli (4)

16. Small, artlessly made martini (4)

17. Fellow comes in 4 types (4)

- Down
1. Dynasty is primarily sort of noble genealogy (4)

2. Boxer cut allowance for smaller portion (7)

3. Resonant energy transmitted over radio (4)

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WHITE & CASE

VIVIENNE WESTWOOD

ON CATSUITS, MIRRORS, AND HER CLIMATE REVOLUTION

As you would expect from a fashion queen, Vivienne Westwood says a lot about what she thinks of fashion without even opening her mouth. Such is the power of clothes and her iconic individual style.

Aesthetically, Westwood presents us with an eclectic mix. For the speech at the Union on Tuesday, she was dressed in elfin pointed platform heeled boots, a woollen jumpsuit buttoned all the way up (including exaggerated arms and legs that look like leg warmers), a Climate Revolution badge, a dog tag necklace, diamond earrings, trademark purple lipstick and red eyebrows, and, most curious of all, a conker necklace. It is a strange look, and one few others could pull off, let alone have the confidence to wear.

As we sit down to speak she is friendly but reserved. Intrigued by her ensemble, I start by asking about it.

What choices did you make getting dressed today?

"I went to work on a bicycle, so that had a bit to do with it. Otherwise I might have worn my cloak instead of my great big bomber jacket. I love this catsuit that I am wearing though, it is good for everything. It is really glamorous and it cuts a very good figure: it is an all-purpose thing."

I ask about the string of conkers that sits confidently around her neck. "The conker necklace was a present from a student. I had one last year too."

Your most recent show in Venice for SS16 was themed around the phrase "Mirror the World". Do you think fashion ever reflects the present or is always looking forward or backwards? Do mirrors reflect or distort?

"There's a very important thing you need to know about mirroring the world. I was giving a lecture the other day and we were talking about imitation. Imitation is what I mean by 'mirroring the world', and if you think about all the things we can do as Homo Sapiens, art is something we do that is not real. That is why we call it imitation. If you look at the Eiffel Tower: that's not art, it's real. I know everything is in flux and nothing exists, but to us it's real. Whereas, art is something that represents the world. That's what I mean by mirroring the world: that you should be a bit of the world, but very importantly, you should mirror the world as it ought to be, not just as it is. Because this leads to culture and us becoming more human and using our potential to express ourselves even more. And somehow, that's what I think about fashion."

"Fashion is there to help. It's there to make you look better. But perhaps if you're twenty years old and you've got this perfect figure, nudity is the greatest look of all. I was once asked [about nudity] and I said 'well I would like to have a pair of high-heeled shoes and with even a beauty spot you're dressed'. Nobody really goes naked do they? We do things to enhance who we are; we are the most incredible creatures in the world, and we walk beautifully on two legs. I just think fashion is about epitomising the human potential to look different and wonderful. I think fashion is a way to express who you think you are. My clothes are quite classy, they tell a story. They're classic because they've always got something to add to whoever is wearing them: they're theatrical in that sense. Fashion can help you to uncover a part

of yourself that you didn't really know existed."

What other discipline do you think really influences fashion?

"Well, more than anything it's paintings. Something visual."

After the interview, Westwood is led into the chamber to give a speech. She opens by asking the Speaker's officer to exit the stage and leave her alone to talk. "What are you going to do?" she asks as if confused. Westwood's mission with this speech, as she explicitly states, is to "recruit you [students] as activists". She goes on to explain that "It is our last chance to save the world" and that "we are the last generation who has a chance to help". This message is one she re-iterated throughout.

Westwood covered a lot of hefty topics in her hour-long stream-of-consciousness speech. From bankers who are "really, really evil", to the whole "rotten financial system", to the "organised lying" of the politicians.

Foraying into the "propaganda" of the press who "pretend everything is the same" to perpetrate what the "politicians say and do on climate change", and emphasising the "danger of mass extinction", Westwood went on to touch on Machiavellian comments on the common man and higher power, and continually returned to the climate change cause with discussion of the "regeneration of the sea".

She did break her train of thought twice. Once when a photographer was taking too many photos of her – "I can only talk or pose for a picture. Sorry." – and once because she really did just get distracted: "If I get distracted I have to talk about being distracted."

Westwood spoke at length about art and culture, citing a friend who said "the world suffers from the isolation of the intellectual"; (when asked later about the intellectual exclusion of Cambridge, she said "Yes it is. But it's not your fault. Make the most of it!"). She believes that art is "the transmission from brain to hand. None of this meticulousness."

There is, however, "no such thing as progress in art. There is only progress in life". She went on to talk passionately about the connections between art and climate change, proclaiming "everyone who is an art lover is a freedom fighter." However, "the world has forgotten more than it knows." We have to cultivate our human genius: "there is genius in our genius".

Though some of these problems had no solution, when there were solutions these were made clear. She spoke about a march happening in London on the 29th November, for climate, justice and jobs. She also urged students to read her online blog – Climate Revolution – and to meet with fellow students to discuss it.

"I could just tell you about knowledge..." she dropped in lightly as if she was just referencing her morning breakfast. "Maybe I won't" she countered, to a mixture of disappointment and relief among the audience members. "Maybe I've said too much."

Meg Honigmann





When art and morality collide

Fashion: an industry that assesses creativity over moral failings?

In 1928 (at the earliest) Hugo Boss became the official supplier of uniforms for the SS, Hitler Youth and other Nationalist Socialist groups. The designer was also suspected to be Hitler's personal tailor, and it is thought that around 180 prisoners of war were forced into labour to supply the garments for soldiers.

Yet in 2010, the German luxury fashion house boasted a net profit exceeding \$200 million, which certainly positions it as a brand of continuous success and fortune. It would seem that the industry has forgotten the fashionhouse's origins, as the designer is certainly no longer seen as the Nazi-couture-sponsor that it was (...that was so last century).

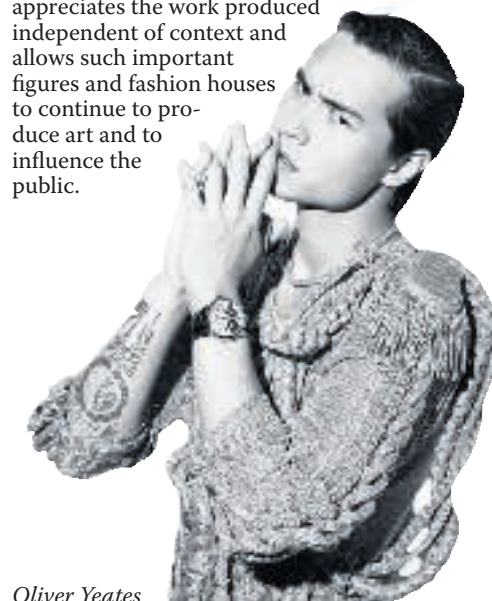
Hugo Boss's position in the fashion world today begs the question of how some of today's luxury brands have escaped their dark pasts to regain their prestige. It also illustrates how the industry plays an important role in shaping and conditioning our perception of history.

We must remember that fashion is, at its heart, art. Though Boss's partialities are to be rejected as abhorrent (a connection which the German firm has publicly apologised for), there is no denying that the SS uniform and other outfits designed at such a time had been crafted with a refined sense of style. Simply cut, consistent in aesthetic and striking in presence, the uniforms ranged from structured trench coats to minimalist capes which would cover the whole body. They looked seamlessly effective. Yet to commend the aesthetic is not to commend the action, and this is a wider point relating to artistic function: it serves as a space for disconnect. A painter who depicts death would not be charged as a murderer, nor would the novelist who probes matters of sadomasochism be rebuked as psychologically unstable. In its fundamentally artistic form, fashion, as the worn, detaches itself from the wearer. Hence the better models are so often found to be "blank canvases" - it is the clothes, not the character, that must come alive. As such, history's lens, though unwaveringly condemning the actions of Nationalist Socialist figures - like Boss himself, whom histories of his company have described as a "loyal Nazi" - seems to filter out, and make exception for, the fact they often look good enacting them. Over time, the world of haute couture has forgiven such transgressions and

imbues value in the work of such designers independently of personal political alignments. How else would Hugo Boss remain the global powerhouse that it is today?

Not only that, but similar instances are seen elsewhere on the fashion timeline. John Galliano, head designer for French fashion houses Givenchy and Dior in 2011, embarked on an anti-Semitic rampage in a bar in Paris. Videos allegedly capture him proclaiming "I love Hitler", and yet, even now, the fashion world is forgiving. Dior's suspension of him and his fine of €6,000 hardly reflects the severity of such sentiments (drunk or otherwise) and he is now the creative director of avant garde Parisian fashion house Maison Margiela. Even the renowned and seemingly untouchable mother of fashion Coco Chanel was thought to have dated Nazi Baron Hans Gunther von Dicklage and shared anti-Semitic sentiments, and Chanel is arguably the most respected fashion house to dress the world.

Whether this is morally unacceptable is not the point to be made here; what is pertinently relevant is that the fashion industry considers itself in a position to make such judgment calls. The current system forgives and forgets; it appreciates the work produced independent of context and allows such important figures and fashion houses to continue to produce art and to influence the public.



Oliver Yeates

FASHIONABLE APPROPRIATION

The place of ethnicity in the current fashion industry has dominated much of the conversation surrounding the collections displayed at this season's New York and Paris fashion weeks. Back in September, Kanye West's collection provoked mixed responses and heated discussions regarding his decision to arrange his models and their outfits by skin colour. West has since denied that the show was politically charged but in subsequent dialogue about Yeezy Season 2 has found it difficult to avoid its seeming social commentary on the racial politics of the industry and, indeed, America generally. West has repeatedly spoken out against the sense of alienation he feels when trying to be taken seriously as a creative figure within predominantly white fashion institutions and the song 'New Slaves' has been widely understood as an exploration of what he regards as entrenched bigotry: "they wasn't satisfied unless I picked the cotton myself". He controversially employs the narrative of slavery to make a statement about modern capitalism and his own relationship with fashion: "spendin' everything on Alexander Wang/New Slaves". He told Zane Lowe last year that the track was referring to "us, the new slaves, the people who love fashion... 'Cause I'm a slave to it". West has discouraged us from seeing Yeezy Season 2 in these terms and accused any political reading of the show as being inherently racist in itself. West wants us to view it through a purely artistic lens and doesn't consider the possibility that this form of art can be sociopolitical.

However, regardless of his intentions, the show did invite a much-needed discussion about fashion's relationship with people of colour. From Kylie Jenner's cornrows to the appearance of the bindi in ASOS's Halloween section, there has been a recent rise in trends that have a problematic relationship with race, triggering accusations of appropriation. Cultural appropriation occurs when a dominant hegemonic culture takes elements from a culture of people who have been oppressed by that

same group. In the current world of fashion, there has been ambiguity and disagreement about what counts as 'appropriation' as opposed to celebratory cultural exchange and 'appreciation'.

The recent Valentino SS16 fashion show, however, demonstrates that much of the fashion industry continues to have a dangerous and insensitive relationship with non-white culture. Their newest collection was entitled 'Africa', featuring what the house described as a "primitive, tribal, spiritual yet regal" aesthetic. Firstly, the use of words such as "primitive" categorises Africa as an uncivilised and underdeveloped world, a process Edward Said famously described as 'othering'. Secondly, the use of the term "regal" appears to be an attempt to civilize and thus reconstitute the aesthetic into a more familiar, Eurocentric and white archetype of female beauty. The simple title 'Africa' fails to recognise the enormous diversity and variation between the fifty-four countries that make up the continent and conceptualises it as one monolithic, homogenous entity. Perhaps the most abhorrent (but normalised) feature of the show, however, is its casting. The house of Valentino stated that the collection was paying homage to 'African grace' but featured almost exclusively white models. Out of a show of ninety looks, less than ten models



of colour were used to showcase the pieces attempting to celebrate the 'beauty of Africa'. White models walked down the catwalk sporting dreadlocks and wearing tiger prints, feathers and beaded necklaces. This alone articulates the distinction between aesthetic appreciations of particular cultures to a mindless usurpation of that culture by white hegemony.

In its failure to include black models, the Valentino show is an example of the most dangerous side of the current industry. It is indicative of the all too common desire to select aspects of other cultures to make impressive and beautiful collections alongside a complete ignorance of the origins and meaning of such materials and imagery. It reminds us that the fashion industry continues to have an uneasy exchange with issues of race and ethnicity and is a problem that continues to demand discussion.

Hannah Parlett

Mary and Claire: A Defence of Poetry

Sarah-Jane Tollan speaks to the creators of the latest student written offering about the Romantics, the Cambridge theatre scene, and cannons.



Upon entering Natalie's room in Jesus Lane, I almost believed I had accidentally stumbled into a supervision: a sprawling space filled with little ornaments, posters stretched languidly on the wall, black and white photographs perched delicately in their frames on the mantelpiece. A clutter of culture drinking in the light from the array of windows lining the room, I discover that it is doubling up as both a bedroom and a rehearsal space for Natalie's play, *Mary & Claire: A Defence of Poetry*. Running at the Corpus Playroom on Monday 26th October only, there is a buzz in the room as the two English undergraduates, writer Natalie Reeve, also playing Mary Shelley, and Ellie Heikel, playing the excitable Claire Clairmont, discuss the exhilaration of being able to perform their original piece on a relatively mainstream stage.

After having scrolled through their publicity photographs – Natalie scowling and draped in black, Ellie almost nymph-like in white – I ask them to explain the premise to me, intrigued by the images. "People have started publishing biographies and memoirs about Byron and Shelley which are very inaccurate and have problematised their reputations, and their poetry is starting to become unpopular because of it," Natalie speaks of her creation, "Mary Shelley is like 'no, I'm going to stop this', so in desperation she contacts her step-sister Claire Clairmont - who she doesn't really like that much actually and Claire kind of knows this - and they come together for this higher cause of restoring Byron and Shelley's reputations. And Claire, who was once an actress, decides that the only way they'll get enough attention is if they perform it themselves, playing all the characters between them".

A plot that seems as if it was written with Cambridge students in mind, then: where did it all begin? "I remember having the idea for it quite distinctly when I was back in my house in Wales, thinking 'I really want a show in which the women get to play shedloads of fun characters as well as themselves, but then I also want to write a show about Byron and Shelley, so how am I going to combine the two?'" enthuses Natalie, a self-confessed Romanticist fanatic. "Then this very macabre idea of Mary and Claire wanting to play Byron and Shelley, and wanting to sort of play-act their way into this very male Romanticism just sort of came out and I was just like 'Yes! Yes I can write this! This will to- tal-

ly work". The fruit of Natalie's labour was initially evident when they were allowed to perform an extract for 'Smorgasbord', a festival that showcased the best in student writing last Easter term. "We basically said if this is well received we'll put on the whole thing. And it was well-received and people were laughing at lines which we didn't think were funny. Like it was a really serious Byron monologue and they were just laughing. So we thought: Why not? Let's try and put on the whole thing".

From a house in Wales to a student writing festival to a pitch at the ADC: "I didn't have really any experience of producing plays before or applying to the ADC", Ellie confesses, "so that was an interesting experience". "We're both quite comparatively unknown", teases Natalie, "so I was just like 'I want to put on my play!' and they were like 'okay', and probably remembered me as that really awful stage manager who really mistakenly stage managed."

There have been some teething problems regarding being an original production with a small cast and crew. "When I first read Natalie's script, it was like 'and then Byron brings on his overlarge canon-bearing ship'" laughs Ellie, "I just said, 'Natalie, what? This is in the Corpus Playroom on a one night stand on zero budget'". They have, however, used it to their advantage: "The fact that Byron couldn't have his canon-bearing ship became a sort of plot twist about the limitations of the Corpus Playroom as a space".

I'm surprised at how straightforward applying to the ADC with a piece of original student writing is. There is a noticeable dearth of it in Cambridge, although as Ellie points out, "there is a lot of space for comedy whereas not for actual drama. Though *Mary and Claire* is comedic, it's not a sketch show." Natalie agrees, "I think there's quite a lot of pressure as a student writer to be funny. I mean I felt it whilst writing *Mary & Claire* but it's quite daunting doing the serious scenes because then you're thinking 'are they going to take this seriously?'. The main predicament, they both agree, is audience numbers, which are difficult to garner when the powerhouse that is the weekly ADC main show and familiar

productions dominate the Cambridge student consciousness. "Everyone is very busy in Cambridge, and I rarely get to see original student scripts because I tend to prioritise the ones I definitely want to see," Ellie confesses, "I think it's a shame, but I don't really know how it could be fixed".

As well as the brilliance of the script, I remark how refreshing it is to have two women staging a production that incorporates comedy, and ask them whether they fear being approached with trepidation because of it. "I think when something has a female protagonist it's always boxed into 'this is a woman's play and it's for women and it's about women' when it can be for everyone," Ellie rebukes, "what is quite interesting is that whilst there are two female protagonists, for most of the play they're not themselves, they are playing male roles and it almost gives them a legitimacy." Natalie nods in agreement: "There's been quite a few productions where the casting has been genderblind, and I've gone for a male role, and got it, and some people are like 'well, maybe let's put in a joke about how you're not actually a man'. But you really don't need to be so self-aware about it, people shouldn't care, as long as you're playing a character and you're good on stage it should be fine. With this you know from the beginning that it's Mary playing Byron or Claire playing Shelley and you don't sit back and spend all your time thinking 'this is a girl playing a boy' because you know it is, it doesn't matter, it's moved on from that".

In one word, what would convince the hoard of Cambridge students to see their production? "I want to go for cannons, but I feel that that would mislead. There aren't any cannons," "I want to say Byron, but then I don't because I know Byron would want me to say Byron". After asking if there is anything else they want to add, they inundate me with cries of "Support your local student writers!", "It's only one night, it's only on for an hour, it's only £6!", before Natalie calmly muses: "And you will learn something about some very horrible and lovely people at the same time".

'Mary and Claire: A Defence of Poetry' runs on Monday 26th October at 9.30pm, the Corpus Playroom



THE MAKING OF THE MONSTER

THE CAST & CREW OF *FRANKENSTEIN* EXPLAIN HOW THEY'RE BRINGING THE MONSTER TO LIFE

CONCEPT

In a post-WWII scientific climate dominated by physics, only in the 1990s did biology have a comeback. People started to care about what it meant to be human, rather than who could build the biggest particle accelerator, and so having Victor as a driven 90's scientist that is able to ride that wave of excitement about the historic Human Genome Project made complete sense to me. We've taken the classical gothic setting and re-rooted it in the grungey, gothic and industrial landscape of Kurt Cobain loving, cigarette smoking 90's Ingolstadt.

Rosanna Suppa [Director]

THE CREATURE

My preparation began well before entering the rehearsal room. Over the summer, Rosanna and Emma both sent me lots of information to help me start work on the Creature's physicality and vocals. For example, I watched videos of stroke victims learning how to speak again, car crash victims taking their first steps of recovery, and a woman moving a baby's limbs about while it slept. All of this was to help me convey the experience of being born into an adult body with the mind of a child. One of my first rehearsals was the birthing scene, and it was so interesting and also difficult trying to completely forget how to use my body, and then starting all over again. We soon learned that stretching was a good idea before these rehearsals!

Toby Marlow [The Creature]

Pembroke Players & Varsity Present: THE PEMBROKE PLAYERS MEMBERSHIP

Today I decided – reasonably impulsively – to interview the Pembroke Players. I met them by the watering-trough that runs down Trumpington Street. The sky was grey, and the water damp. They led me across the quaint gardens of Pembroke College (in Cambridge – near Ely), and then turned sharply left, into the entrance of a gently bemossed cavern.

"This," they explained, "is not New Cellars."

I knew this, having attended many an excellent show in said theatrical venue.

"This," they continued to explain, "is our Cave of Innovation."

"It is here," quoth I, "that I imagine you come to innovate."

"Exactly!" One of the Pembroke Players, at this juncture, offered me a doughnut. I declined, having recently feasted at Pret-a-Subway (my name for the bin halfway between these two bastions of Market Square). Instead, he handed me an explanation of the Pembroke Players' new Membership Scheme, which I graciously accepted. This Membership is, I believe, significantly less fattening than a doughnut, while both as Krispy and as Kremey.

"Our new membership scheme," ran the exposition, "is founded on two beliefs about Cambridge student theatre: first, it is the best in the country."

This I protested. It is, I would opine, the only student 'theatre' in the country which can be called such without the use of inverted commas.

"Secondly, there are lots and lots of people who want to see, support and enjoy lots and lots of it."

This I could not protest.



MEGAN LEE

REHEARSAL PROCESS

After consulting speech therapists, videos of recovering stroke patients and even the odd animal vine video here and there - this production will provide a truly entrancing depiction of the human's progression and development in its most stripped back form. Over the rehearsals we've workshoped characteristics of the human condition in microscopic detail; from the instinctive reflexes we have as newborns, to consonants that take the longest for us to get the hang of, to how we react upon hearing Oasis for the first time - everything that makes us human has been stretched out, stared at for a good long while, and concentrated into this mesmerizing performance.

Emma Blacklay-Piech [Assistant Director]

TECHNICAL

Frankenstein is packed with technical challenges, including a set that needs to transform the ADC stage from a junkyard laboratory to city backstreets to a country cottage to a grand house to the alps, working water pipes and fire! It's been really exciting to see Harry Stockwell and Sheanna Patel design and plan an incredible set that can realise all these crazy ideas. We also have a props list that includes retro electronics, a placenta and a sack large enough to fit a person in, resulting in an interesting search history for our Stage Manager. I don't want to give too much away, but it's going to be unbelievably cool, with a fab lighting design and awesome soundscapes to create lightning, snowstorms, and that all-important 90s soundtrack.

Eleanor Mitchell [Producer]

"This should result in an easy equation, but one factor elegantly turns theatrical arithmetic into Part III Maths: money. The finest factor of all. Every show in Cambridge costs £6 or more, making a regular theatre habit hard to sustain."

The empty wallet crushed between my trouser and my stool gave credence to her theory. If only, I thought, there were a society with a unique position in the world of Cantab Theatre, willing to change all this.

"Fortunately," they continued, "We have a unique position in the world of Cantab Theatre, and are willing to change all this." Hurrah!

"We are a smaller (but hugely popular) production company and funding body, outside of the ADC. We have the opportunity to try to pull off something huge, solve the problem, and get people seeing more theatre more regularly."

I began to wish I had accepted the doughnut.

"We've come up with a Membership Scheme that rewards our most loyal theatregoers. A Membership Card (printed on no less than 650gsm card, incidentally) costs just £5 for the year. With this card, the first show you see is £5 instead of £6. And it only continues to become more generous; the next show is £4, then £3, until eventually you are seeing shows for free for the rest of the year."

I, in case it hadn't become clear by now, have studied Part III Mathematics. And I suddenly realised that – golly! This is a very, very good deal! It pays for itself within a few shows. Is it not too generous? I must ask them.

"Is it not too generous?" I asked them.

"Ask again when we do our accounts at the end of the year." Fair enough. I will.

"We're not doing this because we want to make money. In fact, we're expecting to make a bit of a loss on this one. It's entirely about making it easier for passionate theatregoers to get seats at shows – and shows are what we've got!"

"Tis true – the Pembroke Players offer a huge variety of performances, including sketch comedy, smokers, new student writing and fresh productions of well-known, well-loved plays.

I reminded them of this. It turns out they didn't need reminding and, to emphasise the point, they told it to me again.

"Pembroke Players offer a huge variety of performances, including sketch comedy, famous smokers, new student writing and fresh productions of well-known, well-loved plays."

Members, it turns out, will also benefit from regular bulletins to keep them up to date with all this, as well as priority booking.

"This is possible due to our our brand spanking new ticketing website," they elucidated. "It's brand new, and it spans heartily."

"Only if spanking is required?"

"Only if spanking is required."

"The Membership Scheme boils down to making sure that the many, many people who wish to see lots and lots of theatre are able to do so – money is no longer an obstacle."

"And, speaking of boiling," I cunningly segued, "I would like a cup of tea."

"Unfortunately the Cave of Innovation does not serve hot beverages. I would suggest visiting the Copper Kettle, on King's Parade."

Which is exactly what I did. After purchasing Pembroke Players Membership at www.pembrokeplayers.co.uk/membership. It's a wonderful deal. And the staff at the Copper Kettle sure know how to brew.

Robert Eyers

Restaurant: Rainbow Cafe

I have walked by the Rainbow Cafe many times, dismissing it as an establishment purely for cow-lovers or veg-aholics. But when I braved an evening out with my vegetarian friend, I was pleasantly surprised.

Once I recovered from the general atmosphere of peace, love and broccoli, I came to realise that rather than being rife with militant vegetarians, the ambience is fun and cosy, and both staff and clientele are friendly and always up for a chat. The prices may seem expensive for a student budget, but the portions are huge and for a carnivore like myself, make up for the lack of meat. Cheese to be the main protein staple here, so if you have to be a vegetarian you may as well do it with a hell of a lot of halloumi!

The food is phenomenal to say the least, and there is a wide international range meaning there's bound to be something to tickle everyone's fancy. Most likely though, like me, you'll end up choosing the dish with the snazziest name. I was lured in by the scrummy Shepherdess Pie, with my dinnermate favouring the Jamaican

Roti cups. It's one of those places where although your own plate is divine, you end up saying you want to "have what she's having" as everything just looks so good. They also do daily specials which are worth a try.

Where the Rainbow Cafe really comes up trumps though, is in desserts. I like cake, and as a self-appointed 'pie boss' they did one of the best apple pies I have ever tasted; drenched in custard, pungent with cinnamon, crammed with raisins and covered by a hunky pastry. Heaven on a plate, or as near as you can get in Cambridge. Apparently the cheesecake is fabulous too but there was so much choice I expect to go back again and again. The cafe is open all day, so even if you don't go out in the evening you can go for afternoon tea – perfect for a student inundated with lectures. Most of the desserts are vegan; this didn't mean anything to me, but this is a spectacular feat to achieve in making it taste better than cardboard.

The staff are lovely and can recite ingredients like mantras; I was introduced to veganism, and they weren't stropky at all that I tend to prefer my

sausages from pigs instead of bacteria – I was worried they would try to 'convert' me but quickly realised there was nothing to dread. I would really recommend this restaurant to staunch meat eaters such as myself. It will make you realise that food can be equally and, in fact, more tasty in the absence of meat, and that vegetables aren't the spawn of Satan.

The Rainbow Cafe does still leave something to be desired. The setting is too small and winding for my liking, and when descending down the too-narrow stairs there is very much the feeling of squeezing into a rabbit hole or creeping into an underground secret drinking society. We ended up queuing up the stairs, and it was too cramped when we were seated at a tiny table in the corner. The somewhat claustrophobic atmosphere takes intimacy to a whole new level. The decor is questionable, with lots of funky Buddhas and well, rainbows, but all in all nothing can detract from the quality of the food.

At the end of the day; you have to go here. Nothing more to say!

Meggie Fairclough

Book: House of Windows

I'll admit that I was initially a little wary of Alexia Casale's *House of Windows*. It sounds about as stereotypical as you can get. It is, in essence, a coming-of-age story. The plot follows protagonist Nick Derran through the year between his fifteenth and sixteenth birthday as he starts the first year of a Maths degree at the University of Cambridge, struggling to focus on his work, make friends and keep up with his generally absent father. It seems like the kind of book that could very easily turn into one long love letter to the university, with unrealistic ideas about how prestigious it is to walk through the gates of a college or the genius there must be dripping from its walls. But there is none of that; actually, I really enjoyed it.

Alexia Casale's characterisation, particularly of Nick, is fantastic. Our protagonist initially appears to be a stereotypical sullen, socially inept teenager with a crippling high IQ. Terrible with people and with a life ambition neurotically fixated on achieving a First, he is hardly an endearing character. However, you rapidly realise that Casale goes far beyond such superficiality. Her characters are far deeper and more real than a first glance shows. Nick's character development is so subtle that it took a single major event quite late in the

plot for me to realise how much of a positive transformation his personality had undergone, and it is fascinating to see such clever handling of a character who could so easily be spectacularly mishandled.

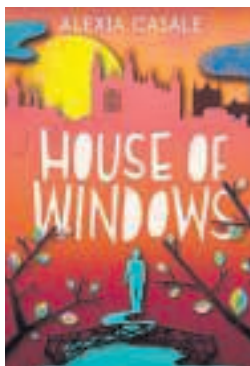
Interestingly, Nick's youth is in fact largely beside the point, besides the occasional issue such as not being allowed to Formal in case he drinks alcohol. His experience navigating a new society, trying to find friends and figure out how he wants to live his life is definitely reminiscent of how I, and I imagine many others, felt on arrival at Cambridge. It could really be about any normal fresher, but his unusual youth particularly highlights the emotional change he undergoes. Similarly, the relationships between Nick and the other characters are treated in a wonderfully subtle yet powerful way. Without relying on clichés, stereotypes or flowery language, Casale creates believable relationships that I felt genuinely emotionally involved with.

However, there are a few pacing issues. The novel features three separate tours around different parts of Cambridge, producing nearly forty

pages of description (albeit beautifully written and amusingly accurate) of the city and the university. While I certainly enjoyed being able to immediately place every little thing mentioned around the city, it does begin to drag on after a while. Similarly, the shoehorning of various university traditions and terminology into the narrative felt a little artificial and forced. It may well have been of more interest to a reader unfamiliar with the city or the university and therefore felt an introduction was necessary to really feel the ambience of the novel's landscape. Unfortunately for me, as a student already well versed in Cantab life, I just felt that it pulled me out of the story.

Nevertheless, *House of Windows* is a highly enjoyable read. The characters are expertly written and Nick's experience so honest and familiar that I found the read becoming easily increasingly emotive, and I was surprised by how invested I was. It might be worth ignoring the slightly misleading blurb, but I would urge anyone to give the book a chance. It is without a doubt worth it.

Frances Reed

**Film: Crimson Peak**

Opening with Mia Wasikowska's haunting beckoning to the camera, hand held towards us and eyes piercing the lens, director Del Toro teases us (with haunting caution) to enter his world. Aesthetically, the film is unrivalled; the colours, sets, clothes and symbols are masterful in their vision and their craft. Every aspect of each scene is meticulously imagined. One is almost overwhelmed by the artistic wonder to be found even in the wallpaper, chairs, and curtain embroidery, not to mention the strikingly gothic buildings and exquisite costumes which, from lace to lapel, have been attended to with commendable craftsmanship. The costumes succeed in constituting the Victorian context in which the film is set in a truly beautiful Del Toro fashion.

Inhabiting this world are three strong leads. Hiddleston's performance as the darkly seductive Thomas

Sharpe does the job, but offers nothing special. Playing the film's heroine, Mia Wasikowska develops a real maturity in her acting, demonstrating a vulnerability which is believable and induces our sympathy; she becomes victim to the very Austen-Brontë worlds she initially recoils from. It is Jessica Chastain's portrayal of Lucille Sharpe that steals the show; her presence on screen is haunting and menacing, a tribute to the ever-growing versatility of Chastain's growing body of impressive work. However the rest of the ensemble feels flat and they seemingly exist only for plot purposes. The film would have perhaps felt much more claustrophobic and intense should it have centred wholly on the main twisted triangle of the dark-Sharpe-duo and Wasikowska's torn Edith Cushing stuck in the middle.

Where *Crimson Peak* disappoints is its ability to tell stories. Its approach is far too similar to what we've seen before and it succumbs to horror-story clichés, from the way it achieves its jump-scares to the (bordering on generic) spindly-violin and heartbeat soundtrack. Having said that, the film visualises ghosts in a truly original



LEGENDARY PICTURES

way; the depiction of them is chilling and spectacular. The script is awkwardly paced and only when we reach the house itself does the film find a stronger voice. It seems Del Toro was uncertain of the genre, as *Crimson Peak* isn't intense enough to justify itself as a horror, but is also too emotionally shallow to be considered a substantial dramatic "gothic romance" (as Hiddleston called it).

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DIRECTOR DEL TORO TEASES US WITH HAUNTING CAUTION TO ENTER HIS WORLD

The unsatisfactory story as a whole should not overshadow some moments of real brilliance. The climax is spectacular, with an adrenaline that achieves the peak of the film's thrill - the sequence of Chastain's pursuit of Wasikowska through the house is genuinely unnerving. Even

smaller, seemingly trivial, moments are executed in beautiful flourish, from the opening of a letter, to the taking off of a coat, to the billowing of a cloak when gliding down the stairs. One cannot help but simply want more of the house, however. Its design as a gothic setting of psychological unsettlement is fully realised, and with rooms lined with black-moths for wallpaper and with corridors of almost hypnotising and gothic inception, the film teases a sense of place which is to be relished and craved.

Guillermo Del Toro's *Crimson Peak* revives the imagination and fantastical flair seen in his spectacular earlier work, *Pan's Labyrinth*, made before he took to a more Hollywood-centric style of film-making. Yet *Crimson Peak* needed a more weighted story and more convincing character arcs to secure itself as a five-star triumph. Nevertheless, to rate it any lower than I have would be simply insulting to the visual accomplishments of an original vision that Del Toro and his crew have so impeccably translated onto the screen.

Oliver Yeates

Music: Beach House – Thank Your Lucky Stars



I am a Beach House devotee. I want 'Take Care' to be played at all my major life events and 'Real Love' has been the soundtrack to so many journeys that in my mind the song is inextricably linked with First Great Western. As a new release is such a high-stakes event, I am far from the detached, critical reviewer this ideally wants. Beach House have released two albums in as many months and, in short, I am a bewildered and emotional wreck.

Whilst Victoria Legrand and Alex Scally insist that *Thank Your Lucky Stars* (TYLS) is not a 'surprise' album, the timing of the release, exactly seven weeks after their last album *Depression Cherry* (yes, I counted) means its existence and relationship with the band's past work is under much closer scrutiny than the those steadily released every two years, and not only have the band departed from their trademark methodology, the results are deeply disconcerting.

Essentially, *Thank Your Lucky Stars* is the first album on which Beach House fail to sound like themselves. These two albums were recorded together and on paper seem similar: minimal drums, influences of shoegaze, and a return to the quieter, darker sound of their early releases *Devotion* and their self-titled debut. But while *Depression Cherry* makes good on that promise, *Thank Your Lucky Stars* seems not so much vintage Beach House as a pastiche of their influences. The otherworldly, complicated beauty of *Depression Cherry* has suddenly gone missing.

Comparing the lead singles is a case in point. 'Sparks' (*Depression Cherry*) sounds like aliens descending to colonise the Earth, although they lovely and benign so you don't mind. 'Majorette' (TYLS), on the other hand, brings everything back down to the ground. It doesn't sound like Beach House drawing on 90s indie rock, more Suede or even Pablo Honey-era Radiohead doing a Beach House impersonation.

There's a similar story throughout the lyrics. The Beach House I know and love talk of waiting silently by Turtle Island's murky ponds, of black and white horses, backs arched, running across uncertain landscapes. Instead we get insipid lines like "she's a rollercoaster, she's a fire in the night". The "sons and daughters, bending at the altar" in 'Elegy to the Void', the album's best track, are mildly evocative, but it is stock gothic imagery that wouldn't be amiss in the most cynical of Lana Del Rey songs. Maybe they are learning to express themselves more directly, but this frankness doesn't make an impact. Their emotional resonance has, until now, rested on allusion; vague reference to feelings that can barely be described. Emotions suppressed and unseen, until this solemn Baltimore duo articulated them with a force that makes your skin prickle and chest muscles seize. Unless that's just me on the 15.10 to London Paddington.

Trying to second-guess what the pair are up to is difficult. To be honest, in all likelihood they are not 'up to' anything. Beach House are not ones to play games; in interviews, their agonised pursuit of honest authenticity clearly comes across, and authenticity can mean not caring about how you come across to others. This release may seem odd, but Beach House simply made the songs and wanted to release them. Perhaps the album is uncertain and unpolished, or perhaps the band's sound is multifaceted and undergoing change. Real growth and development, in music and in people, is rarely pretty.

Emily Bailey-Page

Music: Deerhunter – Fading Frontier



Throughout their decade-long career, it's become obvious that Deerhunter are always going to be unpredictable. From the self-dubbed 'ambient punk' of 2007's *Cryptograms* to the more regular but no less magnificent dreamy indie pop of 2010's *Halcyon Digest*, Deerhunter have never been a band to play it safe creatively. Their newest effort, *Fading Frontier*, provides the perfect combination of previous styles and new experimentation.

With certain songs, there is a sense of a return to the familiar. On opener 'All the Same', it's clear that Bradford Cox and co are picking up from *Halcyon Digest*, bringing back chiming, melodic guitars and a gentler sound, reminiscent of guitarist Lockett Pundt's side-project Lotus Plaza, or bands such as Real Estate or DIIV. The song 'Duplex Planet' is a case in point, with its memorable hook and wonderfully playful harpsichord part making it instantly enjoyable. And despite the album's overall dreamy tone, there are still hints of the lo-fi garage rock stylings of 2013's *Monomania*, with lead single 'Snakeskin' being the obvious example.

However, as expected, the contents of this 36-minute album, Deerhunter's shortest by far, are still full of surprises. After the raw noise and distortion of *Monomania* two years ago, they seem to have made a complete U-turn, instead favouring swelling synthesisers, delicately sung melodies, and chorus-laden guitars. On the surface, 'Breaker' is Deerhunter at their most generic – simply structured, with a singalong chorus and sparkling guitars – however, never one to conform entirely, Bradford Cox accompanies this beautiful, seemingly happy music with his typically morbid lyrics: 'And when I die / There will be nothing to say / Except I tried / Not to waste another day / Trying to stem the tide'.

Even more surprising is that the only songwriting contribution from guitarist Lockett Pundt, the exquisite 'Ad Astra', is utterly devoid of the beautifully intricate guitars that normally fill his songs. Instead, the song is based around the simple combination of an offbeat bassline and various different synth lines – the result is truly magnificent. The song itself is relatively simple, but the way the repeated melodies and synths build and build until their triumphant drum-heavy climax is worth sacrificing complexity for.

Of course, this wouldn't be a Deerhunter album without its share of weirdness, and the track 'Leather and Wood' more than satisfies that need. A repetitive, dissonant piano line spans the length of the six-minute song; other elements come and go, including Cox's howling vocals, modified guitars and bizarre electronic noises, making for one of the strangest pieces of music the band has ever made.

The final song, 'Carrion', is relatively unremarkable, and in fact quite a disappointing closer musically, but its title and lyrics provide a window into the way that they work as a band. While many of the band's lyrics conjure images of death and decay ("I was the corpse that spiralled out" being a personal favourite from 'Octet' on *Cryptograms*), the clever wordplay within the song transforms the word into the exultant cry; "Carry on!" providing a forward-looking finish to an album which has yet again proved Deerhunter to be an important band, whose constant experiments with texture and style always produce something worth thinking about.

Declan Amphlett



Music Picks of the Week, from Margot Speed

Who remembers Scouting for Girls? I'd subconsciously consigned them to the mists of time, but this week the internet tells me they have returned with a new album, *Still Thinking About You*. The sickly-sweet-indie-pop genre unfortunately faded from public love along with James Blunt, Jason Mraz and the mid-noughties, but if you're still into that sort of thing then this is the album for you. Eight years since the release of their first album, the sound of the band hasn't changed much at all. Some tracks are a little more self-indulgent than their old work, using thicker acoustic instrumentals and a slower pulse, and 'Best Laid Plans' provides a surprising solo interlude. But the lyrical content and general tone is basically identical: why not, when they sold so many records to teenage girls? It is easy to be rude about the band; the way they've spent the time since their last album being in their late 30s and writing music for One Direction and Five Seconds of Summer, or the perhaps premature release of 2013's *Greatest Hits*. I won't be rude. I recommend this album wholeheartedly as foot-tappingly happy and fairly musically accomplished. They've even included a Christmas track on the end. Bless them.

Meanwhile, the latest release from Nothing But Thieves shows the kind of music now being expected in the UK industry from boybands. This is the first full album release from the alternative rock band, and it's seriously impressive. Having made their debuts on Radio 1 over the past few years, they've since supported Arcade Fire and George Ezra, and toured with Twin Atlantic. You may have heard some of their singles, 'Trip Switch', or 'Graveyard

Whistling', but the album isn't just an hour of the same identikit formula that made these tracks so successful. The band themselves admit to hating albums that repeat the same sound, a sentiment implied in their track 'Ban All the Music', which aims for something more 'eclectic'. The sound is epic, with flashes of the symphonic sound and almost pained vocals that fill Muse or Radiohead's early work. Other moments are more electric and drawled and make better use of bass lines, such as 'Neon Brother' and 'Painkiller'. While reviews are split between unadulterated adoration and contempt, personally I believe among the raw instrumentals and bitter lyrics there's something quite exceptional.

Finally, the most recent work, *Lay Low*, from French singer-actress and daughter of icon Jane Birkin, Lou Doillon. Her tracks are softly jazzy at points, but at others more upbeat and electro-acoustic, and it is a mixture that suits her style. Although she performs in English the sound draws from the French chanson tradition, which comes through in the half-spoken, half-sung lyrics in which she reflects on the epic loves and tribulations visited on her by lovers. Her voice is husky, but emotive and rich, adding to the cabaret vibe of tracks such as 'Good Man' and 'Where to Start'. The lyrics betray a stirring vulnerability, as she softly scolds herself, 'I've got to stop this obsession / I've got to remember my reason / And let the film roll without you'. It would be unfair to attribute fame or success to her because of the talent and cultural relevance of her parents, and this work proves she deserves recognition in her own right.

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Oh, ça va mal, Michel, ça va mal

Peter Rutzler

Associate Sport Editor

Michel Platini, footballing great, Champions League winner, European Championship winner, three time Ballon D'Or winner, a midfield magician – and now allegedly a corporate apparatchik at FIFA? Where did it go so wrong?

A year is a long time in football but not normally at FIFA, whose perennial allegations of corruption have in previous years blissfully floated by as quickly and as promptly as Manchester City's liaisons with the Champions League group stages.

This year, that changed. Things are happening, people are being revealed as money-motivated wraiths. And Mr Platini, as Vice-President of the sport's governing body, you're right in there with them.

Regardless of whether you actually took that paltry \$2 million from your old pal Sepp, you are tarred with the same brush of guilt that will sweep right through the tower of deceit that we call FIFA. Lest we forget, of course, your loyal but secretive support for the footballing superpower that is Qatar, despite pledging your vote to the US bid. Lest we forget the subsequent employment of your son by a Qatari sports kit company just months after the vote. Lest we forget your close ties with Sepp. Lest we forget the slightly suspect backing you receive from South America's soccer confederation



The best of friends...

CONMEBOL. Lest we forget that you are currently suspended from all footballing activity for ninety days.

But it didn't have to be like this, Michel. You were once the star of the international footballing scene, the darling of French fans.

Many younger generations will be oblivious to your stunning footballing exploits, particularly now that your name is instead associated with headlines about the investigations into

FIFA.

You were at the heart of France's legendary midfield "*carré magique*", your technique, verve and skill stunned the opposition, you laid on goals more frequently than Messi breathes, and your passing was razor-sharp.

You brought home the European crown in '84. You were heralded, lauded, exalted even. They crowned you *Le Roi*. Vive le Roi.

You didn't just save your talents for

the French; you blessed the Italians too. Following your successes at Nancy and Saint-Étienne, you travelled to Turin, where you donned the black and white stripes and scooped every award in sight, taking the title, the *Scudetto*, in '84 and '86, winning the *Capocannoniere* – top scorer – three times consecutively from '83 to '85.

On the continental stage, you won it all – crowning your domestic triumphs with the European Cup in '85.

That night in Heysel, one that many will want to forget because of the disaster that unfolded around you, was your night. It was, and remains, the pinnacle of domestic European football and you reached it. Yet you find yourself so close to being overshadowed again. But this time the spectre looms over your entire career.

From Europe to the world stage, you won the trophy that sets you above all else. Many remarkable talents have come and gone, from Puskas to Rijkaard, Pirlo to Thierry Henry, but none of them have won the Ballon D'Or. You did. Placing yourself on a par with van Basten and Cruyff, you took the title three times in a row. The crowning achievement of a remarkable career. You ranked with the very best; Maradona and Pele sit in your company.

But when history turns her glare towards you, Michel, you won't be remembered for the delight you brought to millions with your feet. You will be remembered as the man in a grey suit, the man tainted by the suspect goings-on at FIFA amidst the stench that currently surrounds the organisation.

Michel, even if you are innocent of wrongdoing, why did you stay? Why did you surround yourself with something so poisonous? Why did you say nothing?

You will always be the man overshadowed, not just by the disaster that night at Heysel, but also by the calamity of your role at FIFA.

Ça va mal, Michel. Ça va mal.

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Oh là là!

Peter Rutzler laments Michel Platini's involvement in the crisis at FIFA. See page 31



Sport

Surviving Cambridge with sport

Lucy Morgan explains why we all need a little bit of sport to balance out our lives

Lucy Morgan

Sport Correspondent

"Academia comes first." That's a common phrase here, tossed around by senior tutors, sports coaches and supervisors alike. More than once I've been warned that rowing (which I don't even do) isn't a valid excuse for being unable to make a supervision or meet a deadline. While I agree that time-management is important, sport hasn't had a traumatic effect on my academics – quite the opposite. Admittedly my ability to stay awake in lectures after a 7am practice has definitely been tested, but I can't imagine life at Cambridge without my weekly doses of chlorine and sweat.

We all know the basics: sports are good for you, physically, mentally and socially. Endorphins, and all that. But having that list rattled off doesn't come close to the reality of why sports are so essential here.

In my experience of Cambridge, almost everything is done to the max. Look at the libraries in Easter term and it's clear that when we study, we study hard. Just days later during May Week, we could awe even Jabba the Hutt with our excessive levels of vegging and partying. At a university level, sports are no different. The same enthusiasm, competitiveness, determination or just plain stubbornness that pushed us to get in here in the first place drives us to work hard in our athletic endeavours. And I much prefer forcing out a sprint set than trying to finish an essay at 5am.

Why? It goes beyond hating the caffeinated daze that accompanies the bleak sunrise as I email off my unedited work. I love my subject; believe



Sport is the perfect escape from the stresses of studying in Cambridge

me, I could go on a ridiculously enthusiastic rant about why sociology is the cat's pyjamas. But it isn't nearly as satisfying to get a compliment on an essay (not the one I wrote throughout the night, I promise), as it is to cycle home, exhausted from practice.

You know those days when you're running five minutes late for lectures because the bustling school groups and oblivious tourists just won't get out of your way. When you get back from a practical, starving, to find that hall has just closed and you're low on groceries. When someone brings up that really embarrassing thing you did that one time that you vowed never to

think of again and that no one's supposed to remember. When your supervisor tears apart your essay after you proudly admitted to a friend that after three days of intense focus you think you finally nailed the topic.

It's those days that finally getting that defensive manoeuvre, killing a swim set or just pushing myself that extra bit as my legs burn makes all the difference. Instead of retreating to my room and re-watching an episode of *Game of Thrones*, sport offers a healthy, and less emotionally traumatic (sob for every GoT season finale ever) output for the frustration, apathy or distress. After practice, those

things all seem farther away, or at the very least much easier to deal with.

Also, that really embarrassing thing you did, the people who ate your snacks so you were low on food, and that messy bedroom with a pile of unwashed laundry: all left in college. But lo and behold, it's training time, and you have a reason to be somewhere else for two hours. In those miserable winter months, exercise gets your blood going, your teammates get you laughing, and suddenly it isn't as cold anymore.

Obviously not every week is a dreaded, busy mess. Some weeks go particularly well: supervision work

handed in on time, someone in your hall made cake, and you even found £5 in your laptop case. Sometimes your bed is just so comfortable and warm that training is just a distant dream. But then someone in your team cracks a stupid joke and your week gets even better. And the new person on your team happens to do your subject so you've got a new source of entertainment in lectures.

Of course there are academic benefits to sports too, it isn't all just fun and more fun. Water polo gets me up at 7am several times a week, and we all know the rowers suffer similarly, which means that rather than sleeping in till the sun's almost at its peak (sorry science students), after sports we're up and vaguely productive before lunch. Ask me to churn out an essay after a midday practice, and I'm likely to be much more capable than before when my mind was still fuzzy, struggling not to be hungover from Sunday night Life.

So you know what? Sports are essential to surviving at Cambridge. Sure, the academics and studying come first. But I wouldn't enjoy my subject half as much, or honestly do nearly as well, if it weren't for the hours that I occupy with something completely different every week. It's ironic that in a university full of brilliant researchers, who I'm sure know the list of benefits, we aren't more encouraged to dedicate time to sports. So even if you didn't make the first team, because this is only the second time you've ever played the sport, don't underestimate this opportunity. You've still got a plethora of new skills to learn, training sessions to enjoy, and sweating to do: in Cindies, as the clock ticks down on the last ten minutes of your exam, and during practice.

Cambridge and MotD: a match made in heaven

Angus Satow

Sport Editor

Cambridge on a Saturday night: oh. The grads have deserted the town in their droves; the humanities students are panicking about the next week in the library; Spoons remains a last resort. Let's face it, Cambridge on a Saturday night is shit.

But wait. For us football fans, salvation lies in television's worst and best program: *Match of the Day*. Every Saturday night at around ten thirty (barring those international breaks – dark times...) the familiar, bland face of Gary Lineker shimmers into vision.

We fall back onto our beds and sofas and let the nothingness wash over us.

There is nothing in this world as gloriously meaningless as football. It's a testament to the powers of bullshit that grown men and women can cry based on the movements of a small round thing that came nowhere near them. From ten thirty until midnight, on a weekly basis, we can devote an hour and a half of our lives to some sportsing and some supremely-unknowing analysis of the sportsing.

But we don't watch it for the sportsing, even less so for the analysis. I have yet to come across anyone who genuinely cares what Robbie Savage thinks about anything. And sure, we

sometimes watch it for some awesome goals, or to watch our team win. But in reality you barely remember any of what you watch. It's not a gripping series, nor is it tense – we already know what's happened.

No, we watch it because it's comfortable. Alan Shearer and Danny Murphy are probably the most boring men on earth, and their insight generally amounts to "they scored because they scored". Manager interviews follow a predictable pattern of "things didn't go our way", "we've got to do better" or "it's all the ref's fault". As for the matches: Mitchell and Webb had

it right with the pithy observation: "Looking ahead to March, every football team will be playing football several times and in various combinations".

In truth, it's about patterns, and reassuring identities. For football's mostly male viewership, *Match of the Day* provides a soothing return to the patriarchy – three men chatting shit. And the permanence of Gary Lineker, aka Big Brother, provides security



in repeated identity. Watching Gary (Gary!) and co, you can slowly drift off as Stoke play West Brom and you give no fucks.

And sure, Gabby Logan and Amy Lawrence herald a better era, an era in which football isn't so incredibly sexist, homophobic, racist and more. But football will remain football – an Andy Warhol art form, devoid of depth.

Cambridge life is shattering, in more ways than one. New ideas discovered, old certainties destroyed, opportunities for sleep and television limited. But no matter what goes on, no matter what goes wrong, you know that there'll always be a Gary at the end of the tunnel.

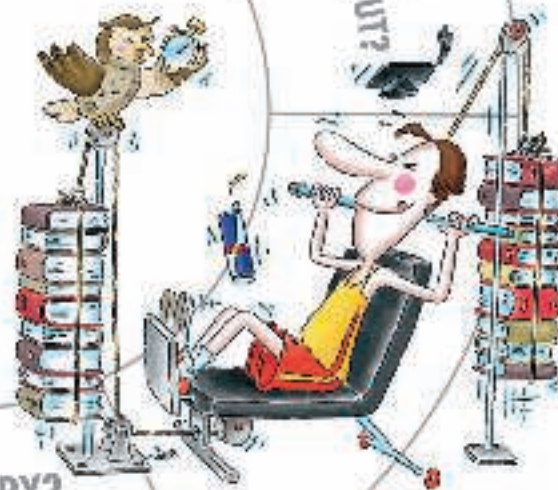
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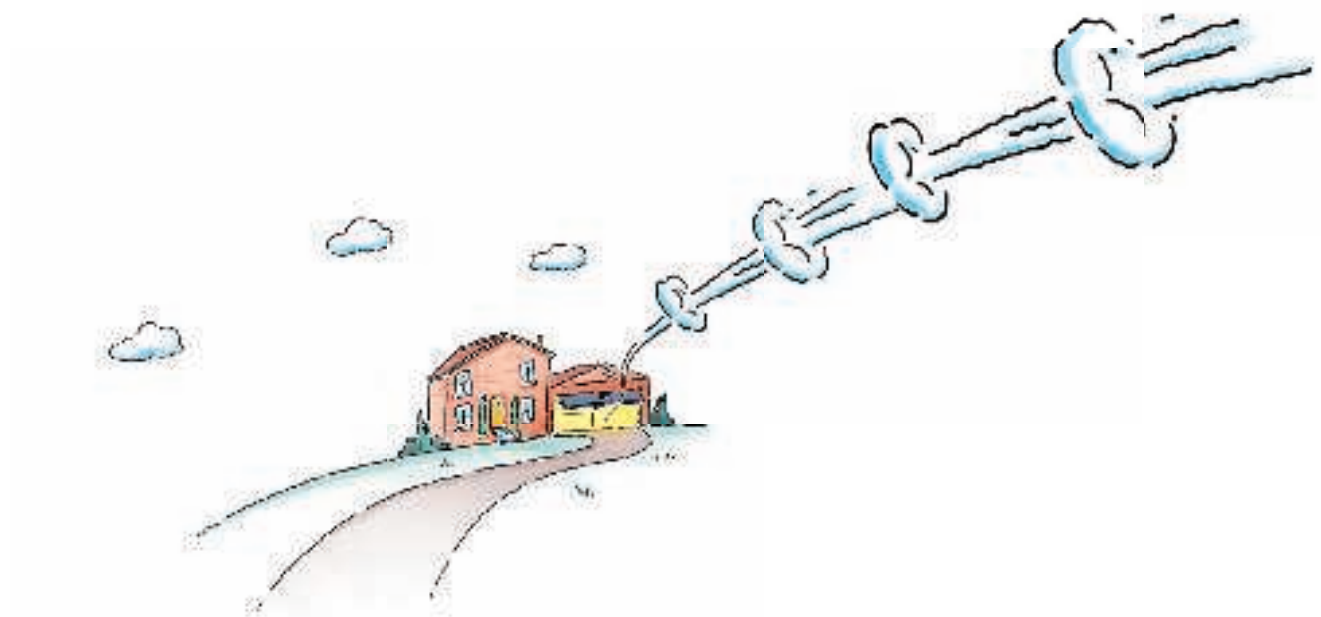
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