

VARSITY

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'Positive repatriation process': Students debated last night on proposals to return Jesus College's Benin Bronze cockerel to Nigeria

Jesus votes in cockerel row

Joe Robinson
Senior News Editor

Fierce disagreements broke out in a Jesus College Student Union (JCSU) meeting on Thursday over proposals put forward by the Benin Bronze Appreciation Committee (BBAC) to repatriate a bronze cockerel to Nigeria. An amended motion was passed in favour of returning the statue, taking into account the concerns raised by opposition to the draft paper.

In an 11-page document entitled 'Proposal to Repatriate Benin Bronze',

the committee set forth detailed plans for "returning [the Benin Bronze] to its place of origin". In it, the argument put forward for doing so was twofold, with the document claiming that repatriating the cockerel was "both intrinsically and instrumentally good". It claims that returning to the "community from which it was stolen" was "just", and that "the contemporary political culture surrounding colonialism and social justice, combined with the University's global agenda, offers a perfect opportunity for the College to benefit from this gesture."

The cockerel that has resided in

Jesus since 1930 was recovered from the royal palace of the Oba during the 'Punitive Expedition' in 1897.

In his opening speech, Amatey Doku, a Sociology finalist at Jesus, stated that the motion called on Jesus members to support not only the repatriation but also for two further recommendations, as outlined in the draft proposals. These are, as the paper notes, "that the College hosts a handover ceremony with representatives from the Royal Palace, Benin, or the Nigerian Government" and that the "college commissions a new piece of their choice for the Hall".

He emphasised the need for a "positive repatriation process" and sought to illustrate the mutual benefit that might be obtained from the cockerel's repatriation.

After addressing concerns raised by a Jesus member over where the bronze cockerel will go – it would reportedly go back to the Royal Palace – the opposition to the motion were given the opportunity to make the case.

Nadine Batchelor-Hunt, a second-year Classicist, began her argument by stating that she agreed with the argument that the bronze cockerel...

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Homerton cancels bops after student damage

Jack Higgins & Tom Freeman

Homerton College has cancelled all bops for the rest of the academic year after excrement, urine and vomit were found after a bop held at the college.

An email sent to undergraduates at the college claims that a bop that took place on Saturday 13th February caused damage worth a four-figure sum.

Both accommodation blocks and the Mary Allan Building (MAB), which houses both the Porters' Lodge and the college library, suffered damage after the party organised by the college's JCR.

In the email, the Bursar, Deborah Griffin, said that the college was "shocked and disappointed" at the students' behaviour.

"The HUS [Homerton Union of Students] Committee have worked exceptionally hard to ensure that these events are safe and enjoyable," Griffin said.

"However, the subsequent noise and damage caused by some students, including excrement, urine and vomit found across several of the residences and MAB, is unacceptable."

The damage during the bop, entitled 'Homerton: The Great Unknown Summer Ball Launch' which was held as a launch event for Homerton's May Week event, meant that the college could "no longer safeguard the welfare of its students under such circumstances," the email read.

The email, which was sent on Thursday also accused students that were from other colleges of causing damage to the college, but did not give further details.

"These were guests of Homerton students, who should therefore take a measure of responsibility," Griffin said.

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INSIDE:

DOUGLAS CARSWELL, REGENI INVESTIGATION PRESSURE, LOAN PROSECUTION THREAT

Finding the value in student journalism

EDITORIAL

Last Friday, as another copy of *Varsity* rolled off the presses, the news broke that as of the end of March the *Independent* will no longer feature as a staple of newsagents' shelves. As the first major national paper to make the transition to wholly online publishing, in one sense this is a brave step: a leap of faith which gambles on the fabled 'death of print' coming to pass.

This is, of course, a sad moment for journalism, and particularly for the art of print journalism. Newspapers which can openly wear their editorial independence on their sleeve are sadly few and far between, and it is something of which we at *Varsity* are proud.

However, this does not mean that other forms of journalism do not have value, as we all choose to read very different things, from very different outlets.

On Sunday, the *Guardian* ran a feature online entitled: 'The Tab picks up business without paying.' It begins innocently enough, charting the rise of *The Tab*, from Cambridge to international operations. The piece then begins to doggedly follow a line of questioning about the fact that some contributors to *The Tab* are not paid for their work, citing individuals and organisations who have condemned this as a form of "exploitation".

This is a move which fundamentally misunderstands the state and nature of student journalism. As *The Tab's* executive editor Joshi Herrmann points out in the piece, they think of themselves as both "a platform and a publisher". This is exactly correct; although *The Tab* may now be a multi-million-pound business, student journalism did not start out that way, and in most cases it still does not exist on that sort of scale. Let's not get into the debate about whether the now-

international *Tab* should pay its writers; that is a topic for ethical reflection at *Tab* HQ, and in suitably righteous *Guardian* think-pieces. (As an aside, it is worth noting that the *Guardian* has since been accused of publishing articles written by unpaid interns. Pot, meet kettle, it would seem.)

What is at stake in this debate is the essence of student journalism. On the one hand, there is the argument (albeit a slightly woolly and potentially rose-tinted one) which positions *The Tab* as the modern-day off-shoot of the long-running convention within student print journalism, according to which writers file articles in exchange for a platform, a by-line, CV points, or even just the fun and experience of writing for publication. On the other hand, *The Tab's* financial success is being used as evidence in support of the counter-argument – that the articles they publish should be treat-

ed as marketised commodities which must be bought from writers.

When we adopt this second approach to the articles which we commission, receive, read, and edit, we abstract them from the intellectual value of their ideas. While looking to pay contributors for their work is perhaps something which we feel would be fair and admirable, reducing the work which they produce to a raw material value based wholly on how much of a page it fills – or, in the case of online publication, how many clicks it generates – is a gross undervaluing of that content. With this in mind, it does well to remember that it is the quality of a publication's content which will make all the difference to a potential reader as they decide whether they want to pick up a copy, click on a link, or engage in some other way. It is, of course, crucial to the survival of any publication not to lose sight of that.

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May Week events prompt appropriation concerns

Siyang Wei

Senior News Correspondent

Trinity Hall's June Event has received a formal complaint from a Japanese student concerning its theme 'Tokyo to Kyoto'. The student in question met with the event's organising committee along with Audrey Sebatindira, the Trinity Hall JCR BME Officer, in order to make her concerns and discomfort known to them.

Three of the released May Ball and June Event themes are centred around providing an experience of non-Western cultures – Darwin College's 'Havana Nights', Clare College's 'The Orient Express' and Trinity Hall's 'Tokyo to Kyoto'.

The issue of cultural appropriation is one that has recently risen to greater prominence in discussion of the welfare of BME students. Millie Ngaage, a fifth-year Medic who has previously held the roles of Vice President of the BME Campaign and President of the CU African Caribbean Society, said that she had misgivings "as soon as the titles were announced".

"It just makes me feel uncomfortable," she added. "The same kind of uncomfortable you feel when someone cracks a 'joke' about not being able to see me in the dark. Perhaps it's because these things have a way of reinforcing stereotypes".

Clare College's 'The Orient Express' has also faced criticism despite the claim that the theme focuses on 'world-famous stops along the famed route of the Orient Express', many of which are European tourist cities.

However, Ploy Kingchatchaval, a third-year English student, explained that the suggestion that the 'Orient' part of the title is not the focus and that 'The Orient Express' has been chosen in order to depict places such as Paris and Amsterdam is "exactly what [she has] qualms with".

"They clearly didn't just intend for it to be about 'travel', because 'orient' is such a loaded term. They've gone with 'The Orient Express' in order to associate their ball with ideas of luxury and exoticism – which is just a prime example of the fact that the words 'the Orient' still hold these kinds of toxic connotations, of commodification and enjoyment of white people at the expense of others. The vibe they are going for with 'The Orient Express' is white people travelling in first class on a train, visiting 'exotic' places with the inherent sense of privilege that comes from being a rich tourist."

Kingchatchaval added that "the whole thing is skewed from a rich, white perspective: it's going to be a white presentation of these places they're trying to represent, full of stereotypes, which is erasing and gross."

Speaking to *Varsity*, Sophie Birkin, President of the Trinity Hall June Event 2016, said: "From the outset we recognised that the execution of our theme could be problematic, but as a committee we have been mindful throughout to do our utmost to avoid any insensitivity."

"Our aim has always been to celebrate culture and we have talked with many Japanese artists, suppliers and societies throughout the planning process in order to ensure the event is led by these sources rather than our

own interpretations. We have been met with great enthusiasm from these correspondents and are greatly saddened that this does not reflect everybody's opinion. However, we will continue to take steps to mitigate these issues, and recognise that it is our responsibility to do so."

"We hope to show that appreciation need not be equated with fetishisation. We do not pretend to be able to perfectly represent Tokyo or Kyoto but we hope that our efforts will bring light to some amazing aspects of these places that may otherwise be lost in generalisations about Japanese culture at large."

"As ever, we encourage anyone with ideas or concerns to get in touch."

Jun Pang, a first-year HSPS student, observed that "the Trinity Hall June Event team seems entirely conscious of the problematic nature of their theme" and have "anticipated many questions and concerns", which was "evident throughout the website".

"My issue, then," she explained, "is why did they choose to pursue this commodifying, Orientalist theme in the first place?"

"I appreciate the fact that the team wants guests to 'appreciate and understand the significance and beauty of this rich culture'. It's great that one of the charities the ball is supporting is Greenpeace Japan."

"But why is Japanese culture the culture that is to be put on display, broken down into lanterns, rice bowls, sakura trees, and a painting by Hokusai? What are we doing by perpetuating the othering gaze? And if we know that is what we're doing, why are we still doing it?"

Jesus students pass amended motion

Continued from front page

ought to be repatriated but that she "immediately had issues" with the proposals as put forward in the draft proposals.

She was critical of the language of the proposals insofar as they referenced "reaping the benefits" of the repatriation and sought to challenge the "neocolonial narrative" that she believed pervaded the document.

Batchelor-Hunt was especially critical of the implication in the draft proposal that the repatriation offered an opportunity to advance the university's "global agenda", questioning the link between giving back to the Benin people their bronze statue and, as the language of the draft document states, providing an "opportunity for the College to benefit from this gesture."

Jason Okundaye, a member of the Benin tribe and a theology student at Pembroke, called the proposals "completely unprofessional" and branded assertions that Jesuans would be doing a moral thing by repatriating the cockerel "paternalistic narration". He admonished the comical language of the draft proposals as having turned the "massacre of [his] people" into a "joke" and called the draft proposals "disrespectful to Nigerian culture". He also drew attention to the fact that the document does not refer to the bronze cockerel by its proper name, okukor.

JCSU's Racial Equalities Officer, Ore Ogunbiyi, defended the proposals by defending them as a "draft" that was subject to change through extensive consultation. She claimed that it was a vote to move forward with the repatriation process while maintaining

a wide consultation.

A fundamental disagreement emerged between those in favour and opposed to the motion over the meaning of a clause in the motion which stated that the Benin Bronze Committee "exclusively" was the "right body to continue to work on the proposal and present it to the College." Those opposed to it claimed that it was an attempt to systematically silence black voices, just as they alleged that a procedural motion at the beginning of the OGM to allow non-JCSU members to speak was.

In an attempt to accommodate both views while reconciling their shared desire to see the Benin cockerel repatriated, an amended motion was put forward that passed.

The amendment stated: "The Master will be informed that the college supports the proposal to repatriate the okukor."

After this stage, an expanded committee will meet, including other members of the BME community, to redraft the proposal. It will then be submitted to the next college council committee, provided the proposal has been finalised.

A spokesperson for the BBAC declined *Varsity's* request for comment.



Emmanuel College Students' Union pushes ahead with gender-neutral college parents

Jack Higgins

Senior News Editor

Emmanuel College Students' Union (ECSU) is pushing forward with the introduction of gender-neutral college

parents. College parents at Emmanuel have historically been two third-year students, with one male and one female. Many colleges already allow gender-neutral college parents.

However, ECSU is currently rewriting the guidelines to ensure they are gender neutral. Speaking to *Varsity*, the Vice-President of ECSU, Kavish Shah, said that "last term the previous ECSU committee voted in favour of gender-neutral college parents (16-2, I believe)", but that the committee "never got around to actually implementing it".

Last autumn *The Tab* reported that ECSU had been striving to introduce this measure and that the criteria for college parents at the time stated that you "must apply with a member of the opposite sex".

"Previously the guidelines on the ECSU website stated that applicants to be college parents had to be male and female", ECSU's Vice-President continued, adding that "a few years ago there was even a blue box and pink box for applicants to put their names in". Shah was clear that the College and its leadership have "no position as such regarding the gender of college parents. The guidelines are ECSU guidelines, not college guidelines".

"The previous ECSU committee simply never got around to making the change as they wished to consult the tutors first, to make sure that any unseen issues could be raised, and because college parents are seen as being an important part of welfare for incoming freshers, for which tutors have



New guidelines for college parents emphasise teamwork

important insight."

The current LGBT+ officer, Helen White, has written on ECSU's website that: "I am working to make sure that all things college related are in the best interest of LGBT+ people, including introducing gender neutral college parenting." Shah also told *Varsity*: "ECSU is free to amend the guidelines" and that the committee "have already removed the old guidelines from the website, and will be putting up new ones before college parents for this October apply".

"The new guidelines will emphasise the need for college parents to be able to work well together as a team, and to offer freshers a diversity of skills and experiences. Diversity can of course be offered through gender, but there

are many other ways in which applicants can show this.

"College parents are there primarily for supporting freshers, and this will remain at the heart of the new guidelines, and if further changes are required to enhance this, then they will be looked into."

Sarah Gibson, the President of CUSU's LGBT+ Campaign, told *Varsity* that this was a "really positive change that ECSU are making and there is no reason why parenting schemes should be limited by gender. "Many colleges already have gender neutral schemes and removing unnecessary references to binary sex or gender makes the schemes more inclusive of non-binary and intersex students."



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CULC 'saddened' by Oxford anti-Semitism accusations

Jack Higgins
Senior News Editor

The Oxford University Labour Club (OULC) has become embroiled in a controversy concerning anti-Semitism after its co-chairman, Alex Chalmers, resigned when the club endorsed Israeli Apartheid Week.

Chalmers, a member of Oriel College, Oxford, issued a statement on Monday stating that he was going to step down, arguing that a large section of the student Left in the city and OULC "have some kind of problem with Jews".

He added that the club was "increasingly riven by factional splits" and that "despite its avowed commitment to liberation, the attitude of certain members of the club towards certain disadvantaged groups was becoming poisonous".

In a statement, Cambridge Universities Labour Club said it was "saddened by the allegations of anti-Semitism in the Oxford University Labour Club. Anti-Semitism has absolutely no place in the Labour movement – it is sinister, dangerous and morally degraded, and we hope that OULC will be able to stamp it out."

The club's decision to support Israeli Apartheid Week, which seeks to emphasise Israel's "on-going settler-colonial project and apartheid policies over the Palestinian people", has caused anger among some Labour MPs, who have called for the party to formally disassociate from OULC.

Ed Miliband has cancelled his planned address to OULC in reaction



Miliband has cancelled his appearance at OULC

to the allegations. He was due to appear on 4th March, when OULC will hold its John Smith Memorial Dinner.



“LABOUR STUDENTS IS LAUNCHING AN INQUIRY INTO THE ALLEGATIONS

A spokesperson for the former Labour leader told *New Statesman*: "Ed is deeply disturbed to hear of reports of anti-Semitism in the Oxford University Labour Club. It is right that the executive of the club has roundly condemned the comments and fully co-operates with the Labour Students investigation. Ed and the Labour Club

have agreed that his talk should be postponed until the investigation is resolved."

Oxford University's Jewish Society (Oxford JSoc) likewise said it was "saddened" by the anti-Semitic reports, but said it "stands fully in support of Alex Chalmers' decision to resign."

The Society continued by saying that it was "unsurprised" by the news, and that it was not the first time anti-Semitic incidents had occurred within the student Left, adding that "it will not be the last."

Noni Csogor, the remaining OULC co-chair, said that she was "deeply upset" with Mr Chalmers's decision to step down, but said that he was "right to highlight growing anti-Semitic violence in the UK as a major issue."

The Labour Party's national student organisation, Labour Students, is launching an inquiry into the allegations of anti-Semitism that have arisen at the OULC.

Christ's debates: must Smuts fall?

Siyang Wei
Senior News Correspondent

On Monday, Christ's College hosted Hakim Adi, Professor of African History and the African Diaspora at the University of Chichester, who was invited to speak on the topic of 'Must Smuts Fall? Apartheid Legacies and Eurocentric Heroification'.

Despite the naming of the event appearing to echo the recently much-publicised 'Rhodes Must Fall' movement at the University of Oxford, it served not to campaign but to ask a question: how should we deal with the colonial legacy of institutions such as the University of Cambridge?

Professor Adi began by explaining the history of Jan Smuts, former Chancellor of the University, and his role in establishing apartheid in South Africa alongside Rhodes.

He revealed that not only was Smuts a leading politician in South Africa in the 40 years leading up to apartheid, but that he was also directly responsible for the repression of Africans and the introduction of the oppressive South African system in Namibia following its repossession from Germany's colonial empire. Smuts's portrait hangs in Christ's College's hall.

However, Professor Adi then moved onto Winston Churchill, another historical figure honoured by the university – and "an even bigger criminal".

In the question and answer session that followed, in response to questions about greater or lesser personal responsibility for particular actions, it

became clear that the use of Smuts's name in the event's title was intended to serve not as a singular target for criticism, Professor Adi responded, but as a symbol of the ideologies on the basis of which he acted, and which implicitly persist in the university as long as figures like him are honoured.

Professor Adi went on to answer questions about a variety of issues centred around the "disinformation" in Western narratives of history that "are Eurocentric, privilege white men of property, and exclude Africans and others".

Indeed, a historian stated from the floor that "the Churchill estate is running scared of exactly this kind of event" after revealing that he had been offered money by the estate to write a series of essays "contextualising" the racist and misogynistic writings in Churchill's journals in preparation for their publication.

Speaking to *Varsity*, Phelan Chatterjee, who organised the event, said: "I wanted to highlight the fact that as much as we like to pride ourselves on scepticism and critical thinking, there seems to be an entirely uncritical glorification of too many historical figures."

"More often than not, we tend to ignore the impact of alumni like Smuts on black and Asian people."

"The Eurocentric curriculum only really allows for white male perspectives, so stories of repression and hardship wrought by people we celebrate remain untold."

"I hope that this can serve as a first step to a wider interrogation of our history."

Timeline

25th January – Giulio Regeni is last seen leaving his apartment at around 8pm to meet a friend.

31st January – The hashtag #WhereIsGiulio begins to be used on social media as part of an attempt to find the missing student.

1st February – Italian media begin to report Regeni's disappearance. The British and student press follow suit the next day.

3rd February – Regeni's body is found in a ditch bearing signs of torture.

5th February – A letter signed by POLIS head David Runciman is sent to the Egyptian Consul General demanding "a thorough and complete investigation".

6th February – The University releases its own statement of condolences and also calls for a "full investigation" by the Egyptian authorities.

9th February – A petition is published on parliament.uk demanding that the UK government ensure "a credible investigation of this extrajudicial killing".

16th February – POLIS holds its Department Graduate Forum, where the Foreign Office's guidelines are discussed.

Growing calls for Regeni inquiry

Tom Freeman
Associate Editor

Pressure continues to mount on the UK government to take part in an investigation into the death of Cambridge PhD student Giulio Regeni.

Cambridge's MP, Daniel Zeichner, has joined calls for a "credible investigation" into the student's death in Cairo.

He told *Cambridge News*: "I will be raising it at Foreign and Commonwealth questions next week."

"I have also written to the Foreign Secretary to push him to urge them to conduct a full investigation."

On Monday, an emergency motion was passed at CUSU Council calling on CUSU Executive Officers to sign and share the petition, as well as for CUSU to publicise the Students' Unions' Advice Service.

The motion also mandated CUSU President Priscilla Mensah to write an open letter to the British Ambassador in Egypt "supporting calls for a full investigation".

The letter was also signed by JCR and MCR Presidents.

Zeichner confirmed with *Varsity* that he was not planning to make his previous correspondence with the Foreign Secretary over the matter public, and claimed that he attempted to raise the issue at Prime Minister's Questions last week.

"There is a profound sense of sadness

and shock in Cambridge following his death and the reports of possible torture," he told us.

"Egypt is a very troubled country at the moment, but I think it is entirely right that when someone from Cambridge is found in such a terrible state, we do all we can to get to the bottom of what happened."

Meanwhile, his predecessor as MP, Julian Huppert, who is currently in a post as a University Lecturer at POLIS, has called for the UK government to take a predominant role in any investigation into Regeni's death.

Huppert also revealed that he was involved behind the scenes at POLIS when Regeni was first reported missing.

"The brutal murder of Giulio Regeni absolutely must be investigated by the UK government and international bodies, so that we can learn the truth about what happened to him – and sadly to many others – in Egypt," he told *Varsity*.

"While this can only provide scant consolation to his friends and family, we can try to ensure that these atrocities do not happen to anyone else."

The President of Girton College MCR, Camilla Fairbairn, echoed Huppert's sentiments, telling *Varsity* that she believed the UK government should play a predominant role in any inquiry.

"We are determined to find out what led to such a barbaric and untimely death. Girton is, with other



Regeni was a PhD student at POLIS

colleagues in the university, pressing the Egyptian authorities for a full and open investigation into Giulio's death.

"This, however, should not just be an issue for Cambridge but all higher education institutions in the UK. It is imperative that the UK ensures the safety, to any extent that they can, for academics researching sensitive topics and doing field work abroad, especially where there is political unrest."

"The MCR have been distraught over losing our colleague, and, more importantly, our friend."

An online petition on the government's parliament.uk service has so far amassed over 5,600 signatures, over 800 of which come from the Cambridge constituency, an increase of over 3,500 on last week.

It argues: "The UK government has a duty to ensure that a credible investigation of this extrajudicial killing is carried out."

Mensah stopped short of endorsing

Huppert's calls that the UK government investigate Regeni's murder itself, alongside international bodies.

A university spokesman also refused to explicitly endorse the specific requests in Huppert's comments.

"The University has engaged fully with the call for a thorough and complete investigation into this tragic incident with the relevant authorities and has backed the Italian government's calls for Egypt to do so," he told *Varsity*.

However, he revealed that the letters issued in the name of Professor David Runciman, the Head of Department at POLIS, and Professor Susan Smith, Mistress of Girton College, were also drafted on behalf of the university as a whole.

He also confirmed that representatives from the university attended Regeni's funeral, which was held on Friday 12th February in northern Italy.

Government crackdowns on student loans

Anna Menin

Deputy News Editor

The government is planning to “trace” and “prosecute” students who do not repay their student loans as part of a new strategy to “ensure the operation of a fair, robust and efficient student loan repayment system.”

Under the new plans, the government will “take stronger action to trace borrowers, including those overseas”, and “act to recover loan repayments where it is clear that borrowers are seeking to avoid repayment.”

Jo Johnson, the Universities Minister, also stated that the government will “consider the use of sanctions against borrowers who breach loan repayment terms and, if necessary, prosecute”, arguing that this new approach will be “fair for borrowers and good for the effective management of public money”. He claimed that the government is “committed to maintaining the UK’s world class education system while living within its means.”

Johnson also stressed the “vital” need for a “robust” repayment system that is “convenient for borrowers” and works “efficiently to ensure the sustainability of the student finance system and value for money for the taxpayer” as more students loans are issued after the government’s removal of the cap on student numbers.

Despite this, he emphasised that the “vast majority” of borrowers do in fact meet their repayment obligations. Johnson also said that the government “will do more to support borrowers who seek to meet their loan repayment



Protestors at the Free Education Demonstration in 2014

obligations”, while, “in the interests of fairness”, they “will be tougher on those who do not.”

Currently, most borrowers repay their student debt through the UK tax system. However, for former students who then move overseas, the Student Loans Company must then collect repayments directly from them.

Speaking to *Varsity* about the plans, Labour MP for Cambridge Daniel Zeichner said “It is right that every effort should be made to make sure that loans are repaid”, and that “failure to do so is unfair on those who do repay.” However, he also claimed “it is clear

that the Government has lost track of huge numbers of people, and that their projections about how much would be repaid are vastly over-optimistic.”

He also argued that Labour had previously warned that “the system faces financial melt-down with so many loans not being repaid, because of lower than anticipated earnings and because of people moving abroad”, and that the government “has failed to come up with a coherent response” to this. “Posturing from the Universities Minister won’t solve the problem. We now need a major overhaul of the whole system”, he added.

Cambridge student denies rape charge

Jack Higgins

Senior News Editor

Prithvi Sridhar, a student at Queens’ College, Cambridge, has denied allegations that he raped a fellow student at Cambridge Crown Court.

Sridhar is being specifically accused of having raped a fellow student – who is not a member of Queens’ College – following a night out in November 2014.

“There was a fair amount of drinking involved,” the prosecution said. “They moved on to a club and both were drinking alcohol. He persistently wanted to dance with her and they were hugging and kissing.”

Last Tuesday, the prosecution argued that Sridhar took a taxi back to the victim’s halls of residence, and that, in spite of her protest that she did not wish to engage in sexual activity, he proceeded to remove her clothes and have sex with her against her will.

Arguing for the prosecution, David Matthew said that the defendant “thought it was implicit they would have sex”, adding that “He says she was eager and willing, but she is not of that opinion.”

The complainant, when giving evidence, said that she had appreciated the company back from town as she had read in the news about people being attacked when they were on their own.

The alleged victim, who was fighting back tears, continued by saying: “when we got back, I said goodbye”, but “he

said no, I’m coming with you.”

She said that, once upstairs, Sridhar began to kiss her, adding that she got in bed fully clothed and told him she was going to sleep in order to communicate that she was not interested in having sex with him.

“I didn’t know what to do,” she said. “I didn’t know what to do to make it stop. I told him we were not going to have sex or anything.”

The court was then told that the defendant proceeded to remove the alleged victim’s clothes before getting into the bed and having sex with her.

“I told him multiple times that I didn’t want to have sex with him,” she said. “He tried to push himself inside me and I laid back because it hurt less.”

She added that: “I was trying not to look at him because I did not want it to happen.

“Tears were running down my face and I was shaking.”

A friend of the complainant said that the next day the alleged victim had seemed distressed.

She said: “She was in her pyjamas. She was saying ‘I kept telling him to leave me alone, but he wouldn’t. I told him to stop but he didn’t.’ She was crying and quite distressed. She just kept repeating it. She was hysterical, really.”

Arguing for the defence, Joe Stone asked the alleged victim’s friend about the halls of residence: “If someone were to shout out or scream in a state of distress, it would be very easy to hear that.” The trial is ongoing.

Homerton cancels bops after ‘excrement’ and ‘vomit’ found

Continued from the front page

It also claims that students involved in the damage were being “dealt with” by the Dean. The Bursar confirmed that the college was working with the HUS

to organise “an alternative event for the end of this term.”

One anonymous student from the college told *Varsity*: “I’m not surprised that the college has decided to cancel future bops, because the behaviour

of some students really was appalling. That said, however, I think it’s all the more unfair that Homertonians are being punished when many of the miscreants were not from Homerton, but other colleges.”



HUS said they were disappointed by the college’s decision

A spokesperson for HUS said: “By now you have probably read the email sent out by college explaining the decision for the final bop of term not to go ahead. Whilst we understand the reasons behind the decision, as a union we are opposed to, and disappointed by, college’s decision to ban the final bop of term. We see this as a collective punishment for isolated incidents caused by certain individuals’ unacceptable behavior and we believe that it is unfair that the whole student population is being punished for the actions of a minority.

“We have explained our position to college, and are considering alternative events for the end of term and next term. Please do get in touch if you have any suggestions.”

This is not the first time a college

has cancelled bops this academic year in response to rowdy behaviour by students.

“

THE BEHAVIOUR OF SOME STUDENTS REALLY WAS APPALLING

In October, *Varsity* reported the cancellation of bops at Queens’ for the remainder of Michaelmas Term after one student was taken away in an ambulance, and another stained stone-work with vomit.

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Cable: Conservatives are 'absolutely ruthless'

Alice Chilcott
Interviews Editor

Sir Vince Cable has spent the morning writing the penultimate chapter of his first novel. The latest in a line of politicians to turn to literature, he's confident his predecessors have not set the bar too high. "Iain Duncan Smith's was terrible. And there was this other woman..." Louise Mensch? "No, she's even worse!"

Cable is back in Cambridge to speak at the debating society of his alma mater, Fitzwilliam College, where he studied Natural Sciences, before defecting to Economics at Part II – mostly, he tells me, in order to free up his afternoons for the Cambridge Union and amateur dramatics.

A former Union president, he recalls "disgracing himself" with a term card which featured "lots of comedians and quite a few criminals". The Kray twins cancelled a few days before they were due to appear. Another speaker, he sheepishly admits, was subsequently hanged.

When I bring up recent protests against the Union's hosting of Julian Assange and Germaine Greer, his face creases into a frown. "I think it's terrible. Greer was one of my great contemporaries, and a marvellously talented and interesting woman. The idea that people like that are being barred is terrible."

For him, Fitzwilliam, which relocated to Castle Hill in the year Cable sat his finals, has changed almost beyond recognition. As a "northern grammar school boy" – an identity he reprises with a touch of pride – he admits to feeling like a fish out of water on his arrival.

"It was quite public school dominated – although I was in no sense under-privileged, we did tend to think of ourselves as the proletariat in this place. In a way, that gave us a bit of an edge to be more competitive... but I did feel quite intimidated."

"I'd never been in a place before where you actually met people who had been to Eton and dressed up in hunting gear and things like that. I mean, it was a bit like visiting the zoo sometimes."

And probably quite a good preparation for Parliament? He smiles and



Sir Vince Cable at a Fitzwilliam College Debating Society event last week

raises his eyebrows.

"Yes... probably quite a good preparation for Parliament."

Cable may still be an astute political commentator but, after the surprise loss of his seat in the 2015 general election, it seems he has put his Westminster career behind him.

He is unreserved – often cheeky – with his political observations, and he describes his experiences of the Westminster crowd with all the exactitude of an avid people-watcher. He calls David Cameron a "cold fish... very comfortable with the Bullingdon Club image", whereas George Osborne, apparently, is "more self-conscious".

Unprompted, he falls into a critique of his party's naivety when working with the Conservatives. "What we didn't realise is that, when it comes to destroying their enemies, the Tories

are absolutely ruthless. And they're about to destroy Labour... although they're getting quite a lot of help on that front."

“

HE CALLS DAVID CAMERON A 'COLD FISH...COMFORTABLE WITH THE BULLINGDON CLUB'

At the time, one newspaper article described Cable as the "moral core" of the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition. "It's a flattering way of describing it," he says. "I was a bit bloody-minded, I think, which is probably more accurate. I was uncomfortable

working with the Tories, but I thought we had no choice."

If he has regrets about the way in which the coalition was conducted, Cable is magnanimous when asked if, with retrospect, he would go back and make the decision to form one.

"I think Nick Clegg was right, but of course we've paid a terrible political price. And it's yet to be seen whether we will recover. There's this enormous political space in the UK between the Tories and Corbyn, which someone should fill, and we're waiting to fill it."

I ask if the new Liberal Democrat leader, Tim Farron, who has previously taken controversial stances on gay marriage, is the right man to win over a centre-left. "Well, I think what you're hinting at is that he's an evangelical Christian..." Cable looks wary. "I don't see why that's a problem:

issues like abortion should be matters of personal choice.

"I happen to have liberal views and always have had, but I don't mind working with someone who is more traditional and religiously guided." He's keen to draw attention to Farron's status as "a radical liberal in the old tradition".

"On some of the big moral issues, refugees, Middle Eastern wars, he's very much in the radical camp."

Given that Cable has been credited by many as the only politician to have foreseen the financial crisis, predictions like these are worth our attention.

George Osborne will be the next Prime Minister, he tells me, "all other things being equal".

He seems, perhaps surprisingly, far less concerned by this than by the prospect of the impending referendum on the UK's EU membership. "I think Cameron has miscalculated horribly by having the referendum, and then imagining that this renegotiation, with these frankly rather flimsy issues, would somehow persuade a lot of sceptical people."

"I think there is a very high risk of losing, and the consequences would be very bad and very profound."

Later, Cable delivers the sort of economic forecast Jeremy Paxman might describe as a "veritable smorgasbord". Comparing the 2008 financial crash to a heart attack, he warns that today's economy "is still connected to the life support system", and calls upon the political left to resist the Tory-built historical narrative that the financial crisis was the fault of the Labour Party.

He is critical of the Chancellor's 'long-term economic plan', even if government cuts are not, thus far, as drastic as they threatened to be prior to the general election. "George Osborne's found some money down the back of the sofa," he concedes. "But," he adds darkly, "What the sofa gives, the sofa can take away."

Cable may have abandoned Westminster for the fictional world of the political thriller. But serious challenges lie ahead for characters in both realms, and it seems a shame that such an experienced and talented politician can only shape the ending of one of these narratives.

Don't train youngsters for Oxbridge, teacher argues

Kaya Wong
Senior News Correspondent

Jenny Brown, headmistress of St Albans High School for Girls, has spoken out against suggestions made by the Oxford Head of Admissions that preparation for entry into selective universities "must happen further down".

Speaking to the *Times Education Supplement* last month, Samina Khan, Head of Oxford Admissions and a school governor, argued that schools should start preparing students for applications to Oxbridge and other top universities as early as Year 7.

"Let's start in Year 7. Let's start raising aspiration... let's start showing them what they will need to have achieved."

To nurture a talented cohort, she believes that schools should provide opportunities for students to explore their interests from a young age, as

well as encourage students to read and articulate their ideas.

"Encourage them to read widely. If they are interested in history, go on visits that inspire them. Get them to start to articulate their thoughts, to talk about their subject, because that's one of the things that will help them in terms of interview practice."

Ms Khan suggests that this would level the playing field in admissions to top universities. As opposed to exclusively training for Oxbridge in upper forms, which tends to favour pupils in educational environments that provide them with sufficient resources to put together a good application, preparing from a young age would mean that pupils are more accustomed to voicing their thoughts and discussing their ideas.

As of now, it is often the case that top universities will reach a "threshold point" where it becomes difficult to select one applicant over the other

based on their grades alone. Ms Khan says that universities take into account contextual factors to "compare applicants from different backgrounds".

"To help us to understand their academic potential we use contextual data, which gives us information on any prior attainment. It tells us if they come from a poor performing school, we understand if the grades they have achieved to date have been achieved in quite a challenging environment."

Rebecca Williams, Head of Oxbridge Applications, agrees, believing that having a goal to work towards "makes school easier" for youngsters.

She said: "The more they can think on their feet... that needs to happen earlier and not just a couple of weeks before the interview is due. It drives the passion for the subject and that's really what we are looking for."

Ms Brown, however, says that this heavily academic focus at a young age is "madness". She praised Ms Khan's

efforts to try to increase social access as "laudable", but believes that the reason for widening her Year 7 students' horizons and developing their passion for reading should not be driven by the aim of training them for Oxbridge.

“

ENTRY TO UNIVERSITY BEGINS AT AN EARLY AGE

"It's great that Oxford advises Year 7s to read ... because it will take those readers into wonderlands of great literature, but not because it will shunt them down the rabbit hole to Queens' College, Oxford," she said.

"And, yes, let's follow their instructions to take Year 7s to [visit places] not because it could unlock Caius College's Medical School, but because

it could breathe magical new life into rocks and bones. This is the advice we'll be giving Year 7s at the High School: learning is its own destination. It's not about where it will get you. Learn that and you may just find yourself following many of our pupils into one of our top universities someday."

Ms Brown is not the first educator to disagree with Ms Khan's standpoint. Professor Alan Smithers, director of the Centre of Education and Employment Research at the University of Buckingham, said that coaching children from the age of 11 could actually prove to be counterproductive.

"Certainly, entry to university begins at an early age, but one wonders how useful these comments from Oxford University will be. The risk is that they will act as an encouragement to over-coaching. This will widen the gap between the children who get a lot of support and those who don't."

Douglas Carswell kickstarts Cambridge Brexit campaign

Eleanor Costello
News Correspondent

With the in/out referendum on Britain's continued membership of the European Union potentially only four months away, the Cambridge campaign to leave the EU ('Brexit') is beginning to gather pace. Last week, it hosted its first speaker of term, UKIP MP Douglas Carswell.

Speaking at Gonville and Caius College to an audience of students and members of the public, Carswell was passionate about the case for leaving the European Union. Pointing out the economic troubles that the European Union has faced, compared with the rapidly expanding economies of Asia, Africa and South America, he argued that Britain has effectively locked itself into the only declining part of the world economy.

His main argument hinged on the principles that he perceived Britain stands for and the discrepancy between this and the way that the European Union is governed. "I personally think there's something pitiful about a prime minister trying to pretend that somehow blaming Polish plumbers claiming in-work benefits is the issue. This isn't about who is claiming in-work benefits or out of-work benefits," Carswell stated.

Perhaps unexpectedly to many, he linked the case for leaving the European Union to socialism and social equality. "It's to the great credit of the centre-left of this country that

the Left has often been on the right side of many debates," Carswell surmised, referring to the Chartists and the Suffragettes, and illustrating that the Left has traditionally advanced the idea that more people should be able to vote and have control over their government.

He concluded that the European Union has "subverted democracy", adding that Britain's continued membership of the EU means that "it doesn't matter who you vote for, the same crowd would get together in places like Davos and decide things for us at our expense."

“

WE WILL BE BETTER OFF AS A COUNTRY IF WE CAN MAKE DECISIONS FOR OURSELVES

Taking aim at the alleged growth of special interest representation in the EU, Carswell said: "one of its huge growth industries is lobbying [...] the reason for that is because so many big businesses today no longer spend their marketing budgets doing what they should do in a free society, which is persuading willing buyers to buy what they sell at a price they are willing to pay. They spend their marketing budgets hiring an army of lobbyists in Brussels, an army of lobbyists who

they rely on to rig the rules for the advantage of huge corporations."

He added: "I know that there are many of the Left who are good and decent and honourable people. How is it that so many on the political left of this country have ended up in the position where they are on the side of rich bureaucrats imposing austerity, in the name of the banking union, on tens of millions of southern Europeans?"

He ended his speech by concluding that he hoped that people would recognise that "[w]hatever your politics, we will be better off as a country if we can make decisions for ourselves."

In person, Carswell is imposing, and was polished and impenetrable in his speech. Speaking exclusively to *Varsity*, he revealed his personal motivations for campaigning to change Britain's relationship with Europe.

He spent his formative years growing up in Uganda, and described how he was taught an idea of Britain that still resonates for him: "I've always thought of Britain as an exceptional place. We are run by mediocrities who are so unambitious for this country. Britain could be so much better than it is – there's a much bigger world out there, and by being in the European Union I think we cut ourselves off from it."

Speaking about UKIP, he remained optimistic. "All political parties are coalitions. There is certainly a different emphasis and different focus and tone in different parts of UKIP, as there are in any political party, but on the issue of EU membership we are all on the



Douglas Carswell, the only UKIP Member of Parliament

same side. It's important that we rise to the occasion, and we'll rise to the occasion not by necessarily trying to spearhead the campaign as a party, but by forming a coalition with members from different parties who all want the same thing.

"I think that there is a profound change happening in politics and governance throughout the West, and it manifests itself in many different ways. But there's a common theme emerging, and that is people are no longer willing to be told how to live their lives

by politicians. Fundamentally because we live in an age where people have so much control over what they can do – the music they listen to, the thoughts they have. They're simply not willing to put up with a one-size-fits-all way of governance. In the future I think power will need to be devolved, to local councils and city mayors. I think that UKIP can play a key role in this. We have to break the central cartel that's in Westminster, and leave a real alternative to establish parties as needed."

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The Graduate Union's narrow escape

After a review, University Council votes unanimously on future of GU

Louis Ashworth

Senior Investigations Editor

On Monday, *Varsity* exclusively revealed that the University Council voted unanimously to continue to recognise the Graduate Union as representative of graduate students.

The vote came after the University Council heard a report presented by a working group, which was headed by Graham Virgo, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education.

The review promised a "full and fair review to determine the best way of providing representation for graduate students".

It noted that the "GU has secured part funding from the university for a second full-time sabbatical officer for two years from 2015-16...having a second full-time sabbatical officer in post will make the Union less vulnerable to weak or indifferent leadership in the sabbatical team." It added: "During the Committee's interactions with the representatives of CUSU and the GU, it has become apparent that there are tensions in the relationship between the two Unions, with both sides reporting difficulties in progressing discussions to work together".

It recommended, among other

points, that the "two Unions should consider the effectiveness of the communication of their work to students", and that "there should be a review in five years to re-consider the question of whether there should be one student union for all students at the University of Cambridge".

In a joint statement, the two student unions said that they "will continue to seek opportunities to reduce duplicated effort and better communicate their work on graduate-specific issues to their members".

Speaking to *Varsity*, GU President Chad Allen credited Poppy Ellis Logan, who is joint CUSU/GU welfare officer, and temporarily stood in as GU executive during its election crisis last year. Allen described her as the "unsung hero in all this", adding: "it was only her commitment to her responsibilities as a GU Trustee and acting President last Michaelmas that enabled the GU to survive".

Last week, documents seen exclusively by *Varsity* revealed CUSU's arguments for taking up the GU's role in graduate representation.

CUSU's intention to seek to bring graduate services under their banner had previously been formally announced in their Strategic Plan for the years 2014-17.

TIMELINE

19th October 2015

Dr Richard Anthony, Bursar at St Edmund's, reports on the topic of the GU to University Council, describing a "series of problems that had beset the GU in recent years".

9th November 2015

A working group, headed by Pro-Vice-Chancellor Graham Virgo, was mandated to "consider the objectives of a student union in the university, in particular the objectives for graduate students".

25th November 2015

The working group held their first meeting, with the promise of a "full and fair review to determine the best way of providing representation for graduate students in the university and to interrogate what student unions provided in a collegiate university, without any preconception about the likely outcome".

The working group agreed that "if the Committee agreed to make a recommendation that the university no longer recognise the GU as a student union, a Report to the Regent House would be required, on which there would be a Discussion, and therefore there would be an opportunity for further debate within the university".

3rd December 2015

The working group received a presentation from CUSU.

In their presentation to the working group, CUSU representatives Priscilla Mensah and Mark McCormack described a general "confusion about why there were two unions and what the unions were doing that was different from one another". They also said that the "GU's problems had created an additional burden for CUSU as it tried to support the GU's operations".

Their suggestions were met with broad support by the working group, who said that "Having one union for both undergraduate and graduate students was likely to make CUSU a stronger student union, with greater consciousness of the diversity of the student population".

Another comment said that "student unions at Cambridge scored very poorly in national student surveys and any changes to the structure could have an impact on those scores. There was also a sense that the dysfunction in the governance of the GU was leading students to doubt its efficacy as a union".

13th January 2016

The working group received a presentation from the GU.

According to the final reports, the "GU argued in favour of the continuation of a separate GU, drawing attention to the different nature of the two unions, the particular emphasis of the GU on welfare, the need for an independent voice for graduate students, who form almost half of the student population, able to provide specialist responsive attention to graduate needs and prioritisation of services aimed at graduate students".



17 Mill Lane, home of the CUSU and GU

The GU suggested that having a separate union for graduate students "made Cambridge stand out and sent a stronger message about the importance of graduate students to the university".

20th January 2016

The working group met with the Trustees of the GU.

15th February 2016

The University Council received a report from the working group, which found that graduate students "need a community", saying that "isolation is a problem for many graduate students, in part because of the nature of academic study, but also because non-College accommodation is geographically more spread out".

They cited an online survey held in November and December of last year, in which "over 70 [per cent] of respondents indicated that they were in favour of the GU remaining the body

representing graduate students".

The working group was "not convinced that CUSU understood fully the importance of the graduate student community to the university and the equal weight to be given to its views and needs, alongside those of the undergraduate student community".

They said that the GU's governance "was in better shape now than it had been in for some time and the current team had a good grasp of the issues facing its community".

They said that it was "clear that there were strong reasons for retaining an independent GU", but that "there was no fundamental reason why one student union could not represent all students in the future".

The University Council voted unanimously to continue to recognise the Graduate Union, with the promise of a "further investigation of the possibility of offering more joint services", and the ruling that a further investigation would take place in five years' time.



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#StandWithJNU protest staged at POLIS

Joe Robinson
Senior News Editor

On Wednesday, Cambridge students protested inside the Alison Richard Building, home to the Department of Politics and International Studies (POLIS), against the Indian government's arrest of a student leader in a New Delhi University.

The protest is part of a wider campaign following the arrest of Kanhaiya Kumar, president of Jawaharlal Nehru University Students' Union (JNUSU). Kumar's arrest has been widely seen as shocking, as the Indian police are not permitted on university campuses in order to safeguard dissent.

Kumar was charged under one of India's many outdated statutes, including a law criminalising homosexuality, more precisely under a 'sedition' law intended to prevent anti-colonial resistance. The legislation prohibits "dissatisfaction" towards the government, and many social movements and their leaders, including Mahatma Gandhi, have been detained under its provisions.

Despite a growing coalition of progressive groups defending the right to free speech, India's Home Minister, Rajnath Singh, stated that anyone chanting 'anti-Indian' slogans and "challeng[ing] [the] nation's sovereignty [and] integrity while living in India [...] will not be tolerated or spared."

Amid these claims from the Indian Home Minister, members of Cambridge South Asia Watch met inside the Alison Richards Building on



The #StandWithJNU protest in the Alison Richards Building on Wednesday

the Sidgwick Site to defend "critical thinking as political dissent", which the group has claimed is being vilified as "anti-national".

The event began with a brief speech in which an organiser from Cambridge South Asia Watch (CSAW) stated: "We believe that democracy needs dissent. We believe in constitutional values above parochial values; we

believe in critical thinking."

A CSAW member stated that "we condemn the arrest of Kanhaiya Kumar", before discussing one of Kumar's speeches, in which he considers the funding of universities and their purpose.

"Here he is saying that some people are saying that JNU runs on taxpayers' money, that JNU runs on state

subsidies. Yes, it's true. It's true that university runs on people's taxes, on subsidies. But we want to ask is, 'What is a university for?' A university exists so that the common sense of society may be subjected to critical analysis, so that critical debate may occur in the public realm.

"If a university fails in this mission, there will be no country at all [...] the

country will only be grazing ground for the rich, for exploitation and oppression."

Protestors took turns reading from Kumar's speech, addressing the state of freedom of speech and freedom of expression in India, the role of universities, and the government's failure. Dr Surabhi Ranganathan, a fellow of King's College and a member of the Faculty of Law, told *Varsity*: "We believe that the Indian government is on a wrongful course of action. They're trying to suppress dissent, they're trying to suppress free speech, they're trying to suppress constitutional values in favour of more parochial values. We believe that they are playing with the idea of India. We're here to try and resist that."

Dr Ranganathan called the idea of putting forward a formal motion condemning the Indian government's actions to CUSU a "great idea" and deemed it the "next step". She added that "it would be nice to make this a Cambridge-wide thing, not just limited to the South Asia group" and endorsed the idea of involving students from Anglia Ruskin as well.

The event ended with a speech which called for the recognition of the "common humanity of the world [and] the common humanity of India". It continued: "We have identified today those who stand against our shared humanity. The most significant question before us today is to remember this identification. We have identified the face of caste oppression [and] economic exploitation." The event ended with a declaration that "the people united shall always be victorious."

PalSoc boycott Middle East Peace Week

Daniel Gayne
Senior News Correspondent

Cambridge's Palestinian Society (PalSoc) has once again found itself at the centre of a boycott-based controversy, snubbing the Middle East Peace Week by alleging that it had been organ-

ised to overshadow Israeli Apartheid Week.

Along with the Middle East Society and the Turkish Society, PalSoc questioned the timing of the week, coinciding with their annual events which seek to draw attention to what they call the Israeli Apartheid.

Middle East Peace Week was organised by the Israeli Society, the Calais Refugee Action Group, the Persian Society, the Kurdish Society, and One Voice, with the intention of opening up a dialogue between societies who "all strive for one goal – a better Middle East".

According to the Facebook page, Middle East Peace Week seeks to "bring to the forefront" innovations from the region which are often overshadowed by war, and "set a precedent for communication and understanding both forwards and within the region".

Talks and discussion will be held throughout the week and will cover topics such as religion and the state, as well as the history of religion.

A group of pro-Palestine societies will not be taking part, arguing that it had been organised to overshadow their own commemoration of Israeli Apartheid Week.

Historically held in February or March, Israeli Apartheid Week is an occasion marked by different university societies across the country which aims to bring attention to the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement. Though it was launched back in 2005, Israel Apartheid Week has been marked in Cambridge for only a few years, and this year's

festivities included a Union debate, an open mic night, and an event advertising volunteering opportunities in Palestine.

“BOYCOTTS DON'T LEAD TO PEACE; ENGAGEMENT AND MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING DO

PalSoc also claim that the Arab Society boycotted the week. However, they have yet to make a statement and are listed as a supporter of the week. Response to the boycott has been characteristically mixed. PalSoc told *Varsity* that the timing of the week was "no coincidence", and suggested that the event "attempts to direct attention away from the growing success of Israeli Apartheid Week".

"We made this decision on the basis that the only way out of the current stalemate and the first steps towards a viable peace is through demanding that Israel be held accountable for its crimes and that it abides to its obligations under international law."

On the other hand, Jonathan Davies, a member of the Israeli Society, was scathing of the boycott: "the decision to boycott is simply grandstanding, it's about middle class students making themselves feel good, not about the interests of the Palestinian people."

"Boycotts don't lead to peace;

talking, engagement and mutual understanding do – why not take a positive approach?" said Jonathan, emphasising that his view did not necessarily represent that of the Israeli Society.

Despite PalSoc's boycott, the topic of Palestine nonetheless spilled into the discussion at the Peace Week event, which took place this week Wednesday's forum on the place of women in the Middle East saw a particularly heated exchange, with Kurdish activist Ruwadya Mustafah criticising Hadas Aharon's work on women's rights in Israel.

"Your presentation was very unfair", Mustafah began, citing the lack of reference to Arab and Palestinian women in Israel.

She brought up the 11,000 Arab women living in Israel who have degrees but struggle to find work. She also criticised Aharon for ignoring the inequality in the system and the "lack of opportunity" for these women.

The tension was quickly diffused, with Aharon largely conceding the legitimacy of Mustafah's concerns. As billed, the rest of the evening gave an overview of the state of women's rights in the region, commenting on progress that has been made in some quarters and regression in others. Mustafah noted the potential of Rojava, the new Kurdish society in northern Syria, which she claimed had a constitution "premised on equality". However, there was a thread of sorrow which ran through the discussion, with references to the brutal sexual torture of women in the Iraqi and Syrian conflicts recurring throughout the night.

BOOK LAUNCH

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A SHORT STORY OF DETERMINATION, GOALS AND ACHIEVEMENT

BY PHEOBE BECKETT-MCINROY AND ISABEL LOOBY

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News in Brief

MP PUSHES FOR CYCLE SAFETY

Cambridge MP visits accident black spot

Today a local woman who was knocked off her bike by a car on Grange Road will show Cambridge MP Daniel Zeichner where the incident took place. Anna te Water Naudé was knocked off her bike by a car turning left across the cycle lane that goes through the junction between Grange and Cranmer Road.

COLLEGE OFFERS ROMANTIC SONGS

Emma offers Valentine's serenades

The Choir of Emmanuel College Chapel offered the opportunity for romantic gestures on Valentine's Day when they enabled members of the College to book members of the choir to sing romantic songs to "your secret sweetheart, your favourite fellow, or someone you've been dying to embarrass publicly".

NEW ARU RESEARCH

Gay role models 'can be damaging'

New research by psychologists at Anglia Ruskin University in Cambridge has claimed that the positive portrayal of gay men on TV "can be damaging". Dr Daragh McDermott, project leader of the research, said: "On the face of it, stereotypes associated with gay men, such as being fashionable or witty, appear positive. However, by their very nature, these stereotypes pigeonhole."

FORMAL PRICES MAY RISE IF PENNYING PERSISTS

Selwyn get tough on pennyning

Selwyn College's Dean has sent an email to students saying that she needs "to get tougher than I have been" after "a large quantity of pennies" was found in the kitchen's washing machine.

The Dean said that a "small number" of Selwynites had "made it very difficult to overlook this practice" when they were "so inconsiderate towards the stuff".

The Dean restated Selwyn's rules for formal hall, which prohibit drinking games and said such games that "encourage excessive drinking... put at risk the college's licence to serve alcohol". She concluded by saying that if "just one penny is found" in the washing machines in future, "we will have no choice but to significantly increase the cost of formal hall".

Lee Robertson, the Selwyn JCR President, sent an email "to echo" the Dean's words and that he stood by the agreed code of conduct.



The Week in Numbers

0

Number of bops that Homerton will have for the rest of the academic year following damage at previous events

5,600

Number of signatures on a petition calling for a UK government investigation into Giulio Regeni's death

5

Recommended number of years until another review of the Graduate Union's role is undertaken

ADMISSIONS FIGURES DOWN

Fewer working-class students at Oxbridge

The number of students from lower socio-economic backgrounds attending top UK universities has declined, according to figures released by the Russell Group.

Of the Russell Group universities, Cambridge has the second-worst proportion, behind Oxford, with 10.2 per cent of applicants being from a more disadvantaged background. A decade ago, students from lower socio-economic backgrounds made up approximately one in every eight applicants.

ON YOUR BIKE

University to release own bicycle range

The University of Cambridge is teaming up with London-based bicycle manufacturer Bobbin to create a new line of bikes officially licensed by the University.

The vehicles, which are designed for commuting and leisure riding, feature the university's coat of arms, with Cambridge Blue detailing integrated into the designs.

The range will include £420 for a "classic town bike" and £780 for a retro racing model.



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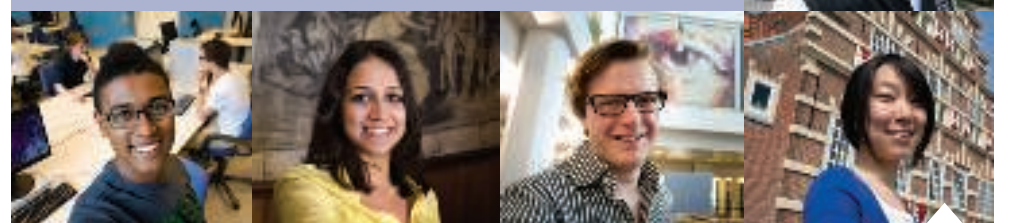
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New drug may delay onset of Alzheimer's disease

Sarah Foster

Science Correspondent

The brain of an Alzheimer's patient looks shrunken and warped; massive cell death causes regions of the brain to contract, while fluid filled pockets inside the brain expand. Neurons must fight through a landscape of toxic aggregates of misfolded proteins. These aggregates form from accumulation of the small protein fragment β -amyloid ($A\beta$). $A\beta$ begins as a small isolated fragment which then clumps together to form small aggregates called oligomers, and ultimately larger aggregates known as fibrils and plaques. Heightened levels of $A\beta$ aggregates, and in particular the presence of oligomers, is thought by many to play a key causative role in Alzheimer's disease (AD), disrupting complex networks of neuronal communication and triggering widespread cell death. $A\beta$ has thus been the subject of intense research, but drugs specifically inhibiting $A\beta$ aggregation have so far proven elusive.

To address this challenge, a team of scientists from the University of Cambridge, the University of Groningen in the Netherlands, and Lund University in Sweden, have developed a drug discovery pipeline to identify and characterise chemical compounds that target the formation of these toxic $A\beta$ aggregates. Habchi and colleagues first screened a large set of chemical fragments to identify a library of compounds that interact with $A\beta$. Next, relying on a detailed chemical analysis of how $A\beta$ aggregates form, they analyzed precisely how and where each selected candidate compound may interact with the $A\beta$ aggregation pathway.

One promising compound is bexarotene, a drug approved years ago by



Alzheimer's disease causes widespread death of neurons

the US Federal Drug Association and the European Medicines Agency for lymphoma. A 2012 study proposed that bexarotene helps get rid of excess $A\beta$ by stimulating the production of another protein called apolipoprotein E (APOE), which promotes $A\beta$ degradation. However, several groups failed to replicate this result, and its mechanism of action remained unclear.

Habchi and colleagues found through chemical kinetics analysis that bexarotene directly inhibits $A\beta$ aggregation by delaying the first step in its production. Bexarotene dramatically slowed the initial joining of single $A\beta$ monomers into the small groups that then form 'seeds' from which $A\beta$ fibrils can grow. Bexarotene therefore delays aggregate formation significantly, but over time the number of aggregates creeps up anyway, ultimately reaching the same level as without the drug.

Armed with knowledge of bexarotene's mechanism of action, the researchers proposed that bexarotene might serve as a 'neurostatin', a preventative drug analogous to statins prescribed for individuals with high risk of heart disease. Statins reduce cholesterol levels, lowering the risk of heart conditions. So, the analogy goes,

neurostatins would be prescribed to seemingly healthy individuals at risk of AD. Delaying the initial aggregation of $A\beta$ would in turn delay the onset of symptoms. Promisingly, in a worm model of $A\beta$ -induced toxicity, bexarotene did just that. Worms normally develop paralysis as they age due to a build-up of toxic $A\beta$ aggregates, so when they were given high doses of bexarotene at early larval stages they remained as motile as $A\beta$ -free worms.

Alzheimer's Disease International estimated that in 2015, there was a new AD case every three seconds. If bexarotene proves an effective preventative treatment, it could be instrumental in quelling this costly and perilous epidemic. Bexarotene delays $A\beta$ aggregation, making it a promising prophylactic treatment, but drugs targeting later stages of the aggregation pathway could be even more powerful, for instance by decreasing the number of toxic $A\beta$ aggregates instead of delaying their onset. The authors' drug discovery and characterization pipeline provides a way to search for such compounds, perhaps offering hope that new drugs may soon be identified to aid sufferers and those at high risk of this disease.

Nutrients change gene function

Michael Baumgartner

Science Correspondent

Cambridge researchers, led by Markus Ralser, recently published a paper in the journal *Nature Microbiology* on the importance of metabolic pathways in shaping the behaviour of genes. Before one can tackle the meat of this complex article, there is essential background information you should know.

The 'Central Dogma' of molecular biology describes how genes shape every living organism. It goes as follows: the information stored in the form of DNA gets transcribed into RNA, a shorter-lived molecule that carries this information to the ribosome. This is where the information is used to produce proteins, the molecules that do most of the actual work within a cell. DNA, however, is not just a static store of information. Different genes are converted to RNA and then protein at different times and at different rates depending on the needs of the cell and in response to external signals. This 'differential expression' of genes is why a white blood cell and a brain cell can have the exact same DNA and yet have completely different forms and functions.

The study centers on differential gene expression in the context of nutrients and metabolism. Metabolism is a broad term encapsulating all of the chemical transformations by which cells break down matter into essential nutrients and build them back up into all the things a cell needs to survive. Scientists have known for a long time that genes play a central role in metabolism. For instance, an individual lacking or producing too little of the enzyme, lactase, cannot break down the sugar, lactose, resulting in lactose intolerance. Thus, genetic factors can dictate if and how nutrients are broken down within the cell.

This latest paper shows that the interaction between genes, nutrients,

and metabolic pathways is far more dynamic than previously believed. Much of this study, conducted in yeast cells, explores a commonly exploited trait in cell biology called auxotrophy. Auxotrophs are organisms mutated so that they can no longer synthesize a biological compound that they need to survive. Researchers worked on yeast that cannot synthesize uracil, a molecule necessary for RNA. As a result, these yeast cells will die unless grown in conditions wherein uracil is provided for them. Biologists typically assume that an auxotroph, when provided with the missing nutrient, functions and behaves the same as a normal, non-auxotroph yeast. This turns out to be very wrong.

“

**A WHOPPING THREE
QUARTERS OF THE GENOME
BEHAVED DIFFERENTLY**

When investigating only four commonly used laboratory auxotroph mutations, they found that a whopping three quarters of the genome behaved differently than in the regular yeast. The paper therefore had two important findings. Firstly, the nutrients available to a cell can exert tremendous influence on the function of the genes within the cell, not just the other way around. Secondly, auxotrophic mutations may not be as consequence-free of a technique as traditionally assumed; the outcomes of numerous studies may have been shaped by overlooked metabolic influences on cellular behavior. This study therefore serves as both a guide for structuring more robust experiments and as a caveat for scientists about the risk of assumptions in the dynamic world of the cell.

Fly on the wall: How to hijack a nervous system



NEUROPOP
WITH
JOY
THOMPSON

Humans have a long history of sending robots into dangerous places. We have already sent them to Mars, and the potential applications for espionage are mind-boggling. The catch, however, is that robots are still

expensive and time-consuming to make, and none has yet improved on nature.

One solution is to piggy-back on existing biological systems, which have been delicately engineered by millennia of evolution, and tweak them by adding mechanical parts. This basically means hijacking a nervous system using electronics, and it makes sense: many living organisms move faster than robots, and their sensory capacities can far outstrip artificial sensors (which is why sniffer dogs are still used at airports). The principle is simple, albeit an ethical minefield; if you know the right areas of the brain to target, you can plug in electrodes and either control movement or mainline sensory information.

Of course, it's not so simple in practice. Rats and mice can carry small video cameras, but there are places that even a rat can't go, and it would also be pretty obvious that a rodent with a miniature AV setup strapped to its back was up to no good. The perfect spy would be a small, unobtrusive animal that's highly mobile

and easily replaced. Enter the cyborg bugs, a collection of remote-controlled insects developed by the US Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA).

Neurosurgery on insects might sound difficult, but several research teams have done it successfully as far back as 2008. One group, led by David Stern, connected a moth with a system controlling its wings. The researchers inserted flexible plastic probes into moth pupae a week before the adult insect emerged, and the thickness of the probes alone – only a few hundred microns – gives some insight into the precision required for the surgery! Even so, most of the moths survived to pupate, with the probes stably connected to their flight muscles. After attaching wires to the probes, the researchers could control wing movements by delivering electrical signals to the moth's flight muscles.

Another DARPA-funded team, led by Michel Maharbiz, developed a battery-powered beetle, controlled by electrodes implanted into the 'flight centres' of its brain. New

Scientist even released a series of video clips online (originally from the conferences where both projects were first presented), which is still available on YouTube under the title 'Cyborg insects'. It's simultaneously surreal, oddly cute, and a little disturbing to watch.

Cyborg insects have even started invading the classroom. In 2013, a start-up company called Backyard Brains caused controversy when it released a 'RoboRoach' kit for general sale. To make a RoboRoach, you first need to sedate the cockroach on ice, then perform surgery to attach electrodes to its antenna and a 'Bluetooth Roboroach backpack control unit' to its carapace. Backyard Brains also supplies an app for remote-controlling the RoboRoach with a mobile phone. The company's aim was for the kit to help children and non-academics learn about neuroscience; however, science writers and animal rights activists alike raised serious concerns about the use of animal experiments and a crude form of mind-control surgery as a teaching tool. The kits are still available to purchase – an ethically-

fraught birthday gift, perhaps?

Of course, hybrid moths or rogue RoboRoaches will not turn up in your house any time soon. All the bulky electronics attached to the current generation of cyborg bugs would make anyone reach for the flyswat, and RoboRoaches adapt to the stimulation from their backpacks within minutes. One day, though, we might be able to conceal all the necessary equipment within the insect itself – and then we should start avoiding every fly on the wall. Especially if it's a real one.



VARSITY INTRODUCING



OWAIN PARK is a composer studying music at Trinity, where he is the Senior Organ Scholar. His music is published by Novello and he is also the musical director of the acclaimed vocal sextet The Gesualdo Six.

www.owainpark.co.uk

What do you consider yourself primarily? Do you see yourself as a composer, conductor, organist...?

I think for a long time all of these kind of worked quite well together, but I guess what's happening, since I was signed to Novello last year, is that the composing is really taking off. That's definitely where I want to be.

How did your contract with Novello come about?

I won a competition that they were organising a couple of years previously and several people connected with Novello were around Cambridge and were listening to some of the works I had done. It was fortunate that Trinity had recorded a couple of works on their Christmas disc which, whilst it wasn't released in time, actually sort of alerted them to the fact I was doing stuff. We webcast everything in Trinity so everything is available. I went and met them about six months before

and had a chat about what I was doing and what projects I had lined up and almost exactly a year ago I was signed to them. The first competition I won, which was in 2010, was organised by the National Centre for Early Music with The Tallis Scholars and BBC Radio 3. Peter Phillips was very supportive of my piece which gave me a lot of confidence as a young composer. I remember how important having that incentive was and so Gesualdo Six have organised a similar composition competition.

How would you describe yourself as a composer? Who would you say are your main inspirations?

So, I guess, I've definitely written the most for voices, choral works, partly because I find it the most comfortable. I kind of know what I'm doing. I sing as well so I know how all the voices work together but that doesn't mean I don't want to compose for other instruments, just that that's where the opportunity has been. So actually doing this chamber opera was great because I was able to combine the choral works along with writing for instruments which was really interesting, and especially being drafted in to play percussion. I won't write a percussion part that challenging again, just in case!

Your new chamber opera *The Snow Child* was recently premiered as part of CUOS's Short Stories Series. Tell us a little bit more about it.

One of my A-level English texts was *The Bloody Chamber* by Angela Carter and this is based on the shortest story from that. I hardly adapted the libretto, I just changed it from the third person to the first person so the characters would have dialogue. We did remove the slightly more grotesque scene because we didn't feel it was appropriate for performance in a chapel and the story does work without it. Actually, what it meant was there was a nice symmetry between the first

opera, Bertie Baigent's opera *The Nightingale and the Rose* and mine, which also involved the rose, which was quite nice. Stephen Bick came up with the project, his was the middle opera, and got us on board and yeah it was a really fantastic thing to do. Working with the singers was great – the whole process, delivering the score and just slightly revising things because you've got to think about the drama, more so than in a choral work. Gareth Matthey's direction was brilliant; I'd worked with him before on Britten's *Curlew River*. Britten's one of my main inspirations so I really looked over that score when

I was writing this, to hear the way he uses the voices and makes the dramatic action unfold in a very simple set up. It's very clever.

You direct The Gesualdo Six, who have just started as Young Artists In Residence at St. John's Smith Square, London. How is everything going so far?

Brilliant, yeah. We've just had a review published which was very encouraging. It's not the easiest space we've sung in, doing the same programme a year ago in King's College Chapel was obviously a lot easier. We did the concert in the round, not just on the stage as most concerts are. Being down on the floor with the audience as part of the action was really nice. We've got two

more concerts coming up and then the final concert when we will, hopefully, perform the winning entries from our composition competition [for under 18s]. It's judged by members of The Gesualdo Six, including me, plus John Rutter, Stephen Layton and Kate Johnson who works at Novello.

Do you see The Gesualdo Six functioning primarily as an outreach project in the future?

I think we need to take the idea of ensemble singing and male countertenors and introduce them to a wider market. Not all boys' voices are suited to being a tenor or a bass, there is another option and often people don't know that. Everyone in the ensemble is very personable, you know, and they've all had experience with outreach work in other groups or by themselves, doing teaching and that kind of thing, so I think we've all benefitted so we'd all like to give back.

What about your plans for the future?

Finals are the number one priority but other than that... I'm writing a new piece for Tenebrae which is going to be performed alongside the re-release of Joby Talbot's *A Path of Miracles*, the premiere for which was interrupted by the London bombings so the piece never received the attention or recognition it deserved. The addition of my new piece makes the concert more full length so that's the next big compositional project. Other than that, there are a few other commissions I'm thinking about, planning another summer tour with The Gesualdo Six and tours with Trinity Chapel Choir to Australia and Hong Kong!

Owain was talking to Charlotte Rowan

Calvin Klein: "Do you have any questions for my answers?"

Meg Honigmann asks the legendary clothing, perfume, and jewellery designer if boxers by any other name would look as good

People are glaring at me, thinking I'm skipping the queue. As I reach the front, I hear that moments before Calvin Klein has slipped past in the other direction. When I turn my head, I catch him returning: he is wearing a tight black suit and beaten lace-up navy plimsolls, and he too makes excuses as he edges his way back to the main chamber. It is almost as if the people he walks past don't recognise him; they haven't yet put a face to a name – to such a big name.

When I sit down to talk with him he laughs. "I don't know what you could possibly want to know. What did Kissinger say? – 'Do you have any questions for my answers?'" Klein left the company that bears his name thirteen years ago, and though he has been "busy", I can't help but wonder how a man who remembers with pride being "involved in every part of the process", can be at ease with his name emblazoned on products no longer truly his own. As a case in point I take the 2016 advertising campaign. The blank space – "I _____ in #mycalvins" – is clever: people can feel/look/think different things in clothes, but making that ambiguity obvious is clever strategy. "What do #yourcalvins mean to you? What adjective would you put to them?" I ask. "I have an idea" he says, "I know. But it's in my book. You'll have to wait and see." (The book he conceded to write only after his ex-

wife Kelly told him "if you don't do it, someone else will and you will hate it.") In terms of creating anticipation, the man is still a god.

I ask about adornment and embellishment: "You have talked about these as enabling women to look like an accessory to men, whereas your minimal designs do the opposite. How would you advise a modern, independent woman to dress?" He casts his mind back to art school, learning about "above the table" dressing. "The fabric and the embellishment were for the woman to sit down at dinners and to look perfect." Though it might seem out-dated, there are plenty of clothes still made for women that inhibit movement and are a far cry from comfort and clean lines. "I want clothes to accentuate the face" he says, "not to distract from the person wearing them. Not necessarily to fade into the background, but to accentuate, to complement."

One thing that comes across is his respect for women, as people with lives who do not live for clothes. He describes working at a time when women were becoming more independent, and going to work. "Those 'Ladies Who Lunch' ... the ones who dine all day at the most expensive restaurants in the city while their billionaire boyfriends and husbands work... are not my women. Not the type of person I was interested in dressing."

He talks in awe of the women on the edge, working, "changing things".

He explores his relationship with architecture. Aside from a reported \$75 million house refurbishment in 2003, he has recently lectured to Harvard's architecture department. He remembers shooting his first underwear campaign in Greece. There was obviously a "gorgeous male model", but what made the image was the phallic building in the background. "It was a great way to launch a product. If I had the same model and the same underwear, but no building, I would have had nothing." After the campaign came out, "people were breaking down bus shelters to steal the posters."

He has been giving a lot of talks recently; it's his way of "giving back", most notably in the five schools he's been working with in Harlem. He speaks with warmth about the pride and self-esteem in the children, who can now boast that "Calvin Klein designed my uniform". I admit, it's something my grey-pleated-knee-length-skirt-wearing-secondary-school self wishes she could claim.

His famous perfumes fit seamlessly into the brand. 'Obsession', his first fragrance, was inspired by Studio 54, filled with "Models, socialites and generally really beautiful people. New York at that time in the early 80s was really very exciting." It was, he says, "real inspiration." This huge success

led him to his next scent 'Eternity', a different type of perfume altogether. "We did our market research; we knew what scents were trending." 'Obsession' had been the "animal scent: sexy and full of lust", while 'Eternity' represented the opposite, a "flowery, romantic scent". Kelly and he designed the bottle together, taking inspiration from a diamond eternity ring: "It wasn't a ring for marriage, it was a ring for more, a symbol for friendship and relationship."

It was inevitable that the Brooke Shields advertisement in 1981 ("What comes between me and my Calvins? Nothing.") was going to be controversial. Klein spent nights sitting with Richard Avedon drinking vodka and discussing what to do. "Fashion usually couldn't afford TV. It relied on Vogue and Harpers Bazaar to sell itself." When they showed it to the company "We thought it was funny [but] they were in shock". And after being broadcast, "the TV threw us off the air pretty quickly". Controversy brought publicity. "No matter how expensive TV was then, we had so much publicity, we weren't even losing any money."

Over five decades,

the brand has stayed relevant, especially to young people, and made a hell of a lot of money: in 2002 he sold it for a package approaching \$800 million. "Success is about loving what you do, not about how much money you make." Calvin Klein has accomplished both.



CHRIS WILLIAMSON/GETTY IMAGES

Comment

Brexitters skew the facts: let's set the record straight



Damiano Sogaro

Let's get back to the facts in making the case for Britain's EU membership

There has been much written on the UK's relationship with the EU, not least in the pages of this newspaper. I write this piece for two reasons. Firstly, to lament the lack of rigorous intellectual exercise on the matter. Don't get me wrong, I am (well, should be) writing my thesis as I speak and have no love for the tortured world of referencing. But without more openness on where statistics are found, we descend into the realm of the ethereal guided only by the will-o'-the-wisp of politics. Secondly, I write to leave no doubt that the UK is better off in than out.

With regard to immigration, Theo Demolder, writing in this newspaper, raises the concern that because the UK must accept EU immigrants, those "promising young professionals" from other parts of the world "lose out". It is the British government that created the annual cap on skilled non-EU workers – a cap it froze between 2011 and 2014 according to a report from the University of Oxford's Migration Observatory. Why? It has been repeatedly shown that immigrants add value, rather than subtract from the economy. A report in *The Economist* substantiates this claim. Even during the financial crisis' peak years, immigrants from EU countries provided a net contribution of £8.6 billion. Immigrants from non-EU countries chipped in a measly £2 billion net. It is a substantiated decision

taken by the UK's executive. Don't lay the blame at the EU's door.

Legislative sovereignty is an important theme to both sides of the campaign. It is true that the UK sometimes doesn't get what it wants. But citing the fact that there have been 55 'failures' since May 2010 is rather disingenuous. Data from VoteWatch.eu shows that the UK has won a massive 97.4 per cent of votes in the Council of Ministers between 2004 and 2009. It is true that this figure has plummeted in the period between 2009 and 2015. The UK now only obtains its desired outcome a pitiful 86.7 per cent of the time (I don't know about you but if that was my final Tripos score...). Discussing only the votes that the UK loses fails to highlight the fact that, for the most part, its policy aims are extremely similar to those shared by other states. It fails to recognise the extreme similarity between the goals that various European governments have, and, most of all, perpetuates the fiction of the 'Brussels diktat'.

It is fair enough that a Brexiter seeks to make their case using the facts which show them in the best light. But for them to then stretch it to support other points is simply wrong. The ukandeu.ac.uk web blog shows the average distance between EU policy decisions and national governments' own domestic policies. The UK ranks fourth. That means the policy decisions taken in Brussels are extremely

close to the approach the UK would follow on its own. Interestingly, the EU commission ranks third from bottom.

“

THE CASE TO STAY SHOULD BE ABOUT POSITIVITY

With regards to the assertion that the role of the European Parliament has not been enhanced, I must disagree. Just one of the latest powers that have been given to the European Parliament is the doctrine of 'Spitzenkandidaten'. Essentially the Parliament must nominate the President of the Commission: an important step in achieving more democracy in the EU institutions. Across the EU, democracy is the word of the day. Saying that legislation is handed down by unelected commissioners is wrong. Legislation is proposed by the commission only. It is at the European Parliament that legislation is determined. Of course, it would help if the UK's representatives were actually there, as recognised by (even) the *Daily Mail*.

The third substantive point is the power of trade. To say that the EU's collective bargaining power is

diminishing in the world because its share of the global market dwindles is to miss a rather important point. The share of the gross domestic product of almost all Western nations as a percentage of world GDP is diminishing. Take the UK as an example. 25 years ago its GDP was 3.65 per cent of the world share. Today, it is 2.53 per cent. This is because there are countries which are growing much more quickly. So looking at percentage share of GDP is not helpful and does not support a conclusion that the EU is losing its role in the world.

Finally, Mr. Demolder raised an interesting point on national security. Juxtaposed controls are based on the Sangatte Protocol of 1991, which is strictly a bilateral agreement between France and the UK. It seems unlikely that this would be affected by the UK's exit of EU agreements. However, the European Arrest Warrant (EAW) functions by permitting member states of the EU to arrest and transfer a criminal suspect to a different state. How important are EAWs? Their use increased from 3,000 to 13,500 between 2004 and 2008. Just one use they were put to was to recover fugitive bomber Hussain Osman from Italy to stand trial in the UK.

I wish that I had more space. The case to stay should be about positivity. But the continual misrepresentations perpetuated by the quitters on the Brexit side must first be corrected.

We should embrace the unsung virtue of uncertainty



Daniel Gayne

A lack of confidence in our own beliefs helps us to improve them

In pursuit of free booze – the start of any good anecdote – I found myself at the Cambridge Brexit Campaign's 'coming out party' last Friday at Magdalene College. It was an event with a fairly incongruous collection of characters, ranging from the garden variety Eurosceptic to the unreconstructed Stalinist.

Arriving late with a friend, we did our best to mingle, engaging in light-hearted banter about the Common Agricultural Policy as we munched on our salted peanuts and slurped on Sainsbury's white wine. On the whole the evening was shaping up to be rather pleasant.

But just as we began laying into a freshly filled bowl of Ready Salted crisps, this unremarkable evening took a rather bizarre turn. Looking for someone to teach us two tepid Europhiles the errors of our ways, we chanced upon an elderly gentleman with a 'Vote Leave' badge. After asking a harmless question about the EU, we were treated a speedy non sequitur which brought us unexpectedly onto the man's real point of interest: 'the Islamics'.

This shady group, we were reliably informed, are engaged in a grand conspiracy to conquer our land and steal our women, imposing Sharia law as they go. Casually mentioning his Rhodesian background (as if he could

be a more perfect kind of racist), he launched into a 20-minute rant which chronicled all the classics of right-wing nuttiness, swinging from unsavoury comments about birth rates to strange theories about forced migration by Arab leaders. As he began to muse on the need for a crackdown, I decided to top up my glass, but my companion doggedly argued back, attempting to rationalise with him using actual historical evidence.

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BEING AT UNIVERSITY CAN BE BRUISING TO ONE'S INTELLECTUAL EGO

Of course, this was a quixotic effort. For people like this, their worldview, no matter how odd or conspiratorial, is practically a religion. It is the very background to their life experience, the basic logic they can fall back on for any political or moral question. It is unquestionable, immune to facts, and explains everything. The ardent believers of mad conspiracy theories and extremist politics demonstrate only the worst symptoms of this sclerotic disease. A milder form of the

illness can be found in many of us. From the student Left, which takes academic theory and uses it to explain and criticise in excruciating detail the minutiae of everyday life, to those on the Right who chastise a European Union which they see as one step away from Stalinism, the poison of dogma pervades.

Now it may seem rather Blue Specs-ish of me to insinuate a shared psychology between WomCam, Marxists, and our white nationalist friend, but bear with me. What I'm talking about here is something which plagues us all.

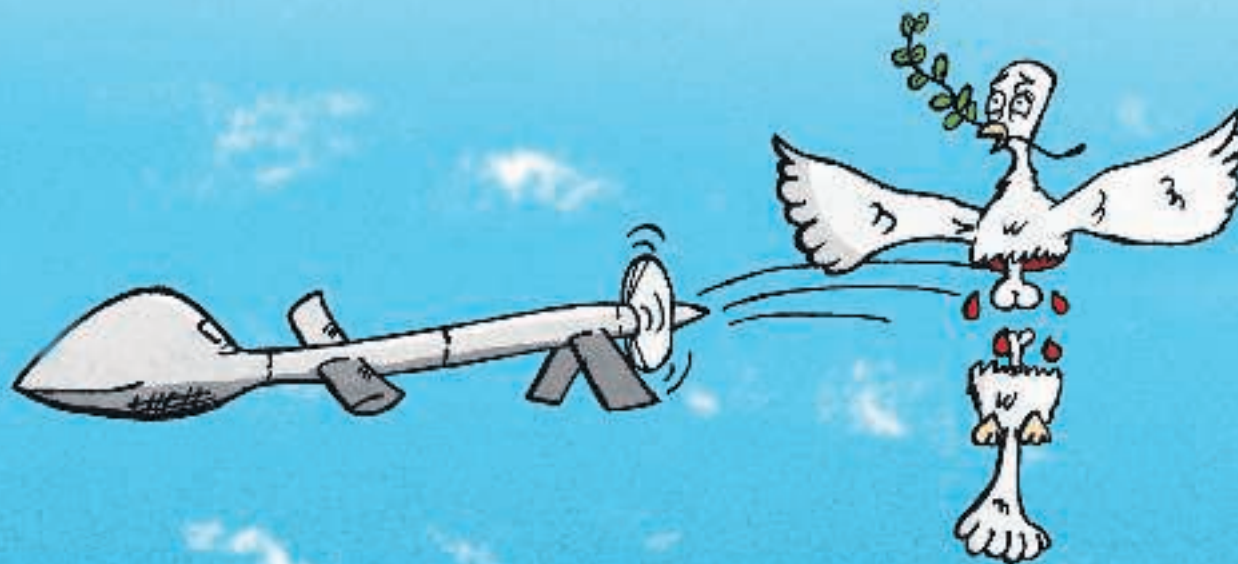
Ideologies are simple. That's why we like them. They clarify and inform our daily decisions, helping us to make decisions, from CUSU referenda to buying bananas. But we should be wary of taking them to be all-permeating and impenetrable. Whether it's socialism, feminism, or conservatism, ideology should be little more than a heuristic tool; not a master, but a slave. I remember once being told that any political theory that explains everything is probably wrong. Even in science, a proper understanding of physical phenomena can only be garnered by a nebula of overlapping models and theories.

But as a student, especially one interested in politics, it can be hard not having an opinion. Being at university

itself can be bruising to one's intellectual ego. Everyone seems to know something that you don't and have opinions on the most obscure of topics. This pollutes the conversational environment with the toxic notion that one must know their opinion and express it as if it is undeniable. To not know is almost an embarrassing admission, no matter how subjective the topic at hand.

The temptation here to settle into a pre-cast set of thoughts is obvious. But resist it we must. Indeed if there's one thing I learnt in my first term of university, it was precisely how many of my opinions were, and continue to be, almost entirely bullshit. This is surely the assumption we should always begin with. A resolute dismissal of our own capacity for an intelligent understanding of the world can be quite a liberating thing in a world full of shrink-wrapped opinions. It has been said that it is only when you graze on the lower slopes of your own ignorance that you can claim to be educated at all, and I think this a mindset that we should all bear in mind next time we make a snap judgement or slip into ideological tropes.

There is virtue in uncertainty, and if there is one characteristic which can bring light to a heated political debate, it is the quiet genius of the partially perplexed.



Trust me, it's worth droning on about...



Caroline Heath-Taylor

The future of our skies lies in the balance. Are drones a blessing or a curse?

The clock strikes 2am. You have seven hours to go until that bewildering essay leaves your hands. Your eyes sting with tiredness, yet your heart beats with unexpected ferocity, thanks to the two Pro Plus tablets you swallowed 20 minutes ago. With 1,500 words to go, your stomach groans and yearns for that McDonald's or katsu curry you so obviously deserve. A familiar scene, you may think. That is until you hear a buzz which gently builds to a crescendo as it collides with your window: a drone, primed and ready for your service.

Originally intended for military surveillance and disaster relief, drones will soon have to meet increasing demand for student stomach relief as their commercial future is unveiled before our eyes. With an announcement from Google that the company hopes to release its 'Project Wing' delivery service by 2017 and Amazon's Prime Air in quick succession, it seems that the delivery possibilities are endless. While this may lead Deliveroo to Deliver-ruin, it does create a seemingly brighter future for students, as we will be able to have what we need delivered right to our desks. For Girton and Homerton students, the future appears even brighter; no longer will they have to frantically cycle to the faculty to drop off essays 10 minutes before the deadline; rather, drones will ensure their essay's safe delivery.

Reflecting on Valentine's Day, the romantic possibilities that drones may create are also worth considering. The #cupidrone was launched by the Flower Council of Holland to deliver red roses to couples in Verona as part of a publicity stunt. As romance reaches new heights, however, it also begs the question of what else might be 'dropped' by drones, particularly if that sweet love does turn sour. Inevitably, drones will malfunction and may deliver the wrong item to the wrong address. For example, that gluten-free pizza might end up being gluten-full, or you might receive heart medication instead of antibiotics. More horrifying is the potential for pranks and acts of revenge, such as the delivery of a half-eaten Sloppy Giuseppe Pizza from an ex to your new love interest. Furthermore, tech critics have raised the issue of what they see as the dawn of a "new era of junk mail on steroids".

A world filled with delivery drones making regular door-to-door deliveries could lead to mountains of unwanted junk mail dropping from the skies. Reminiscent of the owl delivery of Harry Potter's letter from Hogwarts to the Dursley's house, there may be little we can do to stop unwanted mail from piling up outside the front door.

Most notably, camera drones have exploded onto the scene in the past few years, and they are being used by photographers around the world as a cheap and easy way to obtain

aerial photos and videos. However, it is impossible to ignore the potential for dubious uses of camera drones. Indeed, George Orwell's *1984* may resonate now more than ever with the surveillance potentialities which drones provide. Despite our current concerns about CCTV surveillance in Britain, drones provide yet more opportunities for the police, government, or a 'frenemy' to spy on you. At this point in time, if a drone flew past your window you would be more than a little suspicious.

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1984 MAY RESONATE NOW MORE THAN EVER

However, if we all become accustomed to drones navigating to and from our doorsteps, they would become useful for inconspicuous spying. The old maxim 'good fences make good neighbours' would no longer apply, as you could simply send a drone over the garden fence to keep an eye on the antics of the family next door. A world full of delivery drones is, therefore, a world where curtains are drawn, all of the time.

However, perhaps the greatest concern which drones have raised is that of the airborne battle between these

un-manned aircrafts and passenger planes. BALPA (British Airline Pilots Association) is concerned at the number of incidents involving drones increasing over the last two months. The concerns come after the UK Air Proximity Board (UKAB) assessed drone-related incidents and found that, in December alone, seven incidents occurred; four were found to be in the 'serious' category where a serious risk of collision existed. Surely, the safety of 300 passengers is more important than the delivery of red roses to a valentine?

The UK is not alone in its concern. Around the world, as the recreational use of drones continues to soar, authorities have been forced to find solutions. In Tokyo, police have launched drones designed to take out other drones with a net. In the southern states of America the drone backlash is simmering, with 'drone-hunting' becoming a popular hobby for technophobes. In Britain, however, we have two options. In 2015, tech companies unveiled a drone 'death ray' that can disable drones in mid-flight. Birds of prey are also on the cards as a low-tech solution to a high-tech problem. Either way, when this Game of Drones commences, as students from the 'tech-savvy generation', it is our responsibility to seize the opportunities that drones create. It is up to us whether we let the drone-filled future become a utopia or a dystopia.

Empathy: a virtue and a curse

**Emily
Bailey-Page**



Most kids are terrifying. But there is a particular brand of evil which I believe is found exclusively in children under the age of seven. Since the 1990s, educators have, with good reasons, taken more and more seriously the need to cultivate empathy in children, helping them to understand the feelings and perspectives of others.

I remember the plethora of kids' TV shows I watched featuring the explanation that the big scary bully was really just sad and a little bit lonely. If it was based on a Jacqueline Wilson novel, his parents had probably split up too. I remember something very vague and intangible about 'other people have feelings too' being the central – if not only – component of the PSHE education I received up until the age of 16. And I've come to see this vagueness as a big problem.

I was about 17 years old before I realised that, if someone hurt me, my being hurt was justified – and that quite possibly what they'd done was just flat-out wrong. I do know some kids who still don't really understand the capacity their actions have to hurt

other people – these children are somehow now in their 50s and still show no signs of maturing.

But there are also some kids, like me, who actually had maybe a bit too much empathy, and needed to be told their feelings were just as important as everybody else's. Refer to my mother for early stories of my sensitivity: when Billie Piper and David Tennant got split up on *Doctor Who* I barely stopped crying for two whole days.

If you're a kid already hyper-conscious about other people's feelings, and desperate to be a good person, you end up hearing these messages and internalising them in a pretty screwed up way.

When you're taught that everyone deserves a second chance, that there is always a reasonable explanation for people systematically lying to you, constantly invading your personal space or gluing your pencil case shut (shout-out to my primary school bully), your reaction always becomes invalid.

If this issue never went beyond the tragic fate of my gel pens, entombed for evermore, I probably wouldn't be

writing a column about it. The issue presents itself when this whole 'keep having faith in humanity' narrative begins to take its toll on your physical and emotional safety.

As I went through school, I gradually learned that just because someone was going through a hard time, it didn't mean that I had to be their figurative emotional punch-bag, but that took a lot of learning.

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**I WOULD ENDLESSLY
ACCOMMODATE PEOPLE'S
SHIT BEHAVIOUR**

I would endlessly accommodate people's shit behaviour and discard how completely one-sided these friendships ended up being until I was effectively no longer a friend but a carer, a role I was always completely out

of my depth in handling. By the time I left school I figured I'd sussed it out – I'd realised that an explanation wasn't always necessarily a justification.

But in my first year at Cambridge, in these hallowed, enlightened corridors of knowledge, one of the greatest things I learned was not an understanding of the social stratification of the early Ottoman Empire, but the unfathomably shitty behaviour people could sink to. And the blind faith I had that everyone I met was essentially harmless certainly didn't help to keep me protected.

Something I like to call 'the Snape Effect' occurs when someone's tragic backstory is an automatic excuse for whatever behaviour they might choose to enact, because no one else will ever override their victimhood.

Don't get me wrong, empathy is more than a virtue – it's indispensable. But so is expecting that people will take responsibility for their actions. Alongside your circumstances, and beneath your mental illness or your parents' divorce, is your character. And that character resides within the choices you make.

Head space

In her sixth weekly column, Rhianon Shaw explains why academics must understand mental health



Rhianon Shaw

It's funny (well, not really funny at all, but let's go with that) how much the fate of my mental health last year wasn't in my own hands. The person who had quite a large sway over my health and happiness wasn't a family member, doctor, friend or partner. Instead, it was someone I met with every week for about an hour, always in their office, always at roughly the same time on a Wednesday.

To my admittedly imperfect mind, there are many similarities between a course with a counsellor and a term with a supervisor. A good meeting can make you feel hopeful, maybe even elated – a bad one can leave you fragile and dreading next week's instalment. The subject matter of my meetings with my supervisors has been, admittedly, quite different, but not too far gone. Though we rarely discuss my fraught relationship with men, it can occasionally rear its bulbous head. My frustration with the portrayal of the phallus in Donne's poetry, for example, may have grounding in my personal rather than literary pursuits. But, most of the time, we focus on the placement of a comma or the turmoil

evoked by this week's practical criticism. Why did the poet choose blue curtains? Was he... sad?

At the end of last year, I wasn't doing very well. Between my need to shoehorn Sartre into everything I wrote (what can I say? We depressives are very existential) and my DoS's critique of my paragraphing, I grew comfortable enough to admit to him that my head felt like it was rotting and I could no longer concentrate for longer than five minutes. The fateful meeting came one morning in Easter Term when, after breaking down in the doctor's office, I snivelled my way up the ancient wooden stairs and explained that I was rubbish and that was why my work was rubbish and it was all rubbish.

And what happened next, I feel, needs to be recorded in the annals of Bede's Great History of Mental Health at Cambridge. Dear reader, he understood. He asked if I wanted to go home while I adjusted to my anti-depressants. He said I could do as much or as little work as I wanted, until I felt healthy again. When I mentioned intermitting, he didn't push the idea aside, nor did he push me into it. He didn't treat me like I had a nasty rash and must be kept away from other students, nor did he imply that my problems weren't serious enough to merit time off. My DoS was (and remains) the most perfect, shining example of how understanding Cambridge academics can be.

I know I'm lucky, because I'm still here, plodding around the Sidgwick Site. If my DoS had been anything less than extraordinarily understanding, I don't know where I might have ended up this year. Maybe exactly where I am now, maybe at home, having either been forced to intermit or having dropped out of university entirely.

Yes, I know that's melodramatic, and particularly melodramatic because 'oh my god, you can't drop out of Cambridge!', but my sensitivity to images of springtime in the pastoral is only matched by my sensitivity in life in general. I cry a lot.

I know I'm lucky, because I can talk about it in this column. So many people I have spoken to over the past two years have quietly struggled with their mental health, handing in essays late or unfinished and receiving nothing but a withering look and a request that they 'buck up their attitude if they want to be at a top university'. Many supervisors are of a generation that took 'Keep Calm and Carry On' to heart and genuinely believe that a bit of fresh air and a five-minute session

with the college nurse will have you ship-shape and ready to do worksheets. I've spoken to students who've been told that they do too much extra-curricular stuff, they don't work hard enough, they're attention-seeking – anything and everything except that the student in front of them is unwell and that, however eager they are to learn and do the degree they're paying for, they simply can't right now.

If that had been my situation, I'd be writing anonymously to avoid repercussions within and outside my college. I'd be scared to say something. Maybe I'd have taken their comments to heart and genuinely believed I didn't deserve help or a little consideration. Maybe it's just me, but when I'm feeling low I don't fancy getting

into a brawl with 'the system', however archaic, ridiculous and awful it may be.

But it isn't fair that this is the case. Someone at one college should be guaranteed similar treatment to someone at another. There are some absolutely wonderful, caring, understanding supervisors and Directors of Studies out there, but the university as a whole needs to do more in making treatment of mental health transparent and fair across colleges. Insist that all Directors of Studies attend workshops at the Disability Resource Centre; have clear, updated guidelines on intermission available to all students – and don't tell me that supervisors are there to 'teach' and not to care.



Come on Cambridge, let us type our exam papers



Amelia Robson

Cambridge's outdated system needs to be more friendly to laptop-users

We've now crossed the division of Lent term. This is clear to me not only because 13th February was the Disability Resource Centre (DRC) deadline for submitting access requests for this year's exams, but also because of the exhaustion and sleep deprivation that is slowly seeping into my brain, diminishing my sense of who I am, what I'm doing, and what day it is...

I comfortably satisfied the requirements for using a laptop at school level. The Joint Council for Qualifications, in charge of access requirements for national exams, allows laptop use if it is your 'normal way of working'. They are preoccupied with enabling you, quite literally, to access your exams, and I clearly needed that access arrangement; without a laptop my writing would look like a child writing hieroglyphics while sat on a cement mixer.

However, at Cambridge our access system is more rigorous, and arrangements are in line with equality legislation, the 2010 Equality Act. If you have a disability the University needs to put in 'reasonable adjustments' so that you are not disadvantaged, but you first have to meet this requirement. Therefore, an occupational therapist or educational psychologist has to recommend that you use a word processor, following a diagnosis.

This lengthy process requires a visit to the DRC for an initial screening, and, if they recommend that you go

forward to get an educational assessment, you have to visit your doctor, and then book a final assessment. The assessment with an educational psychologist takes three hours, and costs £400. Throughout the process of arranging this, I was continually hearing the same thing: in this day and age, the fact that getting laptop access is so difficult feels ridiculous. Doesn't this just lead us to judge people on the quality of their handwriting, rather than on the quality of their ideas?

There seems to be a general feeling that allowing laptop use for all would be a bit like opening Pandora's Box. One of the main fears includes the worry that people using word processors would write more, and therefore be at an advantage and gain higher marks.

As luck would have it, Helen Duncan, who works as a Disability Adviser at the DRC, has recently produced a research project touching on many of these issues entitled 'Equality or Advantage? The effect of receiving access arrangements in university exams on students with specific learning disabilities', and I was given the chance to speak to her about some of her work.

Helen Duncan undertook the rather daunting task of counting the words of 137 exam scripts from Summer 2014 exams, including 31 Specific Learning Disabilities (SpLD) students with 25 per cent extra time, 36 SpLD students

using word processors, and 70 peers with no learning difficulties, working under normal conditions. These papers were from English, History and Law exams. One of her most interesting findings was that there was a 1 per cent difference in marks between candidates with the highest word count, against those with the lowest word count.

Moreover, the average word count for students with no access arrangements or learning difficulties gaining a First was 3,109 words, whilst the average word count for a 2:1 was 3,499 words; in the SpLD group the average word count for a First was 2,939 words, whilst the average for a 2:1 was 3,097 words. Her results seem to correlate with an idea that many of us are familiar with: quantity isn't necessarily quality.

In response, Helen Duncan said: "The word processors will help to level the playing field [for those with SpLDs], but you can't suddenly become a First if you're not. It's not an advantage to someone who doesn't need the facilities... Given that the awarding of exam arrangements is contentious and identifies a particular group as 'other', one recommendation would be that assessment processes using the principle of Universal Design are considered, which could, potentially, include laptops in exams as a standard provision."

Our current exam system feels

undeniably outdated; students produce a majority of their work every week using word processors, and frequently use technology as a way of learning. However, when it comes to exams, which for a subject like English can include three hours of intensive writing, students are forced to handwrite.

This system potentially punishes anyone who doesn't have very neat, legible handwriting, and even slightly illegible handwriting can seriously detract from the flow of an essay. It is easy to see why Cambridge might be a long way from allowing everyone laptop access for exams. It is unclear how laptops might impact each different subjects, such as STEM subjects, and some exams might be unsuitable for laptop use. More importantly, the theoretical idea of allowing this access is perhaps at odds with the practicality of executing it.

The difficulty of sourcing a sufficient number of word processors, and ensuring that there were enough power supplies, and enough room for people to be able to type without making exam halls too loud, is perhaps the main barrier to these ideas becoming a reality in the near future.

However, the fact that students are losing access arrangements that they had at school, and being forced to medicalise handwriting issues, is something we need to think about changing in the future.



Miranda Slade



It would be odd if this column – one in a series preoccupied with shallow and self-centred interests – didn't join the rest of the media in commenting on Valentine's Day. Having sufficiently characterised myself as a jaded spinster at the age of 21, you might assume I have done so to place myself in an advice-giving position. Such an assumption would be woefully wrong.

The dating advice I give to my friends is more similar to dialogue from *The Godfather* than an episode of *Sex and the City* – it's all "trust no one... play rough... there are no good guys here" – grunted through a haze of cigarette smoke for good measure. I walk through the gritty underworld of dating, armed with the only weapon a girl ever needs: wit so razor-sharp it cuts straight through 'Banter', and could castrate any suitor who seeks to impress me with such.

I cannot impart any wisdom on how to be single and fabulous à la *Sex and the City* because, frankly, I am not. I haven't seen an episode of *SATC* where Carrie turns up to a meeting with DNA evidence of last night's in-

discretion still matted in her hair and a hash brown in her pocket, because she was too hungover to keep down a McDonald's breakfast. Equally, I have never seen an episode where all four women eat their weight in toast and have a hugely in-depth discussion about which historic period they would most like to visit and why. Somewhere between these two extremes exists the non-glamorous reality of single life.

That being established, I will make my predictable contribution to the hoard of Valentine's Day opinions. I took the time to research the tradition of Valentine's Day, in a quest to uncover its true meaning. Unfortunately, this Ides of February I just didn't have time to observe the traditions of Lupercalia, and missed all the fun of burning salt mealcakes made by Vestal Virgins before being whipped by Luperci in order to ensure my fertility. With any luck, by next year I'll have a date to accompany me and I will no longer be a sad, lonely woman longing for someone to gaze lovingly at ME over flaming mealcakes!

I spent Valentine's Day not in the

arms of a lover but instead in the throes of a full-on essay crisis. Whoever managed to synchronise the most romantic/depressing day of the year with the most dreaded week of term is such a sadist that I almost want to meet them, as they would satisfy my usual 'type'.

Warnings about Week 5 are in place as soon as you arrive in Cambridge. They are included amongst the other necessities (Domino's vouchers and a Pasante condom) in every fresher's welcome pack. We are all familiar with the language surrounding the feared Week 5 blues. Coping strategies are put in place to 'survive' Week 5.

Welfare officers do a wonderful job of looking after stressed and exhausted students during this week. Pigeonholes are filled with cookies, motivational quotes are harvested from BrainyQuote.com and distributed to wallowing scholars, and, if you're really lucky, Pets As Therapy come to visit your college. If you haven't gone to a PAT session before, I thoroughly recommend it. Stroking a beaming Labrador for ten minutes genuinely

warmed the cockles of my frozen heart. Even if the lady accompanying Merlin (the dog) didn't appreciate the comic genius of me grabbing his head and asking him whether my insecure attachment fuelled my insatiable appetite for attention.

All these provisions are incredibly worthwhile, and do go a long way in assuaging the angst that accompanies Week 5, but still, it feels uncomfortable to have one week of term dedicated to simply 'surviving'.

As you witness your life fall to pieces around you, it sounds like a sensible response to create a pragmatic solution for each problem, and manage to retain some sense of calm in the eye of the storm. But why not reconceptualise the survival of Week 5 as a Bear Grylls-style ultimate survival challenge? Such is my infatuation with destruction that I genuinely think we may all be able to enjoy thrashing against the tsunami of Week 5, if only we consider ourselves brutish castaways.

Not for the first time in my life, I turn to cultural icon/self-proclaimed

god Kanye West for inspiration. This week Kanye has claimed that he is \$53 million in debt. Does he take time to regroup and think of sensible solutions to his issues? Of course not, he is Kanye fucking West. Kanye, caught up in the hurricane force of his own self-belief, takes to Twitter and starts asking anyone he can think of to bail him out. Kanye posts a mad series of tweets, and as always, opts for spectacle over sense.

There are many valid criticisms of Kanye, but it must be said that he stops at nothing to feed his own self-image. I don't suggest that we all behave like Kanye (even Yeezy is struggling to pull it off). What I am trying to put across here is this: don't settle for less. Kanye won't settle for just being rich enough to 'buy his family furs'. No, he is striving to fulfil a higher purpose. Don't settle for 'surviving' rather than thriving. It can be really fucking challenging, but sometimes essays conceived in a crisis are far better than mediocre. And so, via diversions through Week 5 and Kanye, I believe I have found the secret to love: don't settle for less.

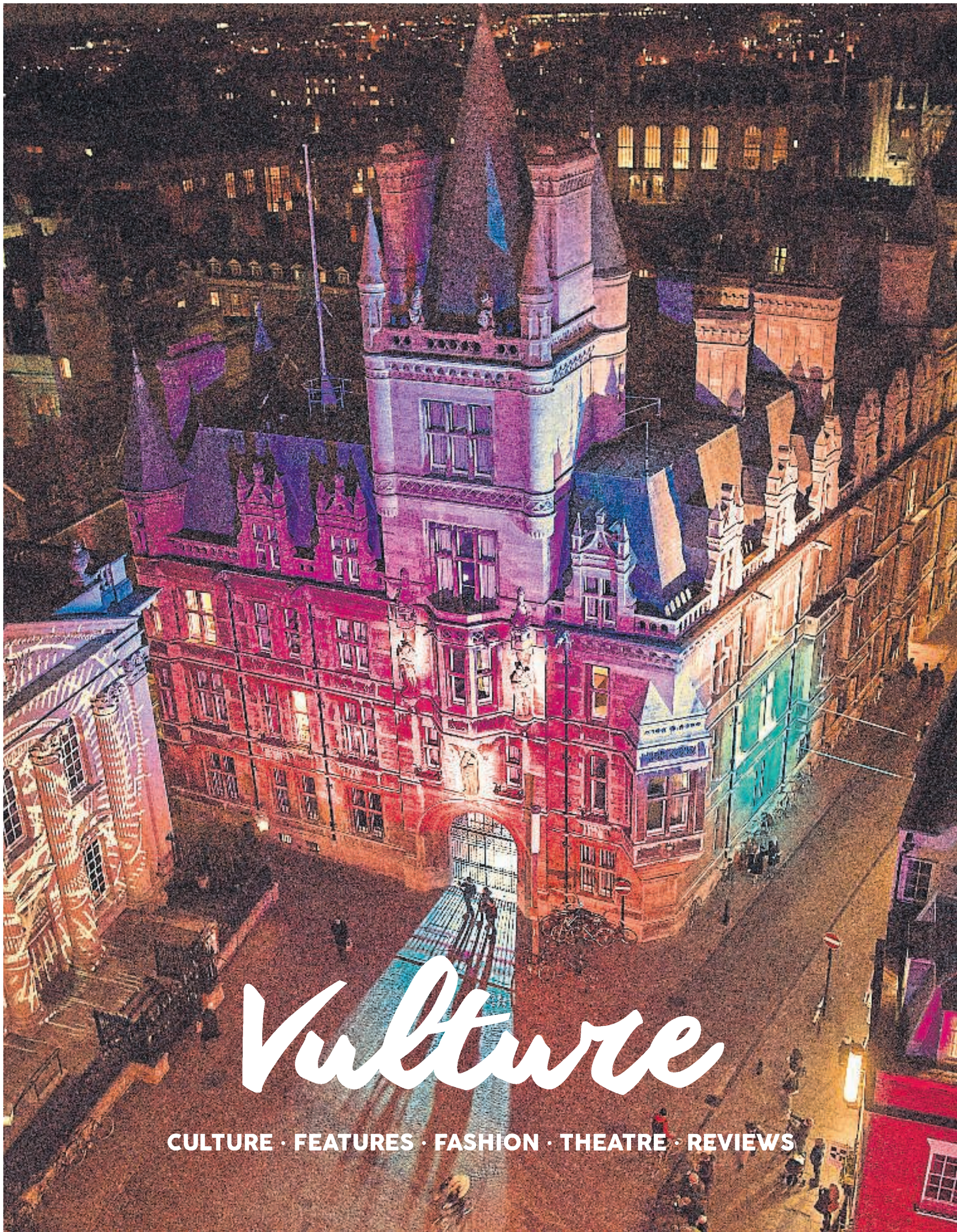


PHOTO: MARIN BOND / A CAMBRIDGE DAY

Vulture

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E-LUMINATE FESTIVAL

The e-Luminate Festival was founded in 2012, and aims to fuse both art and science together in a week-long celebration of light. Alongside the spurts of colour bathing Cambridge icons such as the Fitzwilliam Museum, the Senate House and King's Parade, the festival included family activities, talks and concerts.

PHOTOS: CALLUM HALE-THOMSON/
E-LUMINAIRE/SILVIA MAGGI



KATIE WETHERALL

POTTER PREDICTIONS

what magic will *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* hold?

“He’ll be all right,” murmured Ginny as Harry involuntarily touched his lightning scar. The scar had not pained Harry for 19 years. All was well...”

But, seemingly, all is not, if the upcoming West End debut of *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* lives up to its title. The play picks up exactly where *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* left off. Harry and Ginny, seemingly happily married, wave off their youngest son, Albus Severus, to Hogwarts for the first time, along with his confident older brother, James Sirius. Joining the Potter brood is Ron and Hermione’s daughter Rose, and even a mini-Malfoy: Draco’s son, Scorpius. But tantalising

spoilers released by the production show the story is far from over: “As past and present fuse ominously, both father and son learn the uncomfortable truth: sometimes, darkness comes from unexpected places.” With this in mind, what could the eagerly awaited production entail?

A political angle

The play apparently finds Harry as an “over-worked Ministry of Magic employee”. This wouldn’t be the first time public sector workers are given a hard time in the wizarding world – Arthur Weasley often returned home from work in the early hours of the morning, and his meagre wage meant the Weasley family were always short of money. Given Rowling’s political leanings – she donated £1 million to the Labour Party in 2008 and declared her continued support in 2015 – could

she be making a bit of a political dig? Of course, this critique is especially potent in light of the consideration that the world of Harry Potter is actually a fairly authoritarian, undemocratic one. The Minister of Magic is appointed, there are no official channels of representation, and nearly everyone works for the state bureaucracy – which, by the way, is at complete liberty to perpetrate its propaganda through newspapers and schools. If they fall short of a revolution, perhaps expect some timely discussions of Harry and his comrades/colleagues bemoaning their long hours and low pay.

A live Quidditch match?

Live trains on stage may have already been claimed by the theatrical production of *The Railway Children* but, rest assured, David Chernick, the man leading the special effects of the show, “specialises in making it snow, rain, burn, bleed and explode for the entertainment industry”. If this doesn’t mean finally making Quidditch a live soaring, hurtling reality, then he’s missed the chance of a lifetime. The show would be incomplete without the ‘Go-Go Gryffindor’ chants echoing around the theatre and breathtaking dives for the snitch – but, hopefully, won’t see Dementors, bewitched Bludgers or any of the other dangers that plagued Harry’s matches.

But it’s much, much more than that

Yes, the show is targeted at children aged 10 and older, but that doesn’t mean it’s going to be a fluffy tale of potions and flying cars. Like the books and films, there will be an element of darkness.

Director Tiffany Thorne has said: “I’m conscious of bringing the fans what they love, doing this story justice and exploring the psychology of a grown-up Harry Potter with the same epic sweep as the books and

the films, but in a different way.”

Ron and Hermione are on the rocks

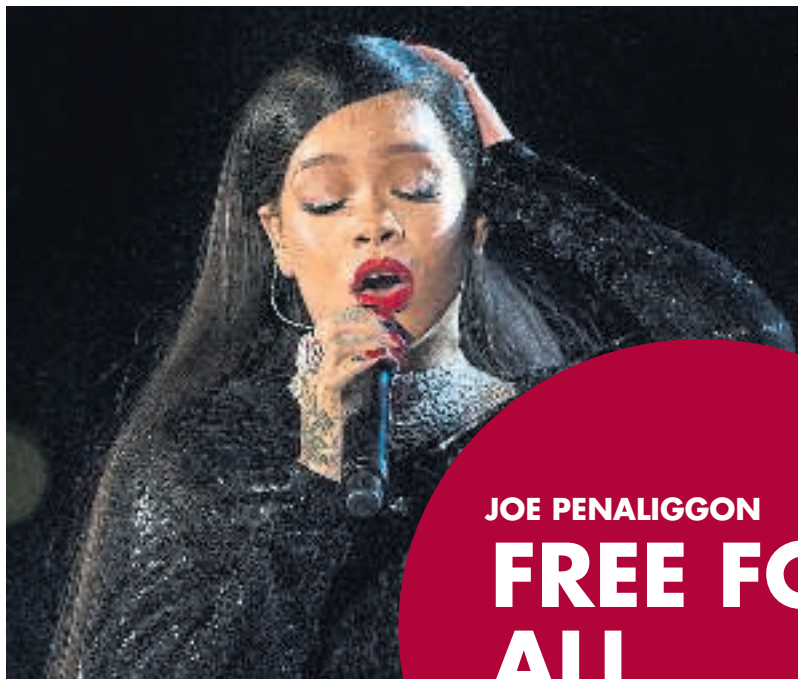
J.K. Rowling has said that she has since regretted pairing Ron and Hermione together, so this might be a good time to sever the couple. According to a statement released by Pottermore, the exclusive fan website, while in 2016 Hermione is the Deputy Head of the Department of Magical Law Enforcement, Ron works in a joke shop. Ron’s jealous side and jokey manner, combined with Hermione’s success and righteous nature, could be a clear driver of tension.

There are such signs in the epilogue of *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*: Hermione didn’t believe Ron could pass his driving test, and exasperatedly criticises him for the way he banters around with the children. Perhaps alongside all of Harry’s drama, Ron and Hermione may have some difficulties of their own...

Albus Severus doesn’t fit in at school

Ron thought he had it hard, having the shadow of his successful, clever and handsome brothers cast over him, not to mention his best friend, ‘The Chosen One’. But turning up for the first day of school when your dad literally saved the entire wizarding world can’t be easy. Though Harry tries to reassure him that being sorted into Slytherin House would mean simply that they had “gained a great wizard”, understandably this would still be extremely difficult for Albus Severus to deal with.

Unable to deal with the shadow of this father, perhaps he gets into the wrong crowd, and turns from a solemn and anxious boy to being one of those students whom, like the Dark Lord, even the teachers are afraid of...



JOE PENALIGGON

FREE FOR ALL

on Rihanna's latest release and the future of the album

'Shock' indeed: after an arduous campaign, Rihanna has ended up releasing her latest album *ANTI* for free online. After showcasing the lead single 'Work', borne afloat by guest performer Drake, the album was "accidentally" released on streaming site Tidal. Though it was taken down shortly after, one lucky customer managed to leak the album, prompting Rihanna to release the album for free via rival streaming service Pandora Internet Radio. Now we are all lucky customers.

Botched though the release may be, how should we view and react to Rihanna's sudden ostensible gesture of generosity? Perhaps to begin with, we can do away with any ideas of "shock". This is a far from new phe-

nom-enon – it is, in fact, good business. We can trace the actions of Prince and U2 right back, albeit indirectly, to the release of Radiohead's *Kid A* in 2000. At least one album by each of the preceding three artists has at some point during its launch period been freely available, legitimately or illegitimately, online or otherwise. Prince's 2007 release *Planet Earth* was distributed as a free covermount with the *Mail on Sunday*. U2's infamous *Songs of Innocence*

was automatically downloaded to all Apple devices worldwide. For Prince and U2, meanwhile, each came across as leverage for future tours – Prince walked away nearly \$19 million in the black after 21 UK shows, while U2 made gross profits of \$152.2 million from 76 shows worldwide. As it was with them, so it was with Rihanna. We could well view *ANTI*'s release in the same means-to-an-end way. Trawl the hazy depths of YouTube and the budding Rihanna follower will find eight cryptic yet compelling videos entitled 'Rihanna's ANTI diary: Room (1-8)'.

Their gradual releases span three months. All are expensively produced and rife with imagery ranging from cleansing (Room 5) to the bitter reward of senselessness (Room 7) to the narcissistic ritual of the conditioned and marginalised (Room 6) – and I'm not talking about the phone they promote either. All seem as sprawling as the album's release itself. All lead to that album, in turn to the eponymous tour.

Does this reduce *ANTI* to the level of those videos: a mere billboard for product placements? Does Rihanna house a vested interest in being seen in the flesh by more people than the Rolling Stones once boasted in the noughties? She would: albums are expensive and cumbersome, as *ANTI*'s release expresses. They reap no real immediate reward, not least from music streaming services, whose paltry payouts to their enabling artists

effectively price the independent out of music – not least when released for free. But Rihanna has today attained the same level of cultural opulence as hits like 'Sweet Child O' Mine' – her success is such that she needn't elaborate, lest she overburden her audience with more hits than they care to warble back at her. There is a reason (other than the horror story of *Chinese Democracy*'s ten-year production period) why the reformed Guns n' Roses have expressed no wishes beyond their reunion tour to release an album: tours are filthy lucre.

From 16th to 30th March 2014 Metallica played seven concerts and raked in close to \$24 million in ticket sales. The Stones' 'Zip Code' tour wrapped up in July 2015 with \$109.7 million in gross profits, despite having released only one album this millennium. All the while, artists can require between 120,000 and 1.7 million streams on Spotify to earn just \$10,000, according to the minimum and maximum payouts of \$0.006-\$0.084 per stream. This is a shame, especially in the light of such stellar recent releases by Julia Holter, Anderson Paak, Baroness and the late David Bowie. It sets unattainable, unsustainable standards for independent musicians who subscribe to a system that forbids them any opportunity to pave their way – this is surely an abuse of privilege on Rihanna's part, and others. The album is kicking, beating and writhing – but, as precious few continually remind us, it's still coughing blood up in the faces of those seeking instant gratification from a medium whose reward is far from instant, a medium for whose vehement and wholehearted subscription these days suffices the mere click of a mouse.



ANNA'S CULINARY CORNER

A few weeks back, I found myself at a cheeky five-course mid-week dinner at St John's. The dinner exceeded your standard formal not only in the number of courses but also in its vintage factor: the crux of the event was to transport the diners back in culinary time to the 19th century, with Victorian favourites such as clear vegetable broth, braised venison, and Prince Albert's tipsy cake featured on the menu. Fancying myself something of a culinary Doctor Who, I was somewhat dismayed to hear our guest speaker – the fellow-turned-food journalist and therefore my idol Bee Wilson – declare at the end of the meal that culinary history cannot, in fact, be authentically recreated and that our food was more noughties than Victorian. Fair enough: having opted for the vegetarian version, I wasn't quite sure how popular stuffed peppers were with the Victorians (or even if vegetarianism was a thing in an era whose cookbooks seemed to favour carnivores). However, I was genuinely devastated to discover that our al dente carrots should have been cooked to near mushiness to be authentic and that our tipsy cake (in effect a mince pie-type pastry) was not nearly boozy enough to qualify as 'tipsy'.

Gradually emerging from the depths of the initial shock of having blown multiple Sainsbury's basics products' worth of money on a not-so-historically-accurate dinner, I ended up researching food history, spending more time on this than I'd like

my supervisor to know. With one shocking discovery after the other, I started to feel grateful that the dinner turned out to be, although disappointingly modern, safe and digestible. Compared with all the perils of culinary time travel, not-alcoholic-enough tipsy cake becomes a very minor worry.

Take fad diets, for instance. You might think that the lose-weight-and-sex-up craze belongs to our modern era of Atkins and 5-2 diets but, believe me, history has seen it all – arsenic, tapeworms, and even cabbage soup, you name it and someone has dieted on it. Forget about Beyoncé going vegan and Angeline Jolie filling her plate with ancient grains, one of the first celebrity dieters was Lord Byron swearing in the name of vinegar. To lose weight, the poet took to drinking the stuff daily and eating potatoes soaked in it. Feel like running for the bathroom? This was exactly the sought after side-effect of the diet: there is nothing like vomiting and diarrhoea to cast off a few kilos. However, the vinegar diet did not remain a one-man experiment. Just as today, the effect of celebrities on youth was a cause of widespread worry as young Romantics took to surviving off rice and vinegar to achieve the Byronesque pale and thin look. Some things never change.

It's not only the Victorians and other people beyond living memory that had, well, interesting ideas when it comes to food. For some curious experiments, rewinding a few decades is

enough. My favourite discovery from the past century is gelatin salads. While gelatin nowadays is mainly associated with the slightly artificial touch it brings to cakes, jellies, and other sweet treats, savoury gelatin was all the rage in the Fifties. Dinner party specials included lime-flavoured gelatin with mayonnaise, cucumber, and canned tuna embedded in it and, as a somewhat mealier salad option, unflavoured gelatin with bits of turkey, chicken, carrots, and green beans floating around. I won't be the first to book a place on a Fifties dinner if one ever comes up.



INSECTS MAY BE ABLE TO SAVE THE DAY

Now fast-forward 50 years, and you're in for another gut-clenching culinary experiment. While weaver ants are a well-established Thai delicacy, and the menus of many African countries regularly feature goodies such as termites, fried, smoked, steamed, sundried, or ground into a powder, insect food is a much shunned option in Western cuisine. Yet creepy crawlies present one of the most effective solutions to an impending global food crisis. By 2050, planet Earth will be home for nine billion people, with a sharply rising demand for animal products in low- and middle-income countries. Combine with this the

huge environmental burden that the global livestock industry is already now, and you have a nourishment bomb in your hands.

Insects, however, may be able to save the day. They are packed with protein and essential micronutrients such as iron and zinc; a beetle requires less space than a cow; insects emit lower levels of greenhouse gases; and a kilogram of feed yields 12 times more edible cricket protein than beef protein. If tucking into a crunchy cricket isn't your idea of a nice snack, there are plenty of more discreet options available. Cricket flour, for instance, can be easily incorporated into anything from burgers to brownies, while the US-based company Six Foods has hit upon chirps, or cricket crisps. Peckish, anyone?

And so my lamentation of missing out on the authenticity of Victorian overcooked carrots turned into gratitude for not being subjected to vinegar. That said, I'd quite like to be around when John's in a couple of hundred years' time puts on a 21st-century dinner with quinoa, cupcakes, and couscous salads on the menu – will the diners be devastated to discover that the early Noughties recipes did not, in fact, involve cricket flour?



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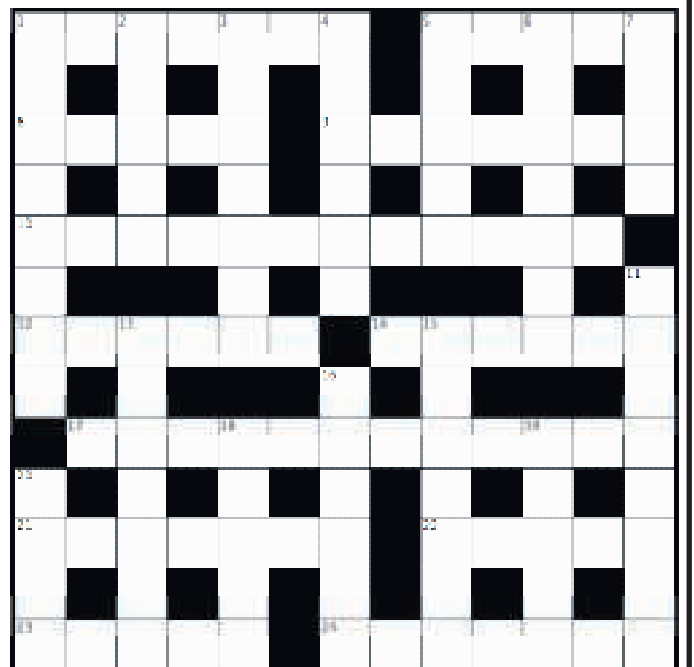


THE VARSITY CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

Set by Glueball

Across

1. Dropped kiln in California lake by sea (7)
5. Down fall of water through pipe (5)
8. Survey the French tree (5)
9. Deserve a permit (7)
10. Red kestrel, as dressed in hats? (12)
12. Chop onions with a negative radical-type (6)
14. Sadly, do this for river region (6)
17. Twig sentient? Considered by this novel thinker! (13)
21. 12 moved by female song (7)
22. Chop back wildly under extremely austere period (5)
23. Not an area for ornamentation (5)
24. Warp ten! Off to Belgium! (7)



Down

1. Prankster's hustle involves newspaper, perhaps (8)
2. Sufficient to confuse 8 (5)
3. Tory leader presents rationale for crime (7)
4. Piercing claw mangled sheriff (6)
5. Man from Germany concerned about kick-start (5)
6. Rang ma, a case in point? (7)
7. Backwards, old fashioned school is one of repute (4)

11. Soldiers spring at trader's booth (8)
13. Mum dropped the proverbial – how stupid! (7)
15. Favour ware's pectin content (7)
16. Sea pet, at sea, is tender (6)
18. Tango line is cliché (5)
19. Egghead to gallop off, run away (5)
20. Check that it fits the rhythm (4)

Congratulations to *Jake Choules* for submitting the first correct answers to the crossword in Issue 805. Please submit answers to editor@varsity.co.uk.



Peter Martin is the President of the Cambridge University Calais Refugee Action Group (CUCRAG). The society runs fortnightly trips to Calais during term in order to offer aid to refugees. He chatted to **Ian Johnston** about his first-hand experience of refugee camps, 'voluntourism' and his vision for CUCRAG going forward.

What kind of work do volunteers do in Calais?

You can never tell exactly what you'll be doing when you go on a trip. First, you'll be sent to a warehouse to sort through thousands of donations and put them into boxes for easy distribution. Though the work itself may seem mundane, it's very useful. Then we run several distributions per day. Usually there are 30 volunteers in the warehouse, so when 20 of us come along, it's very positive.

20 volunteers per trip isn't a very big number, considering our left-leaning, sympathetic student body.

We have had a huge amount of people signing up, but undergraduate life makes it very difficult to take whole weekends off work. It's also not a political cause. All we're doing is trying to help. That is a universal thought and position, regardless of political persuasion. The volunteers have been branded as extreme-left anarchists by French authorities. But I've sorted donations with people from very diverse backgrounds.

Recently, the refugee crisis hasn't featured as heavily in the news as it did several months ago. Do you think that student sympathy is still as strong now as it was in October?

In terms of the press, it depends what you read. The *Guardian* and the *Independent* make the refugee crisis a permanent feature. I think there are trends in public sympathy but it hasn't affected the mentality in Cambridge. We work alongside Amnesty International for our fundraising events and we receive a lot of support.

“

THE VOLUNTEERS HAVE BEEN BRANDED AS EXTREME-LEFT ANARCHISTS

Media descriptions of the camps are often very negative. What's your perception of life in the 'Calais jungle'?

It's difficult to say. The living conditions are definitely incredibly bad but people often have very different reactions. Some of our volunteers say that it's livelier than what they were expecting. They see shops, mosques and churches and get hope from the sense of community. Others see the total deprivation and find it quite depressing. Our perception of life in the camp is largely framed by the job we're doing that day in the camp; we try not to take part in 'voluntourism', observing the camp from the outside.

ing that day in the camp; we try not to take part in 'voluntourism', observing the camp from the outside.

'Voluntourism' is a term used a lot. Would it not be more worthwhile to send donations to established charities in the camps, rather than having to spend time and money training volunteers?

The problem is that Oxfam, the Red Cross and a lot of large charities aren't in Calais. Only grassroots movements are working there and they need volunteers. When we go, we make up a lot of the people there. We often ask ourselves if sending money would be more worthwhile but we believe that our presence is helpful and useful.

Some of the funding for CUCRAG has come from CUSU, which is itself a charitable organisation. Does this set a precedent of charities funding other charities?

CUSU have set up a fund to allocate to societies and CUCRAG applied to it. At the end of the day, it's up to CUSU to decide who it gives its money to. JCR committees all voted for money to be given to CUCRAG and we were very grateful.

Cameron's approach is to give aid directly to refugees in Syria. Do you feel CUCRAG could focus on other

refugees?

We wanted to directly make an impact to the situation. It doesn't take very long to get to Calais so that's where we offer aid. But in Easter break, we're planning a week-long trip to Lesbos. We aren't fixated on the location but Calais is the only viable destination for Cambridge students.

“

CALAIS IS THE ONLY VIABLE DESTINATION FOR CAMBRIDGE STUDENTS

The movement of refugees from Lesbos to Western Europe has put a lot of strain on the EU. Do you think the refugee problem could play a factor in the EU referendum?

Possibly. The migrant crisis is a huge issue. We don't know how Cameron will react to it. But [Angela] Merkel has shown huge determination in accepting millions of refugees. I hope he isn't forced to only accept 50,000 because of political capital.

Germany has recently experienced problems with violence in Cologne. Is there ever a feeling of danger in the camps?

Yes, but not from refugees. Volunteers need to be aware that there are risks involved. Recently, far-right groups burnt down a van filled with donations. They presumably want to discourage volunteers coming to help. We're taking precautions to make sure we and our provisions are safe. But anyone interested needs to keep that in mind.

Does that discourage you?

Of course it's discouraging. The potential that it could happen again is very worrying. But the need is so great that the potential danger doesn't override our desire to make a difference.

What is your vision for the group going forward?

It's very difficult to plan ahead because what's happening in Calais is changing so quickly. Right now the French government is restricting the size of the camps and it makes our role less predictable.

We can't tell what we'll be doing in two weeks, let alone two months. It's possible that CUCRAG will be needed for years to come, or not at all.



CAMBRIDGE CLUB SCENE OFFICIALLY BETTER THAN MANCHESTER

Joanna Taylor issues a defence of Cambridge nightlife

It's no revelation that practically no-one enjoys clubbing. We tell ourselves that we will at pre-drinks, of course we do, but the truth is that once we're there, we quickly get bored and tired. A successful clubber is a confident clubber, who can somehow appear social even inside what is essentially a sweaty box of deafening sound. They know how to dance, what to wear, and even what to do with the arm that isn't attached to a drink or draped around the person they've decided is their new best friend. This is not your average Cantab.

I first went to Cindies in Freshers' Week after matriculation dinner, where I had the largest quantity of port I'd ever drunk in my life (i.e. any at all). I was in the faze of inebriation in which you just sort of stare at inanimate objects with a dreamy, contented smile on your face, and also probably try to high-five the bathroom mirror. But when a sudden, dramatic mash-up of the *Pirates of the Caribbean* themetune came on, complete with streaks of strobe lighting, I sobered up instantly. I enjoy boardgames and name my soft toys, but even I am too cool for this. We left shortly afterwards.

Despite the well-known naffness of the Cambridge clubbing scene, we all

love it a little bit. I'm sure I can't be the only one who would defend it: we are, after all, the students who flood to college bops and complain that we have 9am lectures over jaegarbombs at Fez. I imagine it's the kind of thing where we moan about how much crazier/cooler/cheaper clubbing is at home to each other, but God forbid anyone from home should sneer at Cindies.

“
NO CANTAB WILL JUDGE
YOU FOR A NIGHT IN
WITH A CUP OF TEA

And clubbing at home – in my case, Manchester – is a far cry from the cheesy-but-fun vibe of Cindies (or the Van of Life, for that matter). After pre-drinking in the vicinity of a friend's mum and spending £10 on a taxi, you are greeted with scenes that wouldn't look out of place on a David Attenborough documentary. Men (usually) circle groups of girls and try to separate the weakest from the pack. People get off with people they'd be too shy to say hi to at a bar,

and everyone assumes everyone else is single.

I take issue with this. Getting off with someone is fine, but lunging in before you've done the 'are you (as would be in my case) a heterosexual, single, female with no romantic or psychological barriers in the way of us kissing (and happen also to be mutually attracted to me and want to kiss me too)' test. You don't have to double-check that we both want three kids and live in the city, but obtaining definite consent would be a start. As it happens, I don't fulfil the above criteria – I have a boyfriend – which means I'm often left standing alone, surrounded by people kissing, and wondering what the point of clubbing is.

There are more clubbers in Cambridge who are just out for a laugh and a dance. It's fine to go clubbing in jeans (most will just be thankful you're not in chinos), whereas at home people get ridiculously dressed up. The air of objectification and desperation for validation is far less intense when you're wearing the 'edgy' turtleneck you wore to lectures that morning.

I swear people also stand on your toes more in big-city clubs. I'm not saying I haven't come back from a



Cambridge club with slightly sticky soles, but in Manchester the floor will leave huge black smudges on your feet: something which makes you feel even more like some kind of *Oliver Twist* street urchin than the fact that our main club is called 'Factory'.

Clubbing in big cities is more predatory than in somewhere like Cambridge (although that's not to say that serious incidents don't happen), so we feel safer here. We can also "ironically" dance to terrible music, but better the *Pirates of the Caribbean* theme tune than mashed-up techno beats on an Apple Mac.

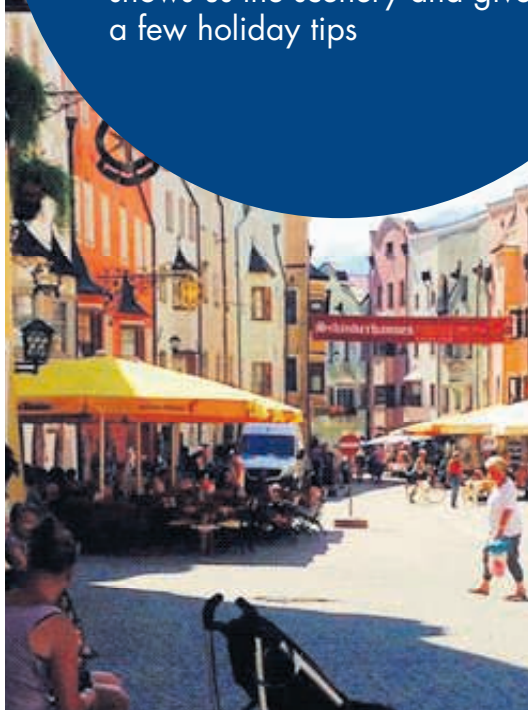
Embrace that a night out means a laugh with your friends, not trying to bat off strangers; embrace that you can probably name half the people in the club, and have seen most of the others in Sainsbury's. Embrace that you can walk home whenever you're ready (unless you're from Girton) and expect a delicious snack on the way.

But most of all, embrace that the pressure to go (and enjoy) clubbing is relatively low: if Cambridge clubbing is just too clammy/cheesy/claustraphobic for you, no Cantab will judge you for a night in with a cup of tea and a game of Risk.

EMILY FISHMAN

A WEEK IN KITZBUHEL

shows us the scenery and gives us a few holiday tips



EMILY FISHMAN

Emily says...

I would highly recommend Kitzbuhel for both summer and winter vacations: there are plenty activities to try out, including skiing, hiking, rock climbing and kayaking.

I would also particularly recommend a stay at the Hotel Tiefenbrunner. Serving traditional Austrian cuisine, with warm and pleasant staff and spacious rooms, the hotel provides all the necessities set for a great holiday. A single room can cost around 99 euros per night. The town boasts two cable car routes, both providing scenic tours to the top of the mountain valleys. At the top of the 2,000-metre Kitzbüheler Horn there is a stunning panoramic view of the valley, and there are some great photo opportunities. There are also fantastic walking paths, if you fancy a stroll back down the valley.

If you're looking for scenery but heights aren't your thing, one of the less mountainous focal points certainly worth a visit is the Kitzbuhel Lake. A 20-minute walk from the centre of town, the lake is a stunning place to relax in the summer sun and there are plenty of nearby restaurants and cafes too. One of my favourite cafes in Kitzbuhel is *Pano*, which in my opinion serves some of the best coffee and cakes I've ever had, and at a reasonable price.

EMILY FISHMAN

CREATIVITY, COURAGE AND CONFIDENCE

on the key themes of
the fashion show

Saturday night was certainly one to remember. The atmosphere was buzzing, with unlimited drinks, servings of burritos, and the delivery of L.K.Bennett goody bags. For under £40, the show was certainly value for money. All proceeds raised from the event went towards tackling social injustice in South London. The charity Cambridge House was the other focus of the evening. The bold, the brave and the bizarre strutted down the catwalk, showcasing a range of colourful, creative, and crazy designs.

Perhaps the fashion was controversial in parts; nonetheless, it was refreshing to see a fashion show representing diversity. The models were ultimately the stars of the show; a mix of body sizes, from curvy to petite, and a range of ethnicities highlighted how all different shapes and sizes could look amazing no matter what. Every model was imbued with confidence, with strength being the preferred choice over skinny, especially with the male models Chris Jammer and Ife Adepegba. With clothes being on show from Central Saint, Hannah Farrugia Sharples, Amanda Wakeley, Burnt Soul, L.K.Bennett and Ted Baker, a range of high street, high end and student designs were displayed. After only five rehearsals, the models seemed to own the catwalk.

Standing in the front row next to the runway, the adrenaline of the models certainly was felt. One of the models, Karl Thompson, commented: "Backstage was pretty frantic – It got quite heated at points, but this just added to the sense of achievement and excitement." The atmosphere was electric in parts, with the main act, Jungle, providing dance tunes, the night felt almost like a mini-May Ball

or a June Event rather than a fashion show.

However, the fashion on display was what made the evening. Art, imagination and fun combined to produce some of the most crazy, shocking and ludicrous designs. Fashion stole the show with creative designs only the most confident and courageous would dare to wear. It even managed to hide the mediocre commentators on stage. While the designs at some points were, to be frank, bizarre, including the bondage gear and nipple tassels, not to mention the 'that boy is a hero' outfit, modelled by Karl – which looked like a hilarious cross between a bouncy castle and a palm tree. Personally, I would not want to wear any of the fashion myself; I would, however, use the show as a source of inspiration.

CUCFS was more about making a bold statement against the stereotypes of what constitutes the University of Cambridge. Cambridge students aren't stuck in libraries all day because they necessarily enjoy it; they can be cheeky, flirtatious and controversial, and the show was able to bring to attention how repressive and monotonous our current catwalks are. Was the fashion inappropriate or slightly too risqué? Perhaps, but this aside, the show was about celebrating individuality – it's about time fashion designers look further than size 0. CUCFS broke with tradition and showed the world it is possible to embrace diversity. It will take more than one fashion show to change the modelling world. Nonetheless, CUCFS has shown us that there is hope, and changes to the way that we present fashion are not beyond the bounds of possibility.

Bella Bonner-Evans captured some of the best looks of the evening

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY CHARITY FASHION SHOW



FASHION TIPS

May Ball – as Xelia modelled elegantly, consider a long black maxi dress (just make sure it has a back to it – unlike Xelia's rather revealing design)

Yellow gloves – they make for a bold spring statement

Pop art – bright colours, playful patterns and colour contrasts like pink and black, blue and yellow, and purple and white make for a statement

Wear those shades – the models had bold red sunglasses and, again, they featured in the pop art designs

Fur – the use of fur for accessories was a big feature, and especially effective throughout the show

For those daring to bare – red was the main colour for showcasing undergarments. Try Topshop or H&M for red-coloured swimwear or a red satin night robe

Vulture

SHOW TIME

Katherine Smith takes us through the highlights of the show

The second annual Cambridge University Charity Fashion Show took place last Saturday, with over 700 people descending in black tie upon the Corn Exchange. Paying £30 for an early bird ticket would have got you into an event not dissimilar in scale to a May Ball. The night raised £10,000 for 'The Cambridge House', a charity that helps homeless people with legal processes. Here's a bit on the live entertainment provided on the night:

Female singers:

Holly Musgrave – This daring lady chose to open with Chandelier by Sia, managing to pierce through the murmur of the audience with some strong and powerful high notes.

Lauren Aquilina – Many beautiful songs came out of this performer, in fact many more than were performed by the first singer. Had she simply prepared more songs and therefore been given more time? Or was she improvising extra songs at the end in order to allow for organisation backstage? If the latter is true, what a legend.

The DJs – CODEK and Jungle:

At several points during the DJ sets, the entire Corn Exchange auditorium shook with bass, making it such a shame that not many people were dancing around the catwalk. It was also a shame, although necessary given the stage set up, that the DJs were set so far back that they felt quite disconnected from the audience.



DEAR DAILY MAIL

Laura Day responds to the *Daily Mail's* coverage of the Cambridge University Charity Fashion Show

On Saturday evening, I attended the Cambridge University Charity Fashion Show (CUCFS). I stood by the catwalk, and watched my fellow students parade up and down in a myriad of designs, each as eclectic and unorthodox as the last. While there was occasionally a more orthodox piece, most of the fashion on show was a little more unconventional, and certainly a little more provocative.

Nevertheless, it was a fantastic display, and the evening was a resounding success. The Corn Exchange was transformed into something out of London Fashion Week, and the guests were dressed as well as the models, albeit adhering to more stringent black tie rules. Free drinks were on tap, and Nanna Mexico was on call to feed the hungry show-goers. The music featured renowned artist Jungle, and the entire night was in the name of a charity: Cambridge House. The team of student organisers behind the scenes pulled off an amazing array of entertainment and organisational feats, and should be highly commended for the immense effort that was surely put in to such a successful evening.

Yet, as one might expect, certain facets of the wider British media couldn't manage to get their lack of journalistic prowess past the near nudity of some of Cambridge's student models.

In their rapidly-published (read: rushed) article the following afternoon, the *Daily Mail* opened with a headline reading 'Fifty Shades of Cambridge', and proceeded to deem the designs worn by the students 'bondage gear', and that the entire fashion show was 'controversial'.

So, to the poor, unenlightened and, quite frankly, meagre reporters from the *Daily Mail*, I offer you an analysis of your very own words, broken down piece by piece, outlining just how wrong you are. Forgive me, if you please: I am an English Literature student, and this happens to be what we do best.

Firstly to your 'bondage gear' reference when describing the designs on show. How would you feel if you'd spent a great deal of time, effort, and investment in following your passion for designing clothing, only to have them disregarded as secondary to the matter of who happens to be wearing them at a show aimed at showcasing the clothing above all else? Spare a thought, would you, for the designer who worked tirelessly to not only craft the piece, but also who had to work with the CUCFS committee to ensure that their designs were shown in just the right way during the show. It's not just about putting the clothes on a model.

Furthermore, in this day and age, with so many body-conscious young people constantly at war with themselves over how they look, or how they don't look, and why they can't emulate the figures of the world's supermodels,

what is the value in commenting on how a jumpsuit revealed one of the students' 'assets'? Some of us in the crowd may have been paying attention to the clothing design (you know, the elegant black mesh jumpsuit by designer Amanda Wakeley), so it is somewhat disturbing to think that your minds were elsewhere.

And please do enlighten me as to the reasoning for your labelling the fashion show as 'controversial'. What exactly made it controversial? Was it the clothing that you have deemed to be as such? The fact that it was a bunch of unknown students parading about in an event that is not the norm at universities up and down the country? The reality that nobody else cares except journalists who want to stir up a bit of controversy of their own, about something they know very little about? Or the fact that the entire spectacle was a way of raising funds for a charity: Cambridge House?

“

IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT PUTTING THE CLOTHES ON A MODEL

Surely it can't be the latter. It can't be, simply because this was the sole drive behind the show. The committee's tireless efforts since the beginning of Michaelmas Term culminated in £10,000 being raised for the charity, one that was begun by Cambridge alumni in 1889 to ease social injustice in South London. The show celebrated the diversity of not only the designers, but also of the students involved. Each model and each committee member had a different story, whether that be the degree they're studying, the college they live in, their connection to the world of fashion, or to the Cambridge House charity.

Next year, when this phenomenal fundraising event takes place once again, I'd implore journalists across the country, whether they are representatives of student publications or of national ones, to take a minute to garner some perspective.

Why bother looking at something if the only desire is to create controversy? Instead, approach things with an ounce of respect and admiration. After all, were you ever responsible for raising so much money for charity?

When was the last time you gave up hours of freedom to liaise with designers, organise food and drink, decorate a venue, and coordinate the demands of many a live act? And have you ever been brave enough to strut your stuff down the catwalk in front of 1,000 spectators, some of whom you'll undoubtedly be sat next to in lectures on Monday morning?

Nah, didn't think so.



Put the shirt on the Jammer:

This probably had to be one of the strangest parts of the show. The presenters created a new version of 'pin the tail on the donkey' called 'put the shirt on the Jammer'. Chris Jammer's body definitely made up for the fact that this part felt a little too much like playing for time as a distraction to a-look backstage to gather themselves.

Zoolander competition:

Basically, this piece was funny if you had watched *Zoolander* (a film which overtly satirises the fashion world), and had the first clue what blue steel is (a pouting facial expression), but really boring if you didn't. Two audience-members competed to be crowned 'king or queen of blue steel'.

Charismatic presenters:

When faced with an, at times, fairly subdued crowd, many show presenters may have faltered, but the energy in these two guys just kept coming all night long.

A sterling effort to ensure everything flowed smoothly during the show, and some pretty good banter to go with it.

CUTAZZ Dance Troupe:

Like a well-oiled machine, CUTAZZ stormed the stage throughout a mash-up performance of several songs.

The group made excellent use of the stage space and really helped keep the audience's energy levels up during the show.

It was a surreal experience to watch a show that switched between heavy bass from DJs and floaty female singing voices.

The models performed exceptionally well, carrying themselves and their often wonderfully outrageous outfits confidently down the catwalk in front of a substantial audience. One possible improvement for next year would be to work on the flow between the live acts and the runway segments.

All things considered, especially with the pressure of doubling the scale of the operation since last year, the show was an exceptional team effort that raised an astonishing £10,000 for an amazing cause.

A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE

Eleanor Costello talks to the cast to find out more about the upcoming production at the Corpus Playroom

The much-loved play by Tennessee Williams is hitting Cambridge's streets once again, and I met with director Joe Richards to discuss how he's approaching the famously divisive text. Bethan Davidson, who plays Blanche DuBois, and Seth Kruger, who plays Stanley Kowalski, joined us.

"A lot of people are going to have preconceptions of the play," Joe states. "I'm always a bit wary of deliberately doing something different just for the sake of doing something different. What we have tried to do is really look at the play from more of an interior perspective, so I've been looking at using things like the projections of the lights, and music, to really get inside Blanche's mind. I know that's something that a lot of people might not like, but in my mind it's going back to the text, taking a really pure approach."

The high expectations that accompany the play are something that Bethan was also very aware of: "I know everyone has their own idea of what Blanche and Stanley should be like, but there's lots of nuances in the text that can be interpreted differently. It's very clever in that the way Blanche speaks to different characters changes, just as in real life you change depending on who [sic] you are with."

"With Stanley she has this strong guttural edge, like her voice could snap at any minute, whereas with other characters she's a lot more breathy. It's this idea that in reality you're different with different people, depending on what your objective is and what you want. She's an expert manipulator, whether she intends it or not – until the end, when it all falls apart."

We talk about the controversy surrounding some of the characters, something that the cast have discussed at length. Bethan looks disgruntled as she admits that Kate Marston, who plays Stella, sees Blanche as the 'villain' of the piece. "I don't think she is. Blanche has many faults and she's very troubling, but that's because of the past she's had and the upbringing she's had. She's so innocent that, when the world hit her and reality hit her, she's tarnished."

"I wonder whether it's Kate saying that, or whether Kate's saying that as Stella," Seth interjects. "There's this idea that Stanley feels that other people measure him against this ideal of the American Dream and he doesn't quite measure up. I guess people see Blanche as this southern Belle and then she's tarnished, and that's what starts her descent." He goes on to talk about the importance of perspective in the play, and the difficulty of judging any of the characters when there



is much that is ambiguous. "When Stanley hears a story about Blanche he takes it at face value because it confirms his world view. It's more important to know what the characters know than what they think is actually true. But maybe you have a different perspective as the director?" he asks Joe.

"Yeah, I don't get into the perspective of the characters in the way you do," Joe replies. "As an audience member watching rehearsals, I know that I have an opinion on how much of it is true and how much of it isn't true. It's about the audience and their interpretation. That is the point of the ending of the play – it's about where the audience thinks it's going to go next, rather than how we think it's going to go next."

“

A LOT OF PEOPLE ARE GOING TO HAVE PRECONCEPTIONS OF THE PLAY

Bethan agrees: "There's so much that's unresolved. For Stella, knowing that Blanche has said that Stanley has raped her, it leaves her on edge, not believing it or not wanting to believe it. An important part of the play is the changing and manipulating of memory. We've done a lot of background work, talking about what our characters did before the play and their childhoods. With Blanche, you never know how much of what she says is true, because it's all mixed up in fantasy. I know for myself that how you remember events changes in your mind. I'm not quite sure what happens to Blanche. I wonder whether she stays locked up forever... You kind

of hope that Stanley will get his come-uppance, though."

Joe cuts in: "But I think the point of the play is that the world doesn't work like that. We hope that Stanley will learn his lesson, but there's a sense that he never really understands what's gone wrong. None of the characters are entirely likeable; they've all got so many flaws, right down to the smaller characters."

Seth talks about the process of trying to understand Stanley, who is a difficult character to pin down. "I really like it when you go really far back into a character's past. When you really go back and place a decision that a character's made within that character's history and childhood, it gives you a completely different understanding of them as a character. There's a sense in the play that even when you've got happiness, there's something not quite there."

"We've given Stanley a New York twang, because he's a second-generation immigrant and we figure his dad is from New York. There's a lot about Stanley emulating his dad, and a real sense of the different places the characters have come from. The dynamics as well – Stanley is very loud, he doesn't have an inside voice, and Stella picks that up. Then Blanche comes in and jumps at every noise. I was never a fan of adopting animalistic acting styles, but it's really helped to do an exercise before rehearsals where I go from me, to being an ape, to Stanley."

"I don't think that Stella ever really understands him as a person. And not knowing what happens afterwards – that not knowing is a form of isolation, which is what so much of the play is about. As an actor, I don't want you to tell me what happens."

I ask why the play is so popular and



how they will make a play, which is set in a world so different from ours, relevant to a Cambridge audience. "It's a play about incredibly complex people just like ourselves, and that accounts for a lot of its appeal," Joe concludes. "We did speak about it as a melodrama, and I rejected that idea out of hand."

"For me a melodrama is removed from your life; because the real world isn't like a soap opera, it creates a sense of distance. This is a play which is very much a drama that is true to our common experiences. They live in a world that's removed from ours – it's got very different social and political circumstances to how we live."

"But the play isn't about its setting. It's about the relationships between the characters and the loneliness that pervades their lives, and that's something that everyone can understand."

A Streetcar Named Desire will be at the Corpus Playroom at 7pm from Tuesday 23rd February - Saturday 27th February 2016.



Tom Bevan talks to **Avigail Tlalim**, director of the innovative Week 6 ADC Lateshow

THE FLICK



What made you choose this play as your first to direct?

I think the ADC can seem like quite a daunting space for a first-time director but, somehow, this unusual staging made it feel as if it wasn't the ADC stage but an odd fringy space in Cambridge no one had used before. That made it feel exciting. I felt like I'd chanced upon a hidden pot of gold when I read it.

We've heard about the atypical staging for this show; can you reveal what is so different and how you've gone about rehearsing?

Yes! We have got the audience sitting in chairs on the stage, and the actors performing in the seats! The play is about three characters who work in a cinema called 'The Flick', so they're just sweeping, doing their jobs for pretty much the entire show. I guess you could call it a 'what happens at work' play – I've never come across anything quite like it.

For our rehearsals in the auditorium we've just had the actors walking around the seats, and I stand on the stage and give notes. It's quite funny to think that if anyone walked in they'd assume I was performing. I think this play re-contextualises how you watch and what you find fascinating. It's about spending some time with the people no one thinks about, the ushers of a cinema, the cleaners.

I think that's really important – especially somewhere like Cambridge where we're all the stars of our own shows – to stop and acknowledge all

the cleaners and gardeners and cooks, whose stories happen in the spaces we overlook.

The Flick won the 2014 Pulitzer Prize for Drama and is already sold out for its run at the National Theatre in April. What has been challenging about staging this in a student environment?

Ah, yes! This show is the European premier to be shortly followed by the National's production! For the professional productions, they build a set of seats from scratch. There are interviews where the off-Broadway designers talk about the long process of making seats look worn. I just read the script and thought we could do it in the actual seats! One of the characters, Rose, is the projectionist at 'The Flick'.

In the script she goes up and down from her projection booth in a few seconds. For our production, the Tech box at the ADC is dressed up as the projection booth, but getting from there to the stage involves a walk and a trip in a lift! There have been loads of fun technical challenges that the script poses that we've had to work creatively around. Lighting the seats is another funny one. The seats weren't built for performance, working out how to slightly adjust everything has been really fun, and it's helped me to get to know the ADC better, if back to front.

Another challenge is that the actors have about three times more stage space to manage – there are so many seats. I thought this would also be a

big challenge because the space isn't built for performance, but the actors are so great that I haven't even noticed. Now I think the seats were built to be performed in!

Film is, obviously, a central feature of this production. What is your personal favourite?

This is probably influenced by the events of the play... but, *Pulp Fiction*.

And, finally, why should people come to see The Flick?

We've discussed the staging and how that will make for a unique theatre experience, unlike any other you'll have in Cambridge, but it is also a fantastically written play (ask Pulitzer if you don't believe me!): subtle, understated and beautiful. I think Annie Baker is one of the most interesting female playwrights at the moment. The cast is also fantastic! The characters are oh-so-loveable and flawed. All the traditional reasons apply with so many more, not to mention the free popcorn if you bring your flyer to be recycled.

If, for nothing else, see it, so when you see it at the National you can feel giddy and smug because the theatre at your own university is better.

The Flick runs between Wednesday 24th February - Saturday 27th February at 11pm at the ADC. There will be a pre-show talk at 10pm on Saturday in Larkum Studio, with representatives from Cinecam and The Arts Picturehouse.



CUMTS GALA NIGHT



The **CUMTS team** talk about the upcoming night

Have you ever wondered what it would look like if you put the kind of thespians who often spontaneously break into *Les Misérables* and do jazz hands in their sleep on the ADC stage together for an hour with an orchestra? Well, you're in luck: the CUMTS Gala Night is this Saturday and will give you the answer (and hopefully a pleasant and exciting evening of entertainment).

For the last three weeks, Gabbie Bird has been directing only the cheesiest musical theatre actors Cambridge has to offer, and the most fabulous songs from the likes of *Wicked* and *Chicago*, with a touch of Disney in there, too.

This is the only opportunity of the year that you will get to watch a group of Cambridge's best musical theatre performers come together on stage to harmonise flawlessly and

step-ball-change in sync to a wonderful variety of show tunes (unless you accidentally stumble into the *West Side Story* after party), so you'd better get your hands on a ticket before they run out. Sometimes Gabbie just makes the performers stand doing jazz hands in the air to make sure they have enough musical theatre pulsing through their veins.

Since 2010, CUMTS has brought the joy and flair of musical theatre to the ADC stage for the annual Gala night and this year's show proves to be as exciting as ever, featuring the recognisable faces of some second- and third-years alongside a talented handful of freshers.

The CUMTS President, co-director of the Gala and general musical theatre royalty, Steve Gage, has said that the CUMTS Gala is always the highlight of his year. "Incredible singing, glamorous costumes,

over-the-top dance routines, and a brilliant 20-piece orchestra. This year I'm particularly excited about the set list, which combines beloved classics that everyone will know with a few hidden gems you may not have heard before. I know I will be backstage with a smile on my face the whole time. In between my six bowtie changes, that is..."

Essentially, if you like musicals, you will love Gala. If you think you don't like musicals, you just might after this night of musical madness.

One of the performers, Amy Carmichael, told us that she watched the Gala last year and "didn't stop smiling the whole way through and can't wait to be on stage making people smile this year".

The Gala is on for one night only on Saturday 20th February at 11pm at the ADC Theatre.





PETER LANYON

EXHIBITION

Generation

The Heong Gallery, 06/02/16

★★★★★

Alan Bowness is the owner of *Generation Painting*, an exhibition currently showing in The Heong Gallery at Downing College. When asked what it was that Bowness looked for in art, he replied: “the cutting-edge”. Displaying works produced between the Fifties and Sixties, the gallery showcases an array of bold paintings that very much define the insurgency of the post-war era. It’s a fascinating time period, one underrepresented in Cambridge’s art scene, and *Generation Painting* certainly does it justice.

The Heong Gallery has only recently opened. The architectural firm Caruso St John, who also redeveloped Downing’s hall, was responsible for converting the college’s Edwardian stables into a sleek modern building. Well-lit, with broad windows and a high ceiling, it avoids the stuffiness of other older galleries. The space is used well; nothing is tucked away or hidden, and there is plenty of room for you to take your time enjoying each piece in turn.

Bowness spoke of finding it difficult to explain to younger generations the dramatic transformation art underwent in this period. But looking at the unusual pieces on display, it’s not hard to imagine just how revolutionary these would have been at the time. Each piece jumps out at you. One such eye-popping artwork is *Alpine* by Richard Smith. A striking piece, it unfolds into the room – Bowness told us it was inspired by both the Swiss mountains and the shape of a cigarette box.

Somewhat bashfully, Bowness admits that he doesn’t really consider himself a collector. Having received most of the paintings as gifts from the artists he grew close to throughout his career, he feels he has amassed the collection almost by accident. You might think that this would make the collection seem random and incoherent, but in fact it gives it a great sense of character, and has allowed Bowness to acquire some real gems. You feel that the room is filled with fascinating personalities. Peter Lanyon captures your attention from the moment you walk in with his huge canvases of gorgeous, earthy colours applied in thick, lively textures – but a new dimension was added to his work when Bowness explained Lanyon’s affinity for his birthplace Cornwall. Suddenly the abstract pieces transported you to the English coastline.

Some of the best pieces were actually among the smallest. Roger Hilton’s *April 1961*, was presented alongside one of the much larger artworks, *Ocean*, a William Scott piece similar in style to that of Rothko, yet it was no less striking. The broad sections of deep blue in *Ocean* highlighted the use of blank canvas in *April*, and made the strip of blood-red paint and the tribal, charcoal scribbles all the more disturbing.

The experience of looking at a painting and finding yourself moved – or even slightly unnerved – without quite knowing why, due to the abstract nature of the artwork, is partly what makes the exhibition so fascinating. You really can immerse yourself in the artworks and marvel at the raw skill behind them. More than anything, I’d recommend seeing the collection because it is genuinely refreshing. How many paintings of old Masters or men on horseback do you reckon you’ve seen around Cambridge? This is an impressive tribute to a decade of experimental and revolutionary art – well worth a visit.

Generation Painting 1955-65: British Art from the Collection of Sir Alan Bowness is open from 6th February to 22th May 2016 (10am-8pm on Wednesdays, 10am-6pm on weekends and bank holidays). Free admission.

Charlotte Gifford

RESTAURANT

Nines Global Buffet

Cambridge Leisure Park, CB1 7DY

★★★★★

Nines Global Buffet is the newest addition to the range of buffet restaurants in Cambridge. Taking over the former quarters of the Chinese buffet Lucky Star at Cambridge Leisure Centre, the restaurant prides itself on offering dishes from around the world – the menu features 200 freshly prepared dishes for dinner and 100 for lunch. With the eat-all-you-can buffet costing between £7.99 for a weekday lunch and £15.99 for a weekend buffet, a Michelin-star dining experience is hardly to be expected; rather, as is usual with buffet restaurants, Nines Global Buffet serves quantity over quality.

Yet as you walk in, there is an air of class that sets Nines apart from your stereotypical buffet restaurant. Gone are the stuffiness and feeling of omnipresent gluttony associated with eateries. The décor is light and fresh, with elegant furniture and neat serving areas separated by theme.

Despite excellent presentation, the

food itself is not that different from a standard buffet experience. Although Nines is branded as ‘global’ the focus is largely on South-East Asia: Thai, Chinese, and Japanese cuisines are featured heavily, while the paella, pizza, and pasta, supposedly representing Spain and Italy, feel like an afterthought added to nominally meet the description of ‘global buffet’. In the dessert section, the global touch seems to be lost altogether, with brownies, ice cream, and chocolate fountains forming the core of the sweet treats on offer. Apparently whoever added ‘global’ to the name of the restaurant understood the term as a dichotomy between Asian savoury dishes and Western desserts.

As for the selection of dishes, the self-service area is fairly unimaginative. Old favourites such as sweet and sour chicken, prawn toast, and various stir fries take centre stage. The starter section falls likewise into the realm of bland, with a heavy emphasis on the deep-fried variety of appetiser. That said, a welcome touch of variation comes from the Japanese dumplings – the custard variety being particularly scrumptious – and from the assemble-your-own crispy duck and pancake wrap, with a lovely set of fresh garnishes.

Although the menu is disappointingly standard, the quality of food is for the most part up to scratch. The meat in the Thai green chicken curry is

beautifully tender, and there is a large selection of vegetarian dishes that go beyond quorn or tofu based replications of the meat option. It is a shame that this otherwise good quality fails in the sushi and dessert sections. The dryness of the sushi rice raises questions of how long the dishes have been on display on the conveyor belt, while the flavours of the desserts merge into a uniform sense of artificialness.

Where Nines does really deliver on the culinary front is the made-to-order stations, preparing teppanyaki, BBQ, and noodles to your taste. The noodles, made from fresh dough as you watch, exceed all expectations: the freshness and non-artificial flavours reach the standards of an à la carte restaurant, and the help-yourself garnishes add an exciting touch to the dishes. I must also give kudos to the customer service at these stations: when the five minute waiting time for my noodles turns into fifteen, the station manager kindly promises to come over to my table to notify me when the dish is ready. Whether this would work at a busier time than on a weekday evening, I don’t know, but at least at a slightly off-peak time the service goes beyond impeccable. In many ways Nines is a standard all-you-can-eat buffet; yet, the freshness of the décor, friendly service, and made-to-order stations make it well worth a visit and the hike to Cambridge Leisure.

Anna Hollingsworth



FILM

Deadpool

dir. Tim Miller, 108 mins

★★★★★

Occasionally, a film will leave you wondering if certain aspects are left in, what calibre of material did they have to leave out? *Deadpool* will leave you slightly stunned, yet still stupidly satisfied, and pondering the bigger questions; how many butt jokes did they actually have to cut? Ryan Reynolds has never quite made a star-proving film until now, probably because he’s been a crude and unpolished peg in a plain leading man hole. However, *Deadpool* is the last will and testament of years of mis-casting. It is brash, brutal and, above all, funny.

Wade Wilson is a walking ‘I’m not a hero’ trope bent on revenge against a maverick experimenter who had turned him into the immortal Deadpool as a quick fix for Wade’s cancer (explained neatly through flashbacks). Deadpool, wanting revenge for being turned into an unlovable monster, enlists the help of the only two X-Men who appear to be awake when he knocks on the Xavier Mansion’s door, Colossus and

Negasonic Teenage Warhead. Despite the obvious X-Men rota issues, kudos must be given to giving an eight foot metal Russian a believably endearing personality. Although there may be some obvious plot holes and clichés to be found here, it is acceptable, because *Deadpool* will frequently point them out to the audience in the form of a near-continuous internal monologue. Violence is not something which is avoided here, including one scene where Deadpool ‘127 hours’ himself, which hopefully requires little further explanation. *Deadpool* is the same old story but told in an unforgettable way.

It is a film about dialogue, it probably (and proudly) holds the world record for variations on ‘inanimate object no.1’ having sex with ‘inanimate object no.2’ jokes, but that doesn’t really retract from any enjoyment. A few jokes are a little hit and miss, some seem like remnants of a humour belonging to a fourteen-year-old teenager who wears too much Lynx deodorant, but the sheer pace of jokes moves any duds swiftly on.

It does what *Kingsmen* did to spy films, except the entirety of *Deadpool* has a similar gutsy, although less derogatory, tone to *Kingsmen*’s infamous ending scene. There are also a lot of in-jokes to the Marvel (and DC) universe, which receive significantly less laughs than most others, except



the smug chuckles of a select few as they spill popcorn on their worn out Lantern Corps T-shirts. Some of the very specifically American references also go over our British heads, like every episode of *The Simpsons* about the Super Bowl or an episode of *Friends* about Thanksgiving. However, on the whole, the only difference between the quality of *Deadpool* and some of the better Marvel films such as *Iron Man* or *Guardians of the Galaxy* is the 20th Century Fox logo and repeated references to crack dens.

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DEADPOOL WILL LEAVE YOU
SLIGHTLY STUNNED, YET STILL
STUPIDLY SATISFIED

However, as a result, a real issue with *Deadpool* lies with the plot. Although incredibly meta opening titles imply that the plot intended to be more than a stereotypical origin story, there are moments where the film becomes very traditional. However, this only goes to show the strength of the rest of the film which make these moments stand out as dull beacons. The ‘British

villain’ Ajax, clearly attended the Justin Hammer school of unmemorable villains. His repeated villainous catchphrase is yelling “what’s my name?”. Yet, despite Deadpool literally spelling it out (in bodies, naturally), it still required a google to remember it. The remainder of the cast does a decent job, but this is really Ryan Reynolds’ film. Although don’t fret about the lack of X-Men star power, Hugh Jackman still gets the biggest laugh of the film.

Swearing is often cited as giving the perception of a person as a more likeable, honest character. This is probably true in the case of Deadpool who curses, breaks the fourth wall and has enough monologues to make him almost insatiable. The best superhero films of recent years have taken on a sub-genre in order to place a spin on increasingly stale plots, such as the incredibly niche but workable idea to make *Captain America: The Winter Soldier* an espionage spy thriller. *Deadpool* is the shining black comedy within a genre that has been treading water, which is especially noticeable as the latest trailer for *Batman vs. Superman* acts as the final opportunity to use the bathroom before *Deadpool* begins.

Most importantly, it leaves memories of the previous mute incarnation of *Deadpool* behind in a messy, crude, destructive trail.

Naomi Sutton

ALBUM

Kanye West - *The Life of Pablo*

released 14/02/16, Def Jam / GOOD

JACK WEARING

★★★★★

HENRY GOODWIN

★★★★★



Chaotic, fragmented, by turns gorgeous and repulsive, *The Life of Pablo* is Kanye West’s most accomplished self-portrait to date. 2013’s *Yeezus* punctuated its harsh industrial beats with musical non-sequiturs, placing samples of Nina Simone and church choirs fighting brittle, noisy distortion. His genius on that album resided in his ability to pull together disparate elements into a coherent whole. *The Life of Pablo* instead revels in its contradictions, jumping from style to style and mood to mood.

The album’s alternate cover art features the words “WHICH / ONE” repeated again and again, inviting us to ask which Pablo Kanye is referencing. In fact, for Kanye, ‘Pablo’ signifies many aspects of his persona: the artistry of Pablo Picasso, the hedonism and vice of Pablo Escobar, and – as he revealed in a recent tweet – the religiosity of St. Paul. The album’s title went through four different iterations, beginning as *So Help Me God*, before Kanye settled finally on a title which, through its ambiguity, best represents the many facets of this album and the impulses that guide Kanye’s art and life. Tellingly, Kanye’s first line on *The Life of Pablo* is “I’m tryna keep my faith”. Kanye is a conflicted man, feeling the strain his work and fame put on his personal relationships, the tension between his desire for a pleasureable life and his newfound responsibility as a parent and husband, and the difficulty of maintaining a spiritual life.

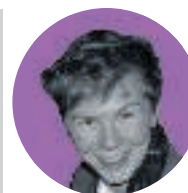
This conflict is musically expressed in a series of stylistic shifts. ‘Ultralight Beam’ is a gospel track, complete with a choir, a prayer lead by Kirk Franklin, and a moving and complex verse by Chance the Rapper. The religious feeling expressed here and on ‘Low Lights’ stands in stark contrast to tracks like ‘Freestyle 4’, where Kanye takes the abrasiveness he exhibited on *Yeezus* even further; beginning with a guttural cry (“Rah! Rah! Rah!”), Kanye proceeds to spit staccato bars expressing intense sexual impulses over an ominous beat comprised of eerie strings, distorted vocal samples and frantic drums that eventually decay into a wall of noise.

The portrait Kanye paints of himself on this record is at times far from flattering, with a lower ratio between insightful and asinine lyrics than one might hope. Kanye’s judgement is at times bewildering; it is hard to believe that the man who produced the heartfelt religious sentiment found in the album’s opening is also responsible for the lyrics like “Now if I fuck this model / And she just bleached her asshole / And I get bleach on my T-shirt / I’mma feel like an asshole.” Equally painful is the already infamous line about Taylor Swift on ‘Famous’. It’s long been clear that Kanye is possessed of an impulsivity which prevents him from filtering his own speech and behaviour. While this is at times unbearable, it is also what makes his music and his personality so fascinating.

Of course, Kanye is aware of his shortcomings and has suffered their consequences; on ‘Feedback’, he raps, “I’ve been outta my mind a long time / I’ve been saying what I feel at the wrong time,” and on ‘Wolves’ he poignantly expresses his regret: “If mama knew now / How you turned out, you too wild.” These candid moments are what keep Kanye relatable, and this album features plenty of them. The standout in this regard is ‘Real Friends’, certainly one of the finest songs Kanye has ever written. Over a haunting piano loop and a reverb-heavy drum beat, Kanye reflects on the disintegration of his relationships with family and friends. Here he admits that that he has a tendency to blame others for his problems, but that deep down he knows that he’s responsible: “I’m always blamin’ you, but what’s sad, you not the problem.”

The album proper ends with ‘Wolves’, but after a brief spoken interlude Kanye includes four bonus tracks of varying quality. Built around a killer Chicago house bassline, the closing track ‘Fade’ is catchy and club-ready but lyrically insubstantial. ‘FACTS’ is a diss track against Nike that Kanye uses as an excuse to brag about the commercial success of his own shoes and his wife’s Kimoji app. By contrast, ‘No More Parties in L.A.’ is essential, boasting a classic Madlib beat and a characteristically impressive guest verse from Kendrick Lamar. Best of all is ‘30 Hours’, which finds Kanye reflecting on an old relationship with a mixture of regret and nostalgia over a soulful Larry Graham-sampling beat and backing vocals from Andre 3000.

The Life of Pablo may well be Kanye’s least accessible album; if Kanye’s persona itself doesn’t turn the listener away, the album’s avant-garde leanings and the constant changes in style and tone might be an even greater barrier to their enjoyment. Nonetheless, Kanye has crafted here a powerful statement and another great album, one which expresses with humour and candour the many contradictions in his life and personality.



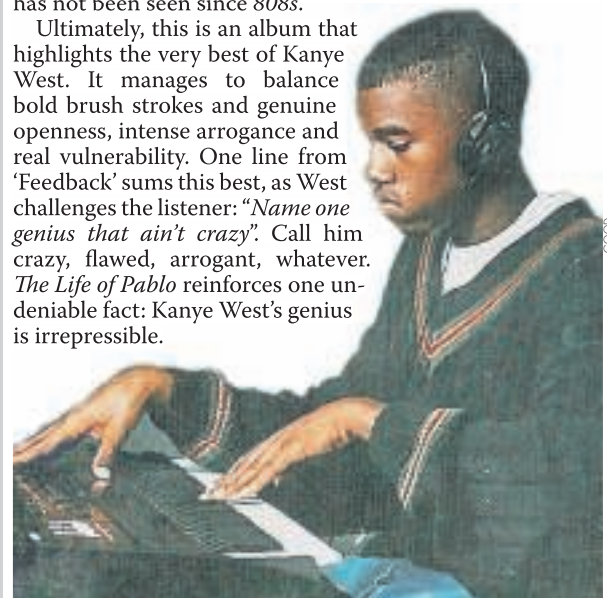
First it was *So Help Me God*. Then it was *Swish*. Then it was *Waves*. Then it was *The Life of Pablo*. Now, it’s here. The build-up to Kanye West’s seventh album has been a whirlwind of name changes, uncertainty, megalomania and excitement. Still Kanye maintains that it’s not finished; it’s not perfect. *The Life of Pablo* has felt cobbled together, even sloppy. Much like the hand-written tracklists that were repeatedly tweeted and amended, then amended some more and tweeted again, the album felt a bit rushed. The release was repeatedly delayed, and even the album’s celebratory debut at Madison Square Garden suffered technical problems. All this contributed to a sensation that fans of Kanye West aren’t accustomed to: trepidation.

How wrong we were to entertain the possibility that *The Life of Pablo* might not live up to expectations. It is another triumphant return for an artist that has always saved his best work for albums; it’s difficult to think of a better creator of albums not just in hip-hop, but in music generally. Kanye’s talent for production has always shone through in his feature-length projects, and *Pablo* is no exception. West is able to draw together so many diverse and seemingly disparate musical elements and house them seamlessly under one roof. The delicate gospel of album opener ‘Ultralight Beam’ contrasts sharply with the desolate and wintry auto-tune of *808s & Heartbreak*’s throwback ‘Wolves’, and yet the two seem perfectly at home as the album’s beginning and intended pre-Madison Square Garden ending. Kanye has never been afraid to take and repackage famous pieces of music (‘Otis’, ‘Gold Digger’), and here he reminds us of his inimitable audacity.

Unlike *Yeezus*, which explored the sonic boundaries of hip-hop, *The Life of Pablo* sees many more guest appearances. Chance The Rapper’s central role in this project is clear throughout; ‘Ultralight Beam’ is basically a Chance the Rapper song. In fact, it might include the best Chance verse we’ve ever heard, and positions the young Chicagoan as the modern incarnation of *The College Dropout*-era Kanye West. When he states: “I made Sunday Candy, I’m never going to hell”, it feels like a transition from cult darling to mainstream hitler. ‘No More Parties in LA’ sees a barnstorming verse by the prolific Kendrick Lamar; Rihanna’s vocals on ‘Famous’ are juxtaposed with those of Nina Simone to underline just how high her stock is at the moment; reclusive R&B icon Frank Ocean adds dense mystery to ‘Wolves’; The Weeknd’s haunting vocal on ‘FML’ is evidence of an artist at the very top of his game.

However this album remains all about Kanye. Before release, *Pablo* was already receiving worldwide notoriety for a certain line about a certain Taylor Swift. It’s hard to sympathize with this version of Kanye West, which appears throughout the record. “My ex said she gave me the best years of her life / I saw a recent picture of her, I guess she was right” on ‘30 Hours’ is the perhaps the harshest line of Kanye’s career. Lyricism has never been West’s strongest suit, and this is clear again on *Pablo*. He can come across as the heavy-handed, “BILL COSBY INNOCENT!!!!!!!!!!!!!!” Kanye West who continually draws such public ire. But amid all the bluster, there is some intense emotional exposure in some of *Pablo*’s lyricism. ‘Real Friends’, unquestionably the best track on the album, sees him revisit the ‘Welcome To Heartbreak’ Kanye; an outsider at his own family events, unable to trust those around him, always having to marginalise his loved ones. There’s an intimacy on this record that has not been seen since *808s*.

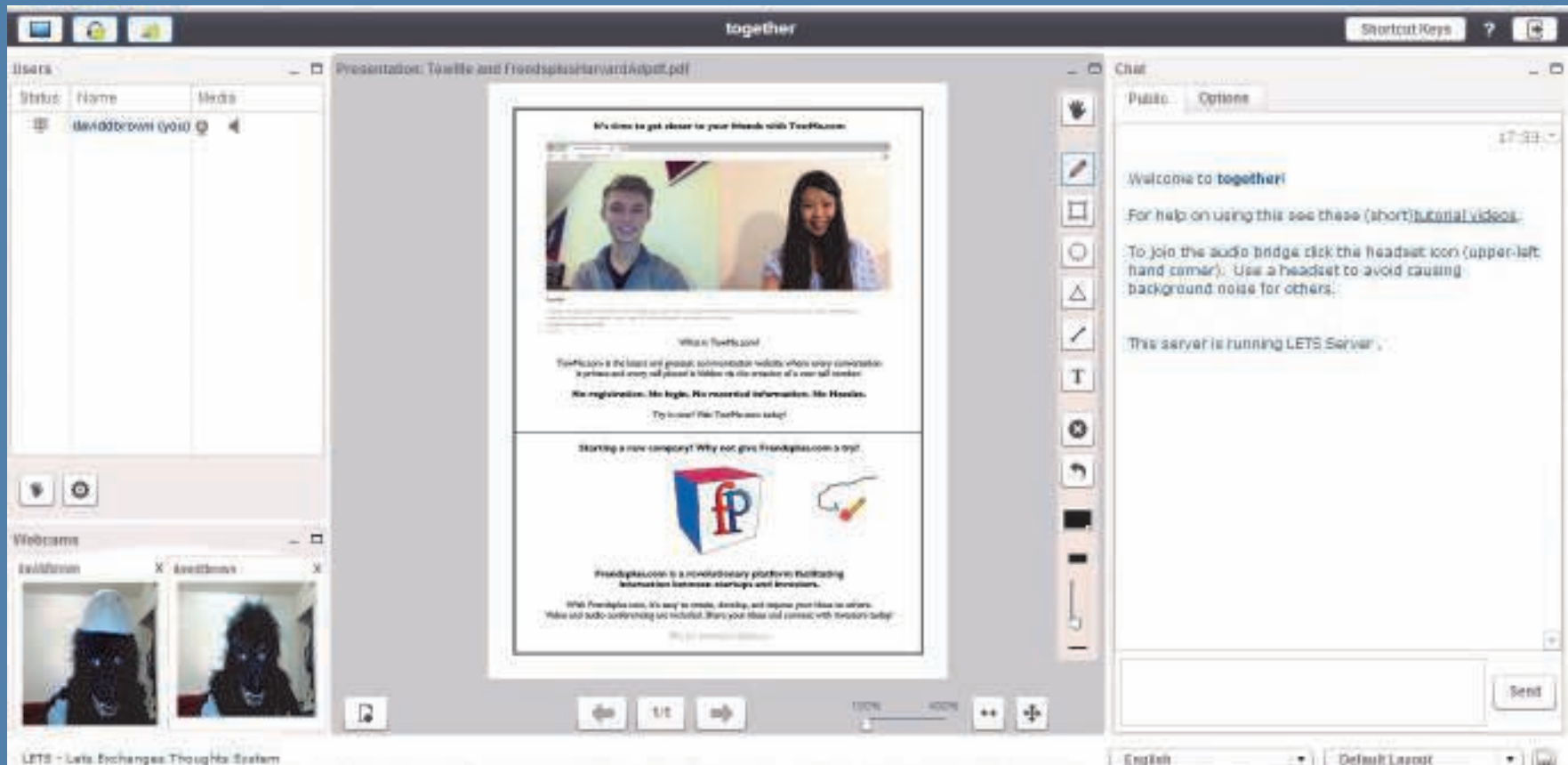
Ultimately, this is an album that highlights the very best of Kanye West. It manages to balance bold brush strokes and genuine openness, intense arrogance and real vulnerability. One line from ‘Feedback’ sums this best, as West challenges the listener: “Name one genius that ain’t crazy”. Call him crazy, flawed, arrogant, whatever. *The Life of Pablo* reinforces one undeniable fact: Kanye West’s genius is irrepressible.



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Varsity matches 2016: a new hope

A run of Varsity matches kick off at the weekend, with the Light Blues hoping to win again or avenge past defeats

Ravi Willder

Sport Editor

It's that time of year again: when two terms of rigorous training, self-denial and meticulous preparation culminate in a showdown against the 'Other Place' for many Cambridge sports teams. Grammatically ambiguous cries of 'Shoe the Tabs!' can already be heard echoing from that institution, perhaps fuelled by a crippling sense of inferiority induced by a glance at any university league table. Varsity matches provide the perfect opportunity to cement Cambridge's superiority with sporting success, and silence our noisy



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neighbours for another year.

The first face-off this year is the Volleyball Varsity match, taking place deep inside enemy territory at Iffley Road Sports Centre, Oxford, on Saturday 20th February. There will be Blues and Seconds matches for both men and women, spread over the day. Both Cambridge's Men's

and Women's Blues will be hoping to avenge their respective losses last year, as Oxford brushed them aside 3-0 in each match. The Men's Blues will take optimism from the fact that each of those three sets last year was extremely close (26-24, 25-23, 29-27), making for an intriguing clash this year. Saturday also marks the day of the Varsity Squash Match, with both Men's and Women's Blues competing at the Royal Automobile Club in Pall

Mall, London. Again, Cambridge will be out for revenge, with the Men's Blues having lost a closely fought encounter 2-3 last year. The Women's Blues, however, triumphed in straight sets at the same venue last year, and will be hoping to repeat the feat this time around.

Sunday 28th gives slightly more niche teams the chance to brutalise Oxford, in a physical as well as a metaphorical sense, for Cambridge's

Judo team. Also at Iffley Road Sports Centre, the Judo Varsity will be comprised of First and Seconds men's matches, as well as the women's competition and one for City players, with matches starting in the afternoon.

A more aesthetic Varsity match will be played a week before, with Cambridge's Cheerleading team, the Cambridge Cougars, competing against the Oxford Sirens at the Genting Arena, Birmingham, on

Sunday 21st February. Having won their Varsity match three years in a row, the Cougars will be hoping to devour the Sirens once again.

Other action this weekend includes the 2s and 3s Hockey Varsity, before athletic attention turns to next weekend. Lacrosse, netball and the women's football Varsities are all looming in the calendar, and will provide the perfect chance to continue our dominance over our perennial foes.



The build-up has started to the climax of the Varsity season: the Boat Race

Varsity Fixture List 2016

20/02/16 - Volleyball
20/02/16 - Squash
21/02/16 - Cheerleading
21/02/16 - Hockey 2s/3s
27/02/16 - Netball
27/02/16 - Lacrosse
27/02/16 - Women's Football
27/02/16 - Basketball
28/02/16 - Judo
28/02/16 - Ultimate Frisbee
28/02/16 - Korfball
28/02/16 - Tae Kwon Do
04/03/16 - Rugby League
04/03/16 - Badminton
05/03/16 - Boxing
05/03/16 - Football 2s/3s
06/03/16 - Hockey
06/03/16 - Karate
12/03/16 - Fencing
19/03/16 - Henley Boat Races

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Gearing up for GDBO

Cambridge's Squash, Volleyball and Judo sides face the ultimate test against Oxford. Page 31

Sport

Football: a price worth paying?



Despite the high ticket prices, Anfield emptied quickly earlier this month as the match against Sunderland drew to a close

Nick Jones

Sport Correspondent

There is certainly nothing unique about the working-class roots of Liverpool Football Club. Indeed, the national game can trace its beginnings as much to the northern mill towns of Preston and Accrington as to the shipping and mining cities of Merseyside and neighbouring Greater Manchester. Much has changed since Tom Finney was making a splash in the old First Division, and the reformed Stanley have never risen above the fourth tier, but that working-class heart has struggled to keep beating in the face of the untold riches unleashed by the formation of the Premier League in 1992. Wednesday's rare and precious victory against yet another ticket-price hike is the proof of that pulse, and if there was one club likely to achieve it, it was Liverpool.

Liverpool is a club tied to its surroundings more than any other. From the days when a swaying Kop sung Beatles songs mid-match, to Robbie

Fowler celebrating a goal in the 1990s by revealing a T-shirt supporting the city's striking dockers, (red) scousers and their side have enjoyed a special rapport through both the good times and the bad.

Tragically, it was the very worst of those times that cemented that relationship more than any other, and as the fight for justice finally looks to be drawing to a close some 27 years after the cover-ups and *The S*n's* lies, the Hillsborough campaign groups soldier on.

Behind the interminable struggle stands a city and a club united by the needless deaths of 96 fans who just wanted to watch their team.

Even with this unique tale of togetherness in mind, the cynic inside me never believed it would happen. A victory over corporate greed in the era of modern football? Surely not... What other sector of business would dream about placing customers sentiments and loyalty first? And yet the owners responded. "A great many of you have objected strongly. Message received", read an open letter from

Fenway Sports Group, as they announced plans to scrap the proposed £77 ticket – freezing prices from this season – along with a number of other positive measures.

On the same day so-called northern powerhouse councils including Liverpool were overlooked for government windfall payments, with the lion's share going to southern Tory shires, fans have been listened to by their club.

Football is central to so many communities, and against the never-ending backdrop of austerity, the inflation of its cost simply must stop. While Fenway's welcome u-turn doesn't render Saturday afternoons cheap for Liverpoolians by any means, it is a key milestone that could set the ball rolling across the country.

Bill Shankly once quipped that a football club is made up of a "holy trinity: the players, the manager and the supporters." This triumph is a welcome reminder that the one group too often forgotten about is the one that keeps the game going. Without fans, football is nothing.

The ticket prices of the modern age:

£14,000: The most expensive pair of black market tickets for the 2013 Champions League final between Bayern Munich and Borussia Dortmund.

£2,013: The most expensive season ticket in the Premier League, for Arsenal in 2015. Finishing fourth almost guaranteed.

£650: The most expensive 2014 World Cup Final ticket, between Germany and Argentina.

£97: The most expensive Premier League non-member match-day ticket, to see Arsenal at the Emirates Stadium.

£59: The cheapest ticket available for overseas fans in the 2014 World Cup.

£22: The most expensive match-day ticket to watch Cambridge United playing in League Two.

£10: The cheapest match-day ticket in the Football League, which can be found at Derby County, Huddersfield, and Reading.

£10: The price of a ticket for last year's Varsity football match. Included in the price were a free drink and burger or hotdog, and reduced entry to Fez or Life.

£0: The price Swindon Town fans had to pay to watch their 4-0 FA Cup first round loss to Macclesfield, after players and staff were forced to reimburse them. Intense disappointment and frustration optional.

League of the Champions?

Felix Schlichter

Sport Editor

On Sundays, no-one has time to watch the Premier League. Work, sports matches, and hangovers all seem to get in the way. Chelsea vs. Manchester United trickles by largely unnoticed, with the exception of the occasional

exclamatory cry after refreshing the BBC Sport web page every 15 or so minutes. Yet when Tuesday evening comes around in mid-February, the ritual remains unbroken. Domino's (other pizza delivery services are available) is ordered, the laptop is propped up, and everyone gathers around to bask in the blaring Champions League anthem.

The Champions League remains a special occasion, even during the sadomasochism of exam term. Nothing can quite live up to the excitement it provides and the disappointment that inevitably comes with it. Why can't we have the Champions League every week?

Well, the suggestion has been bandied around over the last few years, and has risen to the forefront again.

The extension of the Champions League into weekly football would most likely lead to the creation of a football Super League, in which the best 20 or so clubs in Europe play each other week in, week out, to determine a winner over a season filled with epic heavyweight matches and the superest of super Sundays. Barcelona vs. Bayern Munich followed by Juventus vs. Chelsea and PSG vs. Real Madrid, anyone?

In principle, it sounds glorious. What more could you want than the world's best players and the world's best teams slugging it out every week? The implementation of such a plan would mark the fulfilment of the transition from the ancient European Cup system to a modern commercial league. Once only the European

league and cup winners slugged it out in a straight knock out competition. The competition then expanded in the early 1990s to form the Champions League; procedural changes to qualifications meant nations like Spain could field five teams, as they did this year; teams like Chelsea could lose a series of inconsequential matches and still lift the title.

There is a reason why the Champions League remains so exciting, and that is because it is so special. Matches between the titans of European football have an olympian feel to them not only because these are great players and teams, but because it's so unusual for them to play against each other.

Moreover, matches between Bayern Munich and Barcelona will still actually mean something; rather than being

solely a cold, wet windy Monday night clash to decide on who finishes third (which, of course, would no longer have the bonus of Champions League qualification), it becomes a match in which an entire season of drudgery, hard work, and mid-week matches against Darmstadt reaches its zenith.

José Mourinho has asserted multiple times that the Champions League is the greatest competition in football, trumping even the World Cup. Perhaps it's because he has never won the World Cup.

But maybe it's because the competition encapsulates the excitement and tension of football like no day-to-day league can. Like Christmas, Barcelona vs. Bayern Munich only comes once a year.

That is why it's so special.