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# Fashion Show attack defended by FLY and BME campaign

**Exclusive** Reaction following Cambridge University Charity Fashion Show headliner's attack on a student

**Sophie Penney**  
Senior News Editor

The CUSU BME students' campaign, CUSU Women's Officer and FLY (the network for women and non-binary people of colour) have defended the headline act at Cambridge University Charity Fashion Show (CUCFS) for her attack on a student last night, condemning the actions of the student who allegedly shouted insulting comments at her.

Princess Nokia, an alternative hip hop and R&B artist, had completed two songs and was halfway through a third when an audience member was heard shouting something at her. Witnesses say that they saw the artist climb down from the stage, hit the man three times in the face and threw drink in his face. She then got back on stage and before leaving said "When a white guy disrespects you, you punch them in the face".

Witnesses told *Varsity* that the student "looked a bit shaken but not massively," and was otherwise unhurt. The BME campaign and FLY met with Princess Nokia backstage following the incident and said that she was "shaken by the incident".

Princess Nokia explained to the BME campaign and FLY that she could "see [the student] mouthing dirty obscenities like, show me your tits".

However the student claims that he had been shouting "Yes Abigail" instead, he told *The Cambridge Student*: "I was

standing in the audience and was told by a fellow audience member that the name of the performer was 'Abigail'. Given that I was enjoying the performance, I shouted out 'Let's go Abigail!'. After I shouted this, she came down from the stage. She slapped me and threw drinks on me."

In a joint statement released exclusively to *Varsity*, the BME campaign and FLY described the incident as a "disgraceful public display of sexism and misogynoir". 'Misogynoir' is a term coined to refer to misogyny directed specifically at black women.

Audrey Sebatindira, the CUSU Women's Officer, has also condemned the actions of the student: "I express my disappointment as CUSU Women's Officer that Princess Nokia endured such a blatant instance of misogynoir on our campus.

"Sexual harassment of any kind should not be inflicted upon fellow members of the university or those who visit it, nor should it be ignored when it does occur."

In one passage, the BME campaign and FLY statement describes Princess Nokia's reflections on her reaction to the situation: "She soberly expressed that everything had 'happened so fast'; however, she affirmed her 'zero tolerance' stance towards 'instances of sexism and sexual harassment'.

"Princess Nokia expressed her

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**Charity Fashion Show** Amid controversy, futurism and streetwear dominate the catwalk **Fashion 24**



VINCENT HASSELBACH

## Colleges unite in funding drive to combat homelessness

**Caitlin Smith**  
Deputy News Editor

Several colleges have voted to undertake official fundraising efforts for a homelessness charity based in Cambridge.

The campaigns came in the week following reports that Pembroke student Ronald Coyne was filmed burning a £20 note in front of a homeless man in the early hours of Thursday 2nd February. A petition to expel Coyne from the Uni-

versity has since received over 23,000 signatures.

The response to the incident was immediate, with more than £4,000 raised within 24 hours for local homelessness charity Jimmy's Night Shelter, a charity which offers accommodation and assistance to the city's homeless and vulnerably housed residents, as well as the creation of a campaign by PhD researcher Richard Dent encouraging students to go and give £20 to the homeless.

St John's, Queens', Selwyn, Emmanuel,

Pembroke, Peterhouse and Sidney Sussex College JCRs have all organised or are in the process of organising collections for and donating money to Jimmy's.

Elsewhere, Girton College JCR have voted to give £100 to Jimmy's Cambridge from their charity budget, and Christ's College are running a series of themed formals, with the profits from ticket sales going to the same charity.

Girton's JCR president, Joshua

Continued on page 5 ►



# EDITORIAL

## The Week 5 myth is harmful

I learnt about the infamous 'Week 5 Blues' within days of starting my degree. My Director of Studies told with a smile that I might suddenly find things get a bit tricky sometime after Week 4, but definitely before Week 6.

It turns out that Cambridge degrees are tricky quite a lot of the time, and mental health problems can rear their head at any given point – whether or not the stars of the University calendar have aligned. When I first saw someone at the University Counselling Service, it was after weeks of crisis. Now, I take medication every day, just like I brush my teeth. The idea that Week 5 is the only time when you might feel bad – whatever 'bad' may mean – is a nice one, but not particularly accurate.

It is also dangerous. If we are suggesting that students are allowed to struggle, but only in Week 5, then we are helping no one. The truth is that Cambridge is bloody difficult. It's not just about getting your head around an impenetrable essay question or laying your hands on that one impossible-to-find book – it's about a culture steeped in pressure to work hard, to redefine 'working hard' as 'forsaking all physical and mental needs to meet the deadline', pressure to cope, even when things are really not OK.

Great strides have been made towards forging a society wherein discussions of mental health issues are welcomed. But there is much further still to go. Anxiety and depression may have become the acceptable face of mental health, but a whole wealth of illnesses remains in the shadows. If those with schizophrenia, psychosis, addictions – any other serious mental health problems – are not yet allowed to speak freely about their experiences, then our work is not over yet.

This week, Features are taking the opportunity to spotlight student experiences of mental health. I encourage you to read more on p. 16-19, but it is important, as we read these important articles, to remember that these are snapshots of lives lived every single day, not just when we remember.

I compare Week 5 to Valentine's Day – a moment to celebrate a relationship, but if you're not feeling the love the rest of the year round, then something's not right. Similarly, I don't think there's anything wrong with taking Week 5 as an opportunity to talk about mental health, as long as the conversations we start now continue long after.

● Millie Brierley

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## News

# Cambridge lit up by

*Some of the city's most iconic buildings have been washed in dazzling colour this week*

**Charlie Fraser**  
Senior News Correspondent

Central Cambridge has been lit up in dazzling colour for the E-Luminate Cambridge Festival.

E-Luminate, which ran from 10-15th February, was a celebration of light and the intersection between art and science. Iconic buildings, such as the Senate House and King's Chapel, have been lit up each evening.

The festival's theme this year was 'Play'. The Festival Director, Alessandra Caggiano said "I am particularly excited about the theme of 'Play' as it allows us to shine a light onto two very important aspects of Cambridge which we had not yet fully engaged with in previous editions: gaming and sports." Caggiano is curating the festival with the writer Pat Kane, whose book 'The Play Ethic' emphasises the power and potential of play in business, culture and society.

The festival centred around a series of light installations, involving projec-

tions on to many of the historic buildings in the centre of the city. The scale of these installations varied from small works, such as a tribute to John Venn in the entrance to Gonville & Caius College, to displays lighting up entire buildings, including St Mary's Church and King's Chapel. There were also special events run all over the city centre, with a concert titled 'Dark and Light' being held on the opening night at the Corn Exchange.

Perhaps most impressive was the installation on Senate House and the Old Schools. Named 'Spiritus', it involved a complex, animated visual display projected on to both buildings to create a two-sided light show. The installation also used original music.

The 'Spiritus' piece was the work of 'The Projection Studio', a company that specializes in providing large-format projections. The leading artists behind it, Ross Ashton and Karen Monid, said it was a 'fusion of the medieval and modern views of cosmology'.

According to the pair, their display is

the product of a collaboration with the 'Ordered Universe Project', an interdisciplinary initiative that is investigating the work of medieval scientist Robert Grosseteste. Grosseteste put forward a theory of physics in which light played a fundamental role. The artists wanted to "reflect the way the medieval mind was looking at the universe" and combine this with the imagery of modern cosmological simulations.

A particularly striking aspect of the installation is the music that accompanies the visuals. Karen Monid, who was responsible for producing this original soundtrack, said that she aimed to reflect this fusion of medieval and modern by combining Gregorian Chant melodies with a synthesised backdrop. She wanted people to not only see the display but be 'able to feel it' and 'enjoy it for what it is'.

The festival promotes the use of 'green' technology and aims to showcase recent advances in photonics (the science of light), an industry which contributes £10.5 billion to the national economy.





# E-Luminate festival



Spectators braved the rain to watch the mesmerising displays

(Photographs by Lucas Chebib, Qiuying Giulia Lai, Lefteris Paparounas)



## From the archives...

### Union Disrupted over Enoch visit

1 November 1969



Normal running of the union was completely disrupted this week by disturbances sparked off by the visit of Mr Enoch Powell. After 70 students, who had sat in all Tuesday night had been expelled, the building was closed all day Wednesday...

At Wednesday night's crowd pulling debate with Mr Powell and Mr Richard Mars, the Union was only two thirds full and hundreds were turned away. There was a large demonstration outside and over 150 police...Although predominantly peaceful, two undergraduates were arrested.

Trouble began at 8.50pm on Tuesday, when about 30 students walked in and sat down in the bar...It soon became clear that the demonstrators intended to occupy the chamber...With this in mind they confronted the President, Hugh Anderson on the landing

and demanded the keys. Anderson refused...He was met by a flurry of obscenities...

At 10.50 a ladder was removed from the downstairs lavatory...After a fire escape window into the chamber gallery had been forced open, the ladder was brought in lower to the floor and the sitters in followed. Meanwhile more demonstrators had come in through a window in the bar and their numbers had swelled to about 70...

Union officials opened the doors, pictures had been turned to face the wall and a red cloth hung above the presidents chair...Hugh Anderson later commented 'some were there to demand on open union: some were there to prevent Mr Powell from debating; others were there just for curiosity'...

Found by Molly Biddell

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## News

# CICCU invites anti-marriage equality

Charlotte Gifford and Ankur Desai

The Cambridge Inter-Collegiate Christian Union (CICCU) last week invited a speaker who had previously published an article in which he presented controversial views on same-sex marriage and single parenthood. Nick Tucker was recently invited by the Christian Union to give a number of lectures on Jesus from the 6th to the 10th of February, as part of their 'Unexpected' event.

In his article, entitled 'Same sex marriage: when chickens come home to roost', Tucker presented traditional views of the institution of marriage and argued that these are being undermined in modern times. He claimed that ideally "marriage functions as a bedrock for human society, binding people into a network of relationships", but increasingly it has come to be the case that "marriage is simply a contract".

He identified the acceptance of same-sex marriage as a symptom of the deteriorated state of marriage, writing: "The redefinition of marriage has been underway for years, and it is only because it has become a contractual agreement like any other that same-sex marriage is

even on the table."

He presented same-sex marriage as a significant alteration to the meaning of the institution, saying that "many have argued that Christians must oppose same-sex marriage because it represents the 'thin end of the wedge'... I think it would be much more honest to say that it represents the thick end of the wedge." He implied that same-sex marriage is incompatible with Christian doctrine on marriage, writing: "If same-sex marriage becomes legal, it will, as far as I can see, represent a kind of terminus for marriage: marriage in the classical Christian sense at least, as same-sex marriage excludes by definition the possibility of childbearing and that child's subsequent nurture by its biological parents."

Tucker also voiced controversial opinions on single parenthood in his article. He cited research by James Q. Wilson, an academic, which shows "children of single moms are more likely than those of two-parent families to be abused, to drop out of or be expelled from school, to become juvenile delinquents, to take drugs, and to commit adult crimes".

He went on to say: "Of course, this should not be read as though single mothers are the bogeypersons of soci-

► An LGBT+ flag on the Mathematical Bridge for LGBT History Month this February  
(LUCAS CHEBIB)

ety... The statistics simply demonstrate time and again that in general children demonstrate the best outcomes when raised by both of their biological parents together."

In one passage, Tucker warned of a "national epidemic of suffering and deprivation among children", appearing to liken apathy towards the breakdown of marriage to "walking past a burning building and ignoring the pleas for help coming from children trapped in an upstairs bedroom."

He also called upon the Church to "offer God's grace to those who are affected by sexual and marital brokenness."

However, the President of the Christian Union, Dom Palmer, was eager to clarify that Tucker's views on marriage had not fed into the talks he gave recently in Cambridge. "We didn't ask him, and wouldn't ask him, to talk about sexuality," he told *Varsity*.

In the talks, Tucker examined the image of Jesus through Luke's gospel.

"There was nothing in the talks about same-sex marriage, or marriage at all," Palmer said. "The Christian Union is about looking at Jesus infinitely more than it is about people's sexuality."

"It would be a mistake to say that



## CU Law Society stages

Charlotte Gifford  
Senior News Correspondent

On Thursday, Professor Catherine Barnard and Dr Chris Bickerton discussed the implications of Brexit in the Faculty of Law, in a debate hosted by the Cambridge University Law Society.

Barnard is a Professor of European Union Law and supported the Remain side in the European Referendum, while Bickerton is a university lecturer in politics at the university's Department of Politics and International Studies (POLIS), and is a Leave supporter.

Barnard structured most of her talk around the Leave campaign's slogan, "Take back control".

She criticised a recent white paper's statement that while Parliament had remained sovereign within the EU, it had not always "felt" sovereign, as inadequate justification for Brexit. To leave Europe on the basis of a "sentiment of lack of control", Barnard argued, was "concerning".

Since, Barnard argued, the UK is involved in over 14,000 international contracts, Brexit seemed like "a pigeon step" in "taking back control".

As part of the process of leaving the EU, 20,833 EU laws and rules were to be scrutinised over the course of 500 days, amounting to 40 laws a day - "and these", Barnard added, "are not straightforward laws."

Barnard also drew attention to Theresa May's speech on 1st October 2016, in which May noted the need for proper scrutiny of laws.

"So many things being done at EU



► Professor Catherine Barnard and Dr Chris Bickerton discussed Brexit in the Law Faculty on Thursday morning (LUCAS CHEBIB)

level now need to done on a UK level," said Barnard. "Despite aspirations for full scrutiny, Parliament does not have the time or the competence to do this, and so it will be done by secondary legislation."

She spoke urgently of Parliament's need to properly scrutinise the laws, in order "to give meaning to the term sovereignty."

So far, she said, Brexit had meant, "taking back control not for [the] UK Parliament, but for the executive."

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# speaker



Christianity doesn't have something to say about personal life – but the Christian Union doesn't try to be the Church," he went on. "The Church helps you through your personal life, from birth to death, but our mission is just helping people to know Jesus."

Speaking to *Varsity*, Tucker defended his position, arguing that in his comments, made in 2012, he was arguing "against further redefinition of marriage, and in so doing was actually calling people in the church away from singling out Same Sex Marriage as the only problem faced by the institution of marriage."

This is not the first time CICCUC has courted controversy with its speakers. In May 2015, Simon Oatridge gave a talk entitled 'Outdated Living: Does God want to limit my sexual freedom?'. In the talk, he disputed the idea that God was anti-sex, but claimed that "to enjoy sex out of its intended context, outside of husband and wife committed together, is never, and has never been, God's ideal."

Yesterday, the Church of England's House of Clergy voted not to "take note" of a report recommending that marriage should only be between a man and a woman, and that same-sex relationships should not be formally blessed.

# Brexit talk



"Parliament has got to take back control", she asserted. "An overarching executive could be very dangerous for democracy."

Bickerton examined the implications of Brexit for the EU. Brexit, he argued, would reveal the EU's flaws. However, he also argued that it was unlikely the EU was heading for collapse, as the institution of the EU had resulted in a "fundamental process of state transformation" within countries that could not simply "change overnight".

Bickerton claimed that discussion around Brexit has veered too much in the direction of the re-emergence of nationalism. But the events of the past, when there were "imperial states with imperial rivalries", and not nation-states, bore little relevance to the situation today.

Another problem within the EU, Bickerton argued, is the "crisis of national authority across Europe". He proposed that Brexit represented an "anti-establishment revolt", and that the "old rules of politics" no longer function.

He referred to the rise of anti-establishment figures and outsiders, such as Marine le Pen, within French politics. "Because [the] EU has become increasingly reliant on government for its own legitimacy", Bickerton said, "the rise of anti-establishment figures within politics reveals a fundamental fragility within the EU."

In order to survive, he argued, the EU needs to find an alternative to figures like Le Pen. "If it doesn't, over time it will shrink, wither and become irrelevant," he said, "unless some other compelling version of the EU materialises."



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# Shocked Cantabs begin homelessness fundraising drive

► Continued from front page

Peters, told *Varsity*: "We wanted to benefit local charities, or those that deal with issues faced by our own students, and so this year, in addition to donating 50 per cent of our budget to an as yet undecided mental health charity, we felt it would be appropriate, particularly in light of recent events, to donate to Jimmy's. With a lot of other JCRs and individual students, doing the same, it's an opportunity to make a far larger impact as part of a wider movement within Cambridge than what could normally be achieved on our own. Donating to Jimmy's also allows students to take an active role in turning a despicable act into something overwhelmingly positive."

Ted Mackey, the president of Selwyn JCR, told *Varsity* that the student body were "outraged" by the incident: "We as a committee decided that due to the event itself and the recent press around it, notably from the tabloid press, and as Selwyn has one of the largest proportions of state school students, we wanted to show that students at Cambridge are kind, caring and conscientious – and that this incident is very much not the norm." Selwyn College JCR were unable to donate directly from their charity budget, as this money had already been donated to the charities Clic Sargent and Reading Matters.

However, the JCR's Male Welfare Officer, Kenneth McHardy, who attended the same school as Coyne, has set up a JustGiving page for Jimmy's Cambridge and has encouraged members of the col-



▲ Homelessness is a long-running problem in Cambridge (LUCAS CHEBIB)

lege to donate: "We basically want to show that Coyne's actions don't reflect the views of students at Selwyn and Cambridge more widely."

Pembroke College JPC have launched a 'Cambridge £20 Homelessness Fundraiser,' encouraging students to donate £20 to Jimmy's Cambridge through another JustGiving page. In an email to undergraduate members of the college, Charities Officer Louis Slater said: "If we recognise our luck and come together, we can and will make a lasting positive impact on our society."

He also told *Varsity* that Cambridge students had in the past been guilty of inaction on the issue of homelessness: "Until the fundraiser was launched, people were doing very little. Now we are starting to get good responses and we hope this continues."

In a statement on their website reacting to the note-burning incident, Jimmy's Cambridge said: "Here at Jimmy's we have many volunteers, friends and supporters throughout the University and colleges and we are proud of our association, not only with the student body, faculty and staff, but to all who

donate by whatever means, to allow an opportunity for individuals to come in from the streets. This incident is an isolated event and it is, perhaps, more important to focus on the fact that £20 would have provided up to 20 meals for Jimmy's guests on any given day – tangible support for those who need it most."

Speaking to *Varsity*, Jimmy's was eager to point out the positive contribution of Cambridge students to their charity in contrast with the negative image created by the Coyne incident: "We believe at Jimmy's that the [note-burning] incident was an isolated event that is widely reported but rare in our experience of the student body. We would rather focus on the positive community action that has happened out of it."

These are not the only student-led efforts to support Cambridge's homeless community. Cambridge Streetbite is a project set up in 1999 by students concerned about the numbers of people living on the streets. Small groups of its volunteers distribute hot drinks and sandwiches to people living on the street.

# Queens' College eyes up Land Economy Department for new accommodation

**Merlyn Thomas**  
Senior News Correspondent

Queens' College has plans to buy buildings on Mill Lane in order to convert them into accommodation for second-years, according to minutes of a JCR meeting.

*Varsity* understands that the targeted building is the Land Economy Department, and that Queens' College is part of a group of colleges alongside St Catharine's College and Pembroke College who are planning to buy and redevelop the site.

The College currently houses the majority of its second-year undergraduate students in the Fisher Building, accommodation in the part of the College located adjacent to Silver Street.

The accommodation in Fisher Building comprises shared sets, consisting of a walkthrough of two rooms and a ensuite.

It is reported in the JCR minutes that rooms in the Fisher Building will be used as single sets, which would be given to graduate students who could



▲ The Land Economy Department building (LUCAS CHEBIB)

be charged higher prices to live alone in the whole set.

It has not yet been confirmed how much of the renovations will be made for accommodation and how much will be renovated for increased teaching space.

If these plans follow through, the current scheme of placing all undergraduate students on the central Queens' site would be changed drastically.

This is said to be part of a "long term plan" that the College has for its student

accommodation.

"It seems a bit like college looking to make some more money rather than prioritising our interests, but how good it will be for 2nd years really depends on how affordable the new accommodation will be." Speaking to *Varsity*, a second-year student at Queens', expressed mild scepticism about the plans. "I don't really know the precise details of the proposed development but it seems that the college's motivation behind it is to get more money by allocating the Fisher two-room (currently occupied by 2nd years) sets to grad students [who] are more willing to pay for large sets."

Hope Whitehead, the President of Queens' College JCR, told *Varsity* that the College had not been "too specific about the plans", but that "from what we know there's a long term plan to acquire and redevelop properties on Mill Lane for 2nd year accommodation."

On the potential impact on undergraduate students, she said: "We won't know whether this will be preferable until we see pricings."

Queens' College did not respond to a request for comment.



## News

# Student's t-shirts to raise money for refugees

**Caitlin Smith**  
Deputy News Editor

A Cambridge University student has organised a t-shirt campaign in order to raise funds for an NGO providing legal support to refugees.

'Cambridge Trumps Hate: Day of SolidariTee', organised by Tiara Ataii, a first-year German and Arabic student at Robinson College, will take place on Friday 24th February. Students and members of the wider university community are being encouraged to "turn Cambridge awash" with "Love Trumps Hate" by wearing T-shirts bearing the slogan.

Tiara, who designed the T-shirts and spent the entirety of her student loan to buy them, told *Varsity* what prompted her to set up the campaign: "After the protest a couple of weeks ago [following Trump's inauguration], I remember thinking how electric the atmosphere was, and how it would be amazing to have a follow-up campaign.

"People seemed to have two main thoughts; firstly, that this was suprapolitical – that this was something that all people should be invested in, and secondly, that they wanted to *do* something. Solidarity wasn't enough. So I thought of a way to combine both a show of support and something more practical, and came

up with the idea of selling T-shirts."

She also explained some of the difficulties she has faced as the campaign's founder and sole facilitator, including "an emergency late-night delivery on foot." She said: "There was a period before the T-shirts came [when] I was wracked by fear that no-one might buy them apart from my close friends.

"Luckily, that hasn't been the case and we've already sold a large amount; via Cashew, Paypal, cash in hand, or even through appointments arranged by people emailing by CRSid."

She was keen to point out that rather than simply showing solidarity, her campaign seeks to encourage students with "the luxury of a fairly responsibility-free existence" to take positive action. "Ultimately, raising awareness is just a means – not an end. It's useless unless people feel compelled to act in some way – be it by talking to their MP, donating, protesting."

Profits from the sale of the T-shirts will be donated to the NGO Advocates Abroad, which was set up last year by American human rights lawyer Ariel Ricker. According to its website, the charity aims to "uphold fundamental rights and restore human dignity to all refugees and asylum seekers with the free and timely service of qualified asylum experts and attorneys".



▲ Publicity images of participants in the campaign

(KAYE SONG AND CELESTE ABRAHAMS)

Based on the Greek island of Lesbos, the NGO's teams of human rights experts and attorneys across Greece and Turkey offer legal aid and advice to refugees, as well as researching violations of refugees' human rights. Tiara, who worked with the charity briefly while

volunteering at a refugee camp in Chios, Greece, praised their efforts: "I was just so impressed."

Founder and director of Advocates Abroad, Ariel Ricker, commended Tiara on having achieved "a very beautiful thing." Citing the "overwhelming tragedy faced day after day after day" by their volunteers, she said that the campaign would help "not just to make a political statement but to commit to a better world, a better humanity." She stressed that alongside the many British lawyers giving up their time to volunteer with Advocates Abroad, campaigns like SolidariTee were instrumental in providing "another point of contact" between the NGO and supporters in the UK.

Tiara also reflected on her hopes for the future progress of the campaign. A photo shoot she organised to publicise the campaign "has proved really popular," prompting her to organise another on 18th February in Market Square. "It would be amazing to turn the collection of photos into a book," she said, with the aim of raising further funds for Advocates Abroad: "It would be a great way to look back to February 2017 and see people's opinions and objections regarding the current upsurge of fascist thought."

The T-shirts cost £10 and can be purchased via the 'Cambridge Trumps Hate: Day of SolidariTee' Facebook page.

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# Headliner's attack on student defended by BME campaign and FLY

## ► Continued from front page

regret that her performance had been cut short, saying to us that she wanted to 'let the women of colour know she was sorry' but stressed that she felt the incident in question left her in a position where her safety and comfort were severely compromised."

The organisers of the Cambridge University Fashion Society also gave an exclusive statement to *Varsity*: "Thank you to all who took part in and attended a wonderful evening celebrating diversity, beauty and body positivity. It is unfortunate our headliner ended early under unforeseen circumstances, and we hope this did not taint the overall message of the night."

The BME campaign and FLY expressed their "solidarity" with Princess Nokia, and also their "respect for her willingness to share her experience with us despite being obviously upset by the night's events".

They argued that this is not an isolated incident: "the humiliation experienced by Princess Nokia onstage is all too common in the daily experiences of women of colour at Cambridge." They added, "such occurrences of harassment



▲ A model on the catwalk of the Charity Fashion Show (VINCENT HASSELBACH)

are neither unusual nor unexpected for women of colour".

They also said that the incident is representative of a growing problem, describing it as "symptomatic of the increasing hostility white-dominated spaces and institutions project towards people of colour".

The statement argues that the episode demonstrates the failings of tolerance in Cambridge: "Princess Nokia's experience leaves us with the reminder that Cambridge is not yet the safe place it should be for marginalised people, who are still vulnerable to provocation and harassment. As Cambridge students, we must respond to this reality with an embarrassed readiness for change."

The Fashion Show took place on the evening of 15th February at the Cambridge Corn Exchange on Wheeler Street. Proceeds from the show went to The Douglas Bader Foundation, which helps and supports children and adults who are affected by any form of limb loss, congenital or otherwise, or affected by any other similar disability.

CUCFS became embroiled in controversy late last term when it was revealed that the charity it had originally elected to support was unregistered and based only in Florida.

## BACK TO THE FUTURE?

### 1960s Hovertrain idea refloated

A new University project is aiming to continue an abandoned 1960s plan to build a 'hover-train' in Cambridgeshire. The hovertrain was to use magnets and cushioning to travel at 300 miles per hour, but in 1973, after millions of pounds of government funding, it was abandoned due to problems creating tracks in the soft fenlands. Recently, however, the Cambridge Archaeological Unit of the University of Cambridge stumbled across a promotional film for the project, and there are now hopes that the hovertrain might race along the fens after all.

## HAWKWARD SITUATION

### Harris hawk halts Trinity clock

The historic clock of Trinity College was been stopped for exactly 186 seconds after a Harris hawk in pursuit of a pigeon got stuck behind its minute-hand. The hawk swooped down on the pigeon as it was perched on top of the clock, but subsequently became trapped behind the hand. College staff immediately ran out to rewind the timepiece and were able to return it to motion. The clock has a famously idiosyncratic dual chime: every hour, a low-pitched Trinity chime is followed by a higher St John's chime.

## NOT IN THEIR GOOD BOOKS

### Man accidentally locked in Waterstones

The Cambridge branch of Waterstone's on Sidney Street has apologised to a man who was locked in the shop on Monday. Oliver Soskice said that he had been browsing on the upper floors of the shop when he found himself trapped in the branch with the alarm ringing. It took an hour for a manager to come and free him. The store has said it will review its closing policy. Soskice responded good-naturedly, saying: "There are worse places to be trapped than in a Waterstone's." He apparently found himself in a similar situation in the UL last month.

## HOUSE OF CARDS

### Trump dossier spy accused of Union trick

An acquaintance of Christopher Steele, the spy named as author of a dossier which contained allegations regarding Russian blackmail of President Donald Trump, has claimed that he employed dirty tricks during his campaign to be elected President of the Cambridge Union in 1985. The acquaintance said that Steele had wrongly accused his opponent for the position, Lance Forman, of supporting apartheid. Forman nevertheless won the vote, but Steele would be elected to the position a year later.

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## Interview Nigel Inkster

# “ We need to fight smart ”

● Nigel Inkster, MI6's former director of operations and intelligence channels all his experience to give **Toby Fleming** his view on the fight against ISIS



“ It would be difficult to find anyone with more knowledge of violent extremism – or terrorism, a term he prefers – than Nigel Inkster. After 31 years working for MI6, Inkster eventually retired in 2006 as Deputy Chief and Head of Operations, and now holds the position of Director of Future Conflict and Cyber Security at the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS).

So, as an authority that ought to be taken seriously, it is interesting that – counter to the prevailing zeitgeist – he plays down the existential threat of Islamic terrorism. “From a statistical perspective, the good news is that very few terrorist movements have ever achieved their objectives”, he tells me. “The figure is somewhere between five and ten per cent, and those that have succeeded have tended to be attached to an identifiable and resolvable political issue, that commands a level of genuine popular support, and is susceptible to negotiation – Northern Ireland being a case in point.”

Inkster is also quick to highlight the fact that the West, at least, is currently living in the least violent period in human history to date, where the figure for those dying violently is close to zero per cent. However, as I push him on the point, he does admit that ISIS cannot be ignored.

▲ Nigel Inkster, former director at MI6 (CHATHAM HOUSE)

“We have to be prepared to fight if necessary”, he says, “but we need to fight smart and to recognise that the fight has to take place on a much broader front than the purely military dimension.”

Indeed, he continues by noting there is no prospect of negotiating with ISIS because, “you simply cannot negotiate with fanatics because they are incapable of making the sort of compromises that are an essential function of any negotiation process.” He shrugs. “In a case like that, there is no other alternative but to fight.”

However, I wonder if – in the age of soft power – that combating ISIS by cutting off their supply lines of fighters through propaganda which undermines their recruitment methods is a more viable option?

“I think there is an issue about the way in which you deal with IS propaganda, and that should not be about shooting the messenger, it should be about combating the message.” This is precisely Inkster’s area of expertise: he is an authority on cyber-security in relation to international terrorism, having authored a number of books and articles on the subject, as well as heading up cyber-security at IISS.

And it is evident, as he explains that “some of the big media giants, the Facebooks and the Googles, are now adopting a much more responsible

approach to content on their services. They’ve moved a long way from their original position, which was that they were simply service providers and not responsible for policing content. That has changed quite significantly.”

For Inkster, one of the key issues for the West is that they must be aware of the basis for the emergence of terrorist organisations. After all, he points out that, “violent extremism is rooted in grievance, and at the end of the day, it doesn’t really matter all that much what the grievance is. All that’s needed to turn it into a threat is an ideology that frames the grievance in a broader context and gives it an intellectual and moral justification, and a mobilisation mechanism that gets the individual to the point where he or she is prepared to resort to violence.”

Indeed, Inkster explains that not recognising this basis could lead to trouble for the West on an internal level, before noting that “the scope to exploit grievance is by no means confined to the Islamic world. There’s always going to be a plentiful supply of ideologues, marketing simple solutions to complex problems.”

“Brexit and the rise of Donald Trump are indicative of this sort of action”, he continues. “Globalism and the relentless march of technological change have undoubtedly empowered violent extrem-

“ Very few terrorist movements have ever achieved their objectives ”

ism to an unprecedented degree. And the ways in which technology is set to evolve could well provide a fecund source of future grievances if it destroys existing employment options – particularly for an aspirational middle class – without replacing them with comparable alternatives.”

So it seems that, in his view, Western governments are, in essence, going to struggle to counter extremism without addressing the unstoppable tides of globalisation and technological development. But how about the fights they could win: are they doing the right things to counter the threat posed by ISIS?

“I think that certainly in relation to Iraq, the way things are being done there, which is providing capacity building equipment and enabling the government itself to deal with the problem, is right,” he explains. “Dealing with the manifestations of Islamic State that impact on Western countries’ own security is simply an extension of existing counter-terrorism practices and policies, so there’s no need for anything radically different there.”

On President Trump’s ban on immigration from predominantly Muslim countries, however, he is less positive. “That’s something that certainly could not have been the subject of consultation with the intelligence community,” he says emphatically, “because the intelligence community would have advised against it. No question about it.”

And he is also less certain about the West’s handling of ISIS in Syria, partly because, as he notes, it is “more complicated. Islamic State is a key actor in a complex, multi-faceted civil war that is taking place and is very much the creation of Bashar al-Assad. He’s created a Frankenstein’s monster,” he says dramatically.

So should the West have acted earlier to suppress ISIS in Syria? “I think, in retrospect, failure by the US and its allies to intervene in Syria at one particular point was counter-productive, and that was when Obama drew the so-called ‘red line’ over the Syrian state’s use of chemical weapons. I think we’ll look back at that as a seminal moment in the evolution of this conflict.”

“And not to back up that threat with the reality of force was a mistake,” he continues, “because that really created the vacuum into which Russia has stepped. Smug disengagement may make us feel better about ourselves, but it’s not going to do anything to solve any problems, least of all ours.”

Inkster has this uncanny ability to highlight the complexity of the threats posed by violent extremism. Counter-intuitively, however, his message is one of reassurance, setting the current situation in its historical context and recognising that there is nothing dramatically new in the challenges we face today.





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## Science

# Humans want to live forever, but is



Polly Evans

## Is it time to slow down a little?

Supposedly, technology is making our attention spans shorter but our life spans longer. What does this leave us with, a hellish eternity of gormlessly scrolling through life's newsfeeds never bothering to actually take anything in? According to a 2015 *Time* article, our attention span has become shorter than that of a goldfish. This is based on a study by Microsoft which states that the time it takes us to lose concentration has slipped from 12 seconds in the year 2000 to a mere eight seconds in 2015. For comparison, we're now lagging behind the goldfish's impressive nine seconds. It seems to me sad, if not slightly unjust, that after millions of years of evolution we have somehow found ourselves unable to exceed the intellectual capacity of a small fish. Supposedly we can be proud that our ability to multi-task has improved, but this is to the detriment of our ability to concentrate on any one thing.

▲ We often feel like time is in short supply  
(ALEKS)

The article attributes our increasingly diluted approach to the mobile revolution, an age in which we are spoon-fed instantaneous access to information. Nowadays, if we can't remember something, we can just google it rather than trying to work it out.

This need for speed facilitated by technology has affected almost all of our interactions – many of us would prefer a Netflix night in to a cinema excursion, short clickbait articles to lengthy novels, Facebook feeds to fantasy fiction. Our culture is defined by its need for instant gratification – we want our packages the next day, our Uber waiting at the door, our fun flat-packed and sex in a box. We want quick and efficient returns; we are ruled by a childish impulsiveness. Sometimes even technology can't keep up with our impatience. A 2012 study by Compsci professor Ramesh Sitaraman, examining the habits of 6.7 million internet users, found people were willing to be patient for two seconds of a video loading before they started abandoning. After five seconds, the abandonment rate was 25 per cent. At 10 seconds, half were gone.

Why is everybody in a rush? It's as if we are worried that time is slipping away from us. Would things be different if we knew we could live forever? Billions are being poured into biotech firms in Silicon Valley trying to solve the 'problem' of ageing. Scientists remain in disagreement about how far human life can be stretched, with some believing no more than the current 120 years or so, whereas others thinking there is no limit. Aubrey de Grey, English author and biomedical gerontologist who remains largely unpopular with mainstream scientists, estimates that the first person to live up to 1,000 years is probably already alive. How would this affect our impulse-driven lifestyles? Perhaps the

knowledge that we're not pressed for time would make redundant the Carpe Diem mentality that we have to live life in the moment, and take everything as quickly as possible. Perhaps our quality of life would dramatically increase and we wouldn't need technology to make things happen immediately. Rather than take an Uber we might prefer to walk home in the dwindling twilight, and Netflix nights in could be replaced by three-day Truffaut screenings. Fast-food takeaways could be replaced by 12-course feasts.

To be honest, I don't think longevity is directly connected to quality of life – people in the Middle Ages took the time to read the whole of *The Canterbury Tales*, and their life expectancy was only around 40. In the Middle Ages, they didn't have much else going on in terms of entertainment. Now, we are overwhelmed with things to do and watch, and we just don't have enough time for it. Even if we could live till a thousand, I'll bet that we still manage to whittle away hundreds of years playing BuzzFeed quizzes and watching *RuPaul's Drag Race*. I don't think that it's time that we're lacking; rather, our impulsive, insatiable desire to have everything instantaneously comes from the illusion that we have no time. Our consumer-driven society that feeds off our insecurities is turning us into egotistical commitment phobes who discard their old phones the minute the Apple Store releases a new model. We're always waiting to see if something better comes along.

However, sensibilities are shifting as people are starting to react to the quick-fix nature of the digital world. People are returning to the slow-burning pleasures of analogue – *The Guardian* reported that, two months ago, vinyl sales overtook digital for the first time in the UK. People are slowing down their lifestyles, too – just look at

► François Truffaut in 1965  
(JAC. DE NIJS)



the slow food movement, started in Italy by Carlo Petrini in 1986 as a reaction against fast food chains, or the increasing interest in slow medicine, focused on identifying the root of health challenges and creating thoughtful, step-by-step approaches. Even Netflix, despite being quicker to access than a film at the cinema, provides us with a much longer character development than a 90-minute movie can. Walter White's transformation into Heisenberg had us gripped for the duration of 62 episodes.

So we are consuming information quicker than ever before, and young people are probably more likely to watch Zoella than read *Hamlet*. But gradually, the reactions against our impulsive culture suggest that, although we might not yet be able to live forever, we are trying to take things a bit more slowly. Technology helps us access things quickly, but it's also catching on to the fact that our priorities are changing. If you prefer film photography to digital, Instagram has a tag for it – #filmisnotdead. And if it's mindfulness you're after, there's an app for that, too.

“ Sometimes even technology can't keep up with our impatience ”



# it really all it's cracked up to be?

## Telomeres

### Nature's anti-ageing scheme

**Zi Ran Shen**  
Staff Science Writer

The thread of never-ending life has always been a part of the canvas of myths and religion. Every culture has their own telling of the tale. The Abrahamic religions have heaven, the Norse gods ate Iðunn's apples, the Greek gods ate ambrosia and drank nectar, the Taoists sought the elixir of life, and the medieval alchemists sought the philosopher's stone. Though these ancient symbols may have been metaphoric, with cur-

“*To find immortality, one must understand mortality*”

rent technology eternal youth feels to be almost within our grasp. With organisations like Google Calico, A4M (American Academy of Anti-Aging Medicine), Human Longevity Inc and sponsors like Peter Thiel and Mark Zuckerberg, it seems as though humanity may finally taste that fountain of life.

To find immortality, one must understand mortality. Cells seemingly repair and divide without end, but they exhibit signs of ageing as well. The crux of the issue lies in the inherent structure of our genetic material, DNA. Human DNA is linear, so there must be two ends to the double helix. Every time DNA is replicated, information on the ends of the strands are lost. With increasing divisions, more and more information is lost to the point where the cell is no longer able to function – cells' senescence. Cells with this kind of DNA structure must

have an extra layer of molecular protection which ensure many healthy divisions before their eventual death. These protective elements are called telomeres. Telomere research has been a hot topic within the anti-ageing community, as its length is directly correlated to longevity. These DNA aglets are extra pieces of DNA which cap on to the ends of the double helix strand and tightly wraps itself together to protect the genetic material both from chemical and mechanical damage. However, this method is not fool-proof. Telomeres also run out, and with time all cells eventually die.

The miracle of the fountain of life, if it exists at all, can only be found in the moment of conception. In embryos, the DNA is refreshed, and old used telomeres are extended. Embryonic cells are a rare type of cells which express telomerase, the only protein capable of extending the



▲ Peter Thiel  
(DAVID ORBAN)

length of telomeres. These little molecular machines use RNA as a template to extend the depleted telomeres, elongating the lifespan of the cell. Telomerases are also expressed in some stem cells, which supply the body with red blood cells and repair large damages. As attractive as telomerases sound as a solution to age, their over-expression can also become a problem. Many tumours and cancer types use telomerase as a tool to extend their lifespan indefinitely, outliving their healthy counterparts and taking over the body. To fine-tune the activity of this protein such that humans achieve eternal life while escaping the potential over-proliferation of cells is something that has yet to be achieved.

Telomeres may only be one piece of the longevity puzzle. Many other biological processes are affected by age, although the precise mechanisms remain shrouded in mystery. Mitochondria become less efficient, transport to and from the nucleus becomes much less regulated, proteins are misshapen more often, and the DNA racks up too many mutations to efficiently repair them. It looks as though humanity still has so much to learn about mortality that the seemingly tiny step to eternal life may actually be a journey of a thousand miles.

Once we understand the essentials of life, will eternity still be attractive? The underlying basis of all living things is a dynamic equilibrium, meaning that balance is maintained through constant life and death. The confusion of age for life has been recorded since the time of the Greeks. When Eos mistakenly asked for immortality and not eternal youth, what she really obtained from Zeus was eternal torture. The ancient Homeric hymns only remember Tithonus as a withered old man with no strength to even sit up, certainly an anecdote to keep us grounded in our search.



◀ Google's Campus in Mountain View, CA (SHAWN COLLINS)

## Ethics of forever

### Is it right to prolong life?

**Felicity Hall**  
Science Correspondent

We live in a culture obsessed with trying to live longer. On an individual level the desire to prolong life has obviously sensible effects, with widespread endorsement of positive health practices: eat five fruit or vegetables every day, exercise two to three times per week, don't drink too much alcohol. A focus on health and wellness is transforming society into a trendy collection of zumba-going, kale-consuming fitness fanatics. While in some cases perhaps taken a little far, overall a greater focus on health can surely only be a good thing.

But, increasingly, we are seeing a shift away from the individual towards a focus on prolonging life. In 2013, Google founded its \$1.3 billion project, Calico, a research and development biotech which aims at combating ageing and age-related disease. Every year enormous amounts of money is pumped into similar endeavours. In 2015, doctor and

investor Joon Yun launched a competition, offering \$1 million in prize money to anyone able to “hack the code of life”. The aim, he says, is to prolong the homeostatic ability of the body to recover from everyday stresses. Hacking the code of life would not just mean living longer, but staying healthier for longer.

Yun sees ageing as something akin to cancer, a defect of the body that has the potential to be solved and eradicated. So much for the saying that the only things certain in life are death and taxation. When our grandparents were born, they were expected to live until the age of 65. Doctors and scientists consider that today's generation can expect to live over the age of 120. And, given their claims, this is only set to increase further.

The fundamental assumption behind this research and fascination with prolonging life is that living is better than not living. This is no doubt a reasonably universal assumption, underpinning various ethical doctrines, laws, and ways of life. But is it enough to justify the projects of the likes of Yun and Google?

The preceding raises an ethical question: are we right to be pumping so much money into research aiming at prolonging life? On the one hand, it seems that knowledge gained in the fields of medicine and biology can only be a good thing. The more we know about the human body, the more likely we are to

make breakthroughs in other areas of medicine. While projects like Calico look partly at ageing, they are also conducting extensive research into diseases, like cancer, to which we are particularly prone when older. No doubt, increasing our understanding of the ageing body and why we become susceptible to illness and disease is a crucial endeavour, particularly if its effects include improving our quality of life.

On the other hand, we might question whether we are right, in an increasingly over-populated and under-resourced world, to be focusing so much time and energy on research that, if successful, will only worsen this situation? This is certainly a question we can pose to the likes of Yun, who are focusing exclusively on “solving” ageing and enabling us to live longer.

Indeed, vast amounts of the focus on prolonging life is coming from Silicon Valley. Investors include hedge funds and powerful companies. No doubt the results of such research, if the projects proved successful, would be available only to the richest; a pursuit of the wealthy for the wealthy.

How do we justify this when one in eight people go to bed hungry every night? Is it not a cruel irony that those so obsessed with prolonging life overlook the basic needs of so many to live any sort of life?

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# Comment

## Ronald Coyne does not represent us

*The media loves Cambridge elitism, but ignores our attempts to combat it*



Nandini Mitra  
studies History  
at King's

Nandini  
Mitra

Last week, *The Independent* ran a piece calling out Oxbridge's 'problem with elitism' in response to an incident involving Ronald Coyne, the student who, in a disgusting act of cruelty, burned a £20 note in front of a homeless man in Cambridge. This incident has since made national news and has rightly disgusted the nation.

What has been missed, however, is how much it's disgusted those of us connected to the likes of Coyne by the name of the University alone. Much coverage of Coyne has generalised Oxbridge students as a homogeneous entity who spend our time revelling in riches and dismissing the acts of people like Coyne as 'just Oxbridge things'. This could not be further from the truth, and does a great disservice to the efforts of students and staff who push constantly against Cambridge's history of institutional inequality.

I'll be the first to admit that Oxbridge does have an elitism problem – both universities have been bastions of privilege for several centuries. Oxbridge graduates make up one in four of our MPs, 74 per

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He  
represents  
the very  
worst of  
Oxbridge  
privilege  
”

cent of the top judiciary and just over half of Britain's top journalists. The city's population as a whole is also representative of the socioeconomic stratification which has characterised Britain as a nation obsessed with class. House prices in Cambridge have risen faster than any other city in England and Wales, inflating by 50 per cent in the period between 2010 and 2016, and a recent report released by homeless charity Shelter found that 144 people in the city are homeless. Cambridge is a place where privilege and poverty sit cheek by jowl, and Coyne's act exacerbated this divide. He represents the very worst of Oxbridge privilege. He does not represent us all.

The infamous Bullingdon Club occupies several column inches annually with stories of its members and their heinous behaviour. Such a focus is not unjustified, but the student derision for such drinking societies rarely accompanies it. Nor do the efforts of Oxbridge students who are the opposite of the image perpetuated by generalising media coverage. Though it would be naïve to claim that the likes of Coyne don't inhabit the University in large numbers, the media's insistence on presenting them as the norm indicates a fetishist obsession with painting all Oxbridge students as toffs with (literal) cash to burn.

But, there are many Cambridge stu-

dents who are hyper-aware of how fortunate they are to be at the University, and many who have overcome the odds in earning their place here. These students are often the ones who are addressing the problem of elitism every day. Yet, the same journalists who generalise all of us as entitled snobs are the ones who criticised students seeking to confront Oxbridge's institutional history. Weird bacchant initiation ceremonies and glitzy balls have become cultural legend; the reality of Cambridge students carving spaces for the historically marginalised, fighting back against a student mental health crisis, and leading protests against the further marketisation of higher education are never picked up by national broadsheets. Knowing the work we do to fight the Oxbridge stereotype, it



▲ The home of Cambridge's infamous Pitt Club (CMGLEE)

is frustrating to see the totalising image of Oxbridge in a media that insists on suggesting that we are all alike to Ronald Coyne. It is one question to ask why the media is so obsessed with Oxbridge students. It is another to ask why the papers are so obsessed with painting us all in the same, disingenuous image.

In the days after the news of the Coyne incident broke, Cambridge students have signed petitions to have him expelled from the University. Student comic Facebook pages have denounced him, stating that "every single one of us feels ashamed of the actions of this one individual". A student-run appeal requesting donations for Jimmy's Homeless Shelter – a local provider of support for the homeless – has, at the time of writing, reached 93 per cent of its £3,000 target within a day. The media has missed this subsequent outrage present within Cambridge in its insistence upon presenting Coyne as symbolic of us all. The privilege Oxbridge affords us is huge, and as Millard notes, is fuelled by structural inequalities present in the nation's institutions. Coyne is a product and benefactor of that, but he is not representative of us all. Just as students have taken the responsibility to fight the likes of him and what he represents, the media, too, has to take a responsibility in accurately presenting us as we do so.

## I'm a special snowflake. So what?

Yukiko Lui **Pale, Stale, Male**

Since when did authenticity become a bad thing? One of the charges most frequently levelled against today's young people is that we are excessively self-centred, bordering on narcissistic. The 'special snowflake' generation are somehow too sensitive on the one hand, and yet, too aggressive in their pursuits of authentic identities on the other. It's

alleged that the students on university campuses asking for trigger warnings on course materials and the young non-binary people proudly thwarting the gender binary are agents of some organised worldwide conspiracy whose

sole purpose is causing mild inconvenience.

The lamentation that young people are somehow degenerate is repeated by each generation as it grows older and a new cohort of people take up the mantle of youth. But proponents of the argument have gained some footing in the internet age. Now, the alleged narcissism of the younger generation is online, just a click or two away. At the heart of the scepticism about 'special snowflakes' is a refusal to acknowledge the plurality of human experience, in itself predicated on a very narrow conception of the boundaries of human identity.

The fear about the adoption of different, 'fake' identities to which young people subscribe is unfounded. The plurality of identities and labels we see now is not the product of some generation-specific glitch. These identities have always existed and have always been legitimate, but we have not always lived in a society which validates them. But we are now living in an era that is more inclusive

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Identity is  
no longer  
a luxury to  
be enjoyed  
only by the  
pale, stale  
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than ever. Information about different identities, particularly gender and sexual identities, is more freely available. And it is a luxury to have a choice as to the performance of your identity – for a long time marginalised people have had identities foisted on them. Polari, the language of gay subculture, is just one example of the many ways that identities have been forcibly suppressed. And it continues to this day with, for example, Facebook's attempts to have users register under their 'real' names, cornering trans people with names the site deems 'fake'.

We are seeing the start of the slow domino fall of discriminatory views, and are becoming better at articulating authenticity. In our brave new world, an authentic identity is no longer a luxury to be enjoyed only by overrepresented groups – the pale, stale or male. Those begrudging the younger generation of the pleasures of a life lived authentically shouldn't be so quick to judge. We need to stop focusing on the solidarity of sameness and focus instead on solidarity through empathy and allyship.



We need to place our faith and trust back in the true lived experiences of our peers. Only when we discard our suspicion of difference will we be able to achieve real allyship and inclusion. This requires accepting inclusion, compassion and the recognition of other people as the real, authentic human beings they are. We are only just developing the vocabulary with which to accurately describe the things we might always have known we are. Young people are the generation most adept at accepting difference; we know what it feels like to be othered. Being a 'special snowflake' doesn't have to be pejorative. It can mean we've opened ourselves up to the array of different identities and found that diversity does not present a threat. In some circles diversity is often conceptualised as threatening a certain way of life or worldview, but accepting identity as multifaceted can eradicate this fear. If we can widen our definition of authenticity, the groundless anxiety about 'special snowflakes' will melt away.

▲ LIZZY O'BRIEN



## Comment

Cartoon by [Ben Brown](#)



### Online

Labour is doomed unless Corbyn goes

by Felix Peckham



Betsy DeVos: America's new plutocrat

by Nate Cain



Column Where's the contemporary art we deserve?

Guy Birch

The best words



[varsity.co.uk/comment](http://varsity.co.uk/comment)

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# There is nothing complicated about torture

*Torture cannot be compared to animal testing. It is cruel, inhumane and never a necessary evil*



Patrick Wernham is Deputy Magazine Editor and studies History at Downing College

Patrick Wernham

It is hard to disagree with the overarching idea of Anna Jennings's Comment piece last week. As it argued, the world is an increasingly complicated place, and we need nuanced rather than simple solutions, no matter how electorally successful the latter may be. It's just a shame that the example chosen to illustrate the argument was torture, as there's nothing complicated or nuanced about torture. It is wholly, unequivocally wrong.

I think it's important to clarify what exactly torture involves. In her efforts to chart the changing meaning of torture throughout history, Jennings succeeded too in obfuscating what the reality of torture is today. It is waterboarding. It is simulated drowning, feeling like your lungs are about to burst until you lose consciousness or start violently throwing up water. If it's not that, it's your genitalia being electrocuted, or being hung upside down for hours on end. We should remember that when people, whether that's Donald Trump or anyone else, are talking about torture in 2017, this is what they're talking about.

For some people though, that doesn't matter. One of the most common arguments is that torture is a necessary evil. People like to envision *Homeland*-style interrogation scenes, where there's a ticking time-bomb in the middle of London, and if the good guys can extract

the information in time, only then will everyone be saved. Torture might be terrible for that one person, but if it going to save the lives of so many more, then surely it's justified?

Yet for all the number of times that kind of scene appears in fiction, it doesn't quite work like that in reality. In her piece, Jennings says that we don't know how effective torture is. Leaving aside the fact that a policy of 'not really knowing if it works but choosing to err on the side of torture' is a bizarre one, that simply isn't true. Despite what President Trump might claim (and he does say *believe me, folks*), torture does not work.

There is absolutely no precedent for torture having produced information which then saved lives. It's not hard to understand why that's the case: when people are being put through such intense pain, they will say anything and everything to stop being tortured, regardless of how true it is. Moreover, scientific studies have noted that torture is actually less likely to produce correct information. Such is the stress that an individual is put through, their ability to remember things and think clearly is severely compromised. Shane O'Mara, a professor of experimental brain research at Trinity College Dublin, in his book *Why Torture Doesn't Work*, provides the example of a Cambodian torture survivor who

“We shouldn't condemn torture just because it is ineffective. It is morally wrong”

confessed to being, among other things, a hermaphrodite, CIA spy, Catholic bishop, and the King of Cambodia's son.

So torture just makes people say whatever they think will make it stop, and in fact makes it less likely that they will be able to remember the truth. But even in some parallel universe where torture did produce accurate intelligence, there would still be a problem. In the UK, evidence gained under torture is not permissible in a court. In order to prosecute therefore, authorities would be reliant on whatever they had been able to gather not through torture, rendering the actual torture somewhat pointless.

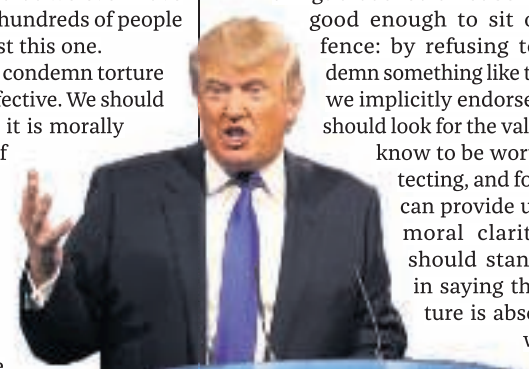
The comparison made in Jennings's piece between torture and animal testing is therefore a completely false one. For one, humans are not animals to be abused. One would have thought that this is pretty obvious, but the fact that the comparison was made is indicative of the contempt that potential torture victims are held in. Dodgy similes aside, it is wrong to think that we even have the option of saving hundreds of people if only we torture just this one.

But we shouldn't condemn torture just because it is ineffective. We should condemn it because it is morally wrong. What kind of society would we be living in if we were to sanction such barbaric behaviour, if we were to justify inflicting such agony on other human beings? We

could hardly expect to call ourselves a civilised society, and to preach values such as compassion and decency (as I'm sure most people would want us to), if we were also giving official approval to such cruelty.

We should see it as our responsibility to set the tone for the kind of world we want. This is true both at home and internationally. We should be striving for that moral high ground. If we were to practice torture, it would become much harder to condemn other countries that committed human rights abuses. Purely practically, it sets a dangerous precedent: if a US citizen were to be tortured by another government, they wouldn't have much ground to stand on. Within the country, it would be a deeply troubling message if the government were to say that such abhorrent behaviour is sometimes justifiable. At some point, a line has got to be drawn.

One of the worst things we could do in response would be to complicate things that should not be. It's not good enough to sit on the fence: by refusing to condemn something like torture, we implicitly endorse it. We should look for the values we know to be worth protecting, and for what can provide us with moral clarity. We should stand firm in saying that torture is absolutely wrong.



► President Donald Trump recently endorsed waterboarding (GAGE SLDMORE)



## Comment

# Divestment is a mirage. Here's what we do instead

Cambridge should use its money to invest in reducing the cost of renewables



Nicholas Mauveas  
studies Medicine  
at Selwyn College

About a week ago, a team of Cambridge students released a video accusing the University Council of not accepting a motion (called a 'Grace') for the University of Cambridge to divest.

By divesting, what they want is for Cambridge to reduce its ownership of fossil fuel company stock and bonds from £370 million to effectively zero. Cambridge has a £5 billion endowment and invests it across a variety of sectors.

I assume the goal of the creators of the video is the same as mine: to prevent catastrophic climate change. But we must consider if divestment really is the best way to push for this? Does it have any practical effects? I would argue that it doesn't.

When we talk about divestment, we mean selling off our stock and bonds of fossil fuel companies. Who are we selling them to? Other people, funds, institutional investors. Who do we buy stock that is already in the market from? Other people, funds, institutional investors. William McAskill makes this point succinctly in *The New Yorker* "Well, what happens is that someone who doesn't have ethical concerns will snap up the bargain. They'll buy the shares for nine dollars apiece, and then sell them for 10 dollars to one of the other thousands of investors who don't share the university's moral scruples. The market price stays the same; the company loses no money and notices no difference."

If we were talking about subscribing

to a new stock issue where the money would go directly to the company, it's a different matter. They would use it to invest in fossil fuel exploration for example, and it would be significant to oppose Cambridge University buying some.

I have been accused that what I say is just investing in fossil fuels now and damaging the climate so we have more money to fix it later. I think this is based on a fundamental misunderstanding of investment. Subscribing to new stock gives money to a company, buying stock on the market does not.

In any case, in the video we are told that the University Council cited their fiduciary duty (their duty as guardians of the University's funds) to ensure that the University's funds are invested appropriately as justification for refusal to enforce the Grace.

Divestment is portrayed as a moral imperative and as a way to ultimately lead to the goal of reducing fossil fuel consumption. An argument for it is often stigmatisation of the affected companies, to which great importance is placed. Also, they say, how can Cambridge advocate clean energy while investing in fossil fuels? But given that I have shown divestment in no way reduces the revenue or profits of those companies, it is essentially misguided.

Campaigners argue that the symbolic gesture of divestment has great power. However, given the limited amount of time campaigners can put into influencing the University of Cambridge with respect to climate change, it might be

better not to spend it on something with so little practical effect. Climate change is far too important and its consequences are far too dire.

Let us use the dividends (in short, a portion of profits which is given to stockholders every year) to set up a ring-fenced fund with a specific name, a catchy name, for research into renewable energy and seed money for renewable start-ups in Cambridge. Then let us use our position on those companies' boards to attempt to influence them to spend money on renewables research. We cannot at the same time be diversified (a central tenet of investing) and own a large enough portion of one company. However, hopefully, we can ask for a seat on the board of small companies and attempt to influence how they spend their research money. Furthermore, we could use some of these seats to create a media spectacle with the brand of Cambridge University, although I suspect that would violate our fiduciary duty.

The University of Cambridge is at the forefront of research in engineering and science. The return on the entire fossil fuel industry currently is about five percent. If we get £18 million per year from our investments and use that to back Cambridge students and academics. Imagine what we could do and how much we could accomplish with both money and talent.

One of the biggest obstacles to fossil fuel replacement is renewable energy cost per unit and we can help in reducing it.



▲ ARNOLD PAUL

Nicholas  
Mauveas

## Why are we asking whether Jews are 'white'?

Miikka Jaarte 28 per cent fear

Over the last few weeks, Cambridge has seen an unprecedented amount of anti-Semitic hate. Most prominently, a series of flyers distributed at the Sidgwick Site denying the Holocaust, and a swastika spray-painted on the map of Jesus Green, appeared within a few days of each other. That such blatantly horrifying bigotry against Jews can occur in Cambridge, usually thought to be something of a safe haven for Jewish students, has got me thinking about the history of anti-Semitism and the relationship we hold with the mythical category of 'whiteness'.

A recent article in *The Atlantic* titled 'Are Jews White?' sparked conversation in the international media about the place of Jews in the Western world. The answer is, of course, clearly not necessarily - Jews can be black, Asian, Middle-Eastern, European or anything in between. Even the urge to ask the question seems to rep-

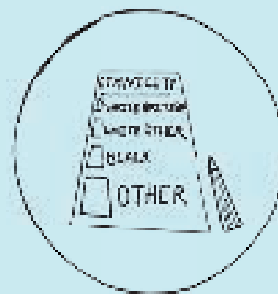
“The Jewish people have bounced in and out of 'whiteness'”

resent the very worst parts of 21st-century identity politics, where every single person must be successfully placed in a racial category so we can evaluate the seriousness of their grievances. But what people interested in the supposed whiteness of Jews are probably asking is whether Jews like me, Woody Allen or other pale Western Jews should be considered a 'real' minority - or whether we enjoy enough privileges to be part of regular old 'whiteness'.

Many groups of people, like Irish-Americans, weren't considered white for a time. They too were seen as an ethnic minority, and were the victims of white supremacy. But after a long period of integration, differences are smoothed out and the lines between social groups are blurred.

This shows that if it is anything, 'whiteness' is a kind of socially constructed club, the entry requirements to which change according to status (although historically, smart-casual dress is preferred). 'Whiteness' is a label of privilege and power in Western countries. So in asking whether Jews are white, we're really asking: are Jews privileged enough to be a part of the club?

Recent events notwithstanding, it would of course be silly to claim that Jews in the UK and other Western countries are terribly badly off. There are certainly many groups who have it worse



than us. But the recent influx of anti-Semitic hate, even in supposedly safe havens like Cambridge, brings home a chilling reminder: this wouldn't be the first time that an otherwise assimilated and well-liked Jewish population is turned into a vilified enemy.

Anti-Semitism, historically speaking, is cyclical. Even in 1920s Germany, Jews were, overall, a respected, influential and well-educated minority. This is a part of the strange nature of anti-Semitic bigotry compared to most other forms of racially motivated hatred. Jews aren't seen as the enemy because they are perceived as being somehow weak, lesser or lazy - rather, anti-Semitism tends to target Jews precisely because of the trope that they are successful, and because this is seen as a mark of some dishonesty, conspiracy or satanic pact. That's why anti-Semitism has always been nearly invisible before its rapid recurrence -

because it allows Jews to succeed, only to turn on them again. Jews have thus been allowed to become 'white' - but only momentarily.

I might sound like I'm wearing a tinfoil hat. I admit that it seems happily unlikely that the system could turn against us as dramatically as it has in the past. But while Jews certainly enjoy many, perhaps most, of the same privileges as white people, recent events even in Cambridge show that these privileges aren't necessarily secure. Flyers denying the Holocaust and spray-painted swastikas are terrifying signs in themselves, and this terror only deepens when considering the current global political climate.

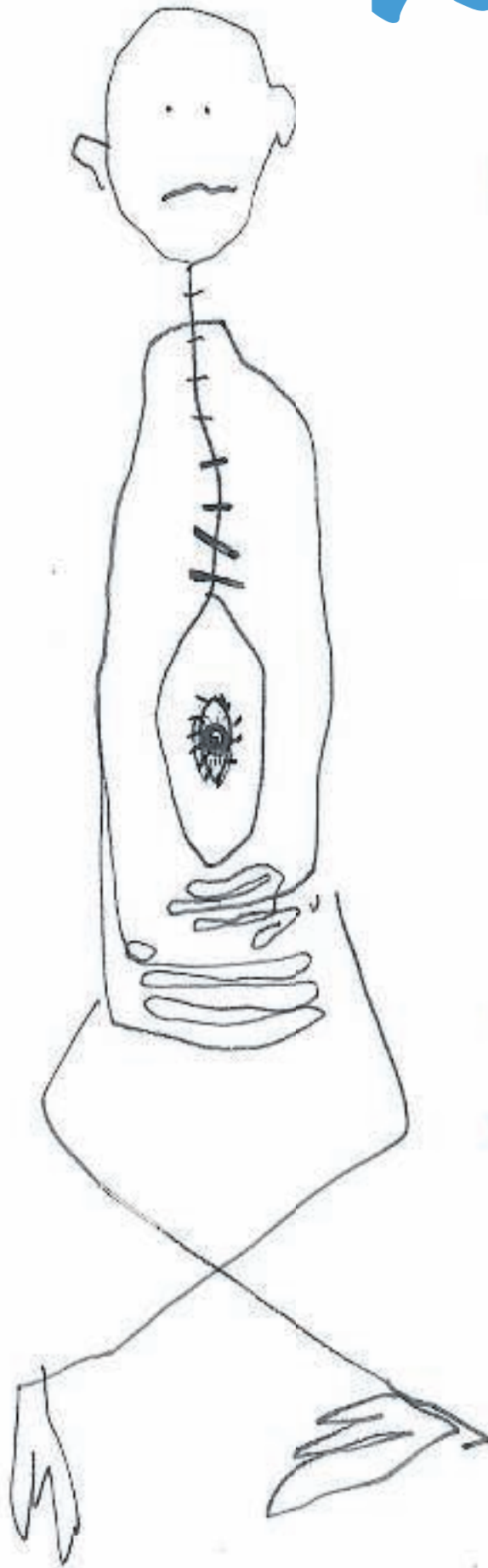
Whether Jews are called white or not has no significance in itself. But for those who are inclined to think that 'whiteness' is a static category of relative social safety, I would point to history. The Jewish people have bounced in and out of 'whiteness', and while it may seem peaceful now, it's seemed similarly peaceful before. What I do think matters is that those of us who care about social justice don't dismiss the fears and worries of Jewish communities because of their relative privilege. Holocaust-denial and swastikas aren't sticks and stones, but they're not too far off.



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# Vulture



## Manning the phones

*Talking to the Nightline volunteers*  
(18-19)

## Order enforced

*Our photography award winner*  
(20-21)

## Fickle and changeable

*An afternoon with Laura Marling*  
(26-27)



# The panic attack that took me to A&E

**Laura Day** talks about how her trip to hospital taught her to take her mental health more seriously

There are 86,400 seconds in a day. The average panic attack lasts for 1,200 seconds.

This means that there are another 85,200 seconds left. These could be filled with any number of things: sleeping, eating, drinking, running, laughing, writing, kissing, smiling, or singing. The possibilities are endless.

But at the end of the day, all you're going to remember is how those panicked 1,200 felt. 1,200 seconds equates to 20 minutes. As time elapses from the initial advent of terror to the very last hitched breath or quiver of a hand, the presence of panic triggers a series of symptoms. The most common are heart palpitations, hyperventilation, sweating, and trembling. But some people experience nausea, tingling fingers, or even chest pain.

At 3am on 25th January, I experienced a terrifying combination of these symptoms. For a moment, as the pain tore through my chest, waking me abruptly, I believed I was going to die. It was dark, and I was alone in my set in college. There was no clear precipitating factor to explain the sudden onset of my pain, nor the

shortness of breath. The night before I'd done a yoga class and had a brew with a friend.

As I fell out of bed onto the carpet, tears rolling down my cheeks, trying to calm my breathing, all that sprang to mind were the words 'heart attack'. Rational thinking then kicked in, and I reminded myself I was too young. At 21, as a non-smoker, teetotaler, and an ardent runner, my heart was surely a picture of near-perfect health.

Fastforward seven hours and it's nearly midday. I'm at Addenbrooke's Hospital, listening to the hum and whirl of the myriad of machines in the Majors department: needle in arm, blood pressure cuff laid across my lap, and ECG stickers adorning my chest. Doctors and nurses flit in and out, measuring things, asking me to rate my pain, questioning my life story. Sympathetic looks, nods of heads, and compassionate mumblings follow.

As it turned out, my heart was fine. Unfortunately, it was my head that was not. I hadn't really had a heart attack. What had happened at 3am was an acute reaction to stress, which presented itself in the most extreme physical symptoms. Over time, the doctor explained, my body had collected stress and anxiety like a child collects stickers. Each time I was met with a stressful event or situation, I had allowed myself to neatly fold it away in the recesses of my mind, where it lay latent and in waiting for the perfect moment to let me know it was there and ready to talk. It was clear, I had quite the collection of stickers.

I'd had a panic attack – admittedly a very bad one. As I sat feeling sorry for myself in Addenbrooke's, I realised that my mental health had finally waged war on my physical health – and it was winning. For years, I'd kept it at bay and I'd found ways to cope. I had taken up running, become obsessed with photography, written prolifically, and smiled my way through the darkest and most anxiety-ridden of days. But the cracks had finally begun to show in my elaborate façade. As I embarked upon my penultimate term in Cambridge, faced applications for further study, saw my younger sister off into a career with the Royal Marines, and questioned my own future prospects. I had, quite simply, broken.

For days afterwards, all I could think about were those 1,200 seconds. I'd always taken pride in being strong. My friends came to me with their problems: I was known

as the 'mother' of the group. But suddenly I wasn't. I held whispered conversations of distress over the phone with my parents. I eventually went home for a few days. I'd hit rock bottom.

Mental health deserves just as much consideration as physical health. For me, it took a frightening blurring of the lines in the early hours of 25th January to realise this. When a patient walks into their GP surgery with a physical complaint, the temptation is generally to find the source of discomfort in a physiological process, and it is often only much later that mental health is given a nod of acknowledgement. For many, it is more acceptable to pin an ache or pain on a physical weakness rather than a mental one.

According to the findings of a YouGov/MQ survey in 2016, roughly 51 per cent of young people aged 16-24 are 'embarrassed' by a mental health diagnosis. I'm completely aware that being at Cambridge for the last (nearly) three years has almost destroyed me. And, quite frankly, I have let it. I've been swept up in the silly remarks made between peers about how late I stayed in the library last night, dealing with the inevitable 'essay crisis'. For a lot of Cambridge students, stress is a badge of honour.

But it's not 'cool' to be stressed, and it's unacceptable to ignore it. I learned this the hard way, and I wish I could rewind to the beginning of Lent term and start again.

I'm a little bit in love with the drama of 25th January. It may sound like a strange sentiment regarding one of the scariest experiences of my 21 years, but it woke me up – literally and figuratively. Since that morning, I have been lectured by a number of people, all of whom have taken the time to explain how stress can be incredibly dangerous for the body, and that I should treat my trip to A&E as a warning. I understand what they are saying. I really do.

I'm grateful to the people at my college (St John's), who have been a fantastic source of support. The women of the College Health Centre have been an unrivalled force of advocacy and reassurance, not just lately, but since day one of my degree.

The porters never fail to smile and say hello as I walk through the lodges, often asking how things are going, or if I'm having a good day. The night porter who dealt with me in the early hours of 25th January was calm and compassionate – two things I desperately needed.

Mental health and physical health are powerfully entwined in each other's grasp. They are hard to disentangle, and one ultimately controls the other. It's the job of charities such as Mind and Heads Together to raise funds to help tackle the stigma, and to help begin the vital conversations needed between friends, family, and colleagues. And it's the work of new websites and apps such as Headcase that shows the rest of the world how strong and resilient people with mental health issues are, and that talking about it is neither strange nor weak.

And so this leaves me with one last thing to say: I have a mental health issue. But, you know what? I'm OK with that, and you should be, too. I live for the other 85,200 seconds in my day, and try not to dwell on just the 1,200 ●

▼ Original Artwork by Sophie Buck

Mental and physical health are powerfully entwined in each other's grasp





# Feeling sick? Why I can't work out why

**Miriam Joy** explains what happens when the symptoms of mental and physical health disorders blur

For years, I suffered from inexplicable bouts of illness where I would feel nauseous and unable to eat for days on end, but I would have no temperature or visible signs of the cause. These almost always coincided with periods of stress.

I wasn't diagnosed with an anxiety disorder until I was in sixth form and suffering from panic attacks, but I remember these stomach problems occurring from about the age of 11. I can't help but think that if somebody had connected my genuine stomach aches with a psychological cause, my anxiety might have been identified before it became so severe.

The trouble is that since these physical symptoms are often invisible and have no provable cause, doctors (and other presumably well-meaning people) dismiss them as being 'all in your head' – by which they mean fake. I can't speak for anyone else, but trying not to vomit in Victoria Station because unfamiliar journeys and crowds making me anxious felt all too real. Moreover, just because that nausea was caused by thinking doesn't mean I can think my way out of it: positivity and 'trying not to worry' have so far failed to produce miraculous results. Besides, if my anxiety were logical it wouldn't be an anxiety disorder.

What needs to be acknowledged is that physical problems with a mental cause are just as real as those caused by a virus or another physical trigger.

There is a flip side, however: some doctors take the correlation between mental health and physical symptoms to an extreme. I have hypermobility syndrome, which causes chronic pain due to frequent dislocations and other joint trouble.

When I went to a rheumatologist, seeking a referral to a pain clinic so I could learn to manage this better, she stopped listening to me after she heard I had an anxiety disorder. I'm not pretending: she literally didn't let me finish my sentence when she asked me about symptoms. I was told that I didn't need the referral, because pain clinics were 'for people with actual chronic pain', and that if I had CBT for my anxiety, the pain would go away.

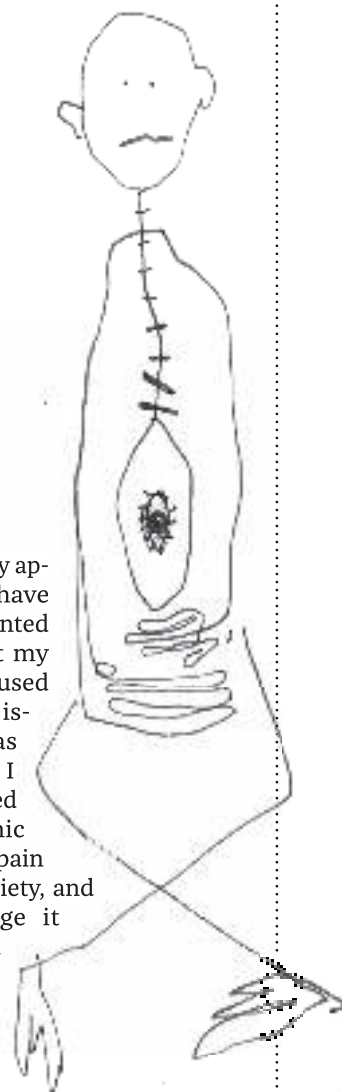
Funnily enough, a psychosomatic dislocation is just as painful as a 'real' one. If only I'd known sooner that my anxiety had caused my shoulders to slip out of place, I might have stopped my various injuries and pain crises from ever happening. Oh, enlightenment!

Not only did she refuse to refer me to the pain clinic, but I was also discharged from the rheumatology department, so I couldn't seek further treatment. Ironically, had I not

been so anxious in my appointment I could have spoken up and presented her with proof that my pain was indeed caused by actual physical issues. Instead, I was on the edge of tears. I shouldn't have needed to, though – chronic pain is still chronic pain if it's caused by anxiety, and learning to manage it would have helped regardless of the cause.

Suffering from both physical and mental health conditions can make it impossible to identify the cause of a symptom. Have I 'glutened' myself (I'm coeliac, so even a crumb can make me ill), or is my stomach aching because I'm anxious? Am I fatigued because of hypermobility or because of depression, and so will getting out of bed help or make it worse? Sometimes it feels like a game of 'pin the tail on the disorder', but there's no way of knowing whether I've got it right. Most of these aren't solvable problems: whether mental or physical, when it comes to chronic illness, learning to manage it is as good as it gets.

But if doctors and peers took the intersection between mental and physical health more seriously, that would be a start ●



## Spiders

I wrote this poem about my latest episode of bipolar depression. I woke up one day in late December, and my mind felt infected. For me, depression doesn't always feel like emptiness. Sometimes depression is accompanied by a skin-crawling agitation, like my mind has been taken host by an infestation of creatures. I tried to incorporate an element of hope in the final lines, but I wrote this while in the midst of a depressive episode, so positivity didn't come naturally. It would seem that growing wings should allow me to break free from the grasp of depression, but ultimately the struggle is futile – flies have wings, but cannot break free from the webs that hold them.

It was a Thursday morning when the spiders came.

I woke up one day, and there they were,

a small cluster in my mind's corner dust,

inked eyes in eights of thousands, noiselessly mocking my every movement.

I made breakfast – eggs and coffee. It tasted like cobwebs.

Come evening dusk, more hatch,

sewing threads of doubt, at first so thin they knit into the

darkness they were birthed in.

Threads soon weave nooses –

a crucifixion,

trapping flights of ideas in their fanciful paths.

Hang forebodingly

until thoughts come no more,

but one, a prayer.

Let me grow wings

Emma Simkin

## Find out more

For more information on anything written in these articles, or for help and support, check out the following websites and organisations:

- Mind
- Heads Together
- MQ
- SANE
- Time To Change
- B-eat
- Headcase

Varsity is looking for more poetry submissions! If you're interested, send an email to [feature@varsity.co.uk](mailto:feature@varsity.co.uk)



# Hello, this is Nightline. What's on

*Three anonymous students reveal what it's like to volunteer for the confidential*

## A problem shared

Confidential. Anonymous. Non-judgemental. Non-directive. These are the values of Cambridge Nightline. 'What's wrong with talking to friends or family?', I hear you say. We are a trained listening service, and unlike most friends and family, we are contactable at 7pm-7am, every night during term time. For some issues it's not always appropriate to approach family or friends: you remain anonymous with Nightline. Friends and family often give advice, but Nightline is broader. We can help you talk through your problems, we can chat about life, or we can just listen. What we have in common with good friends and family is a desire to care.

Unlike the University, we are not bothered about academic achievement.

Being part of Nightline is a fulfilling experience. Meeting like-minded people who have unconditional concern for fellow students' well-being is a constant reminder of the potential for kindness in our world. The shared acknowledgement of the social and mental health problems faced by human beings is reassuring. When British culture tends to perpetuate a stigma around sharing negative emotions, volunteering reminds me that I am not alone in feeling down sometimes.

One in four adults will experience a mental health problem in a given year. But a statistic less commonly quoted is that 100 per cent of us experience some degree of emotion, whether positive, negative, both or neither. While I acknowledge that there are many ways to deal with both everyday and extraordinary emotions, and that Nightline should not be the default source of help, it is nevertheless

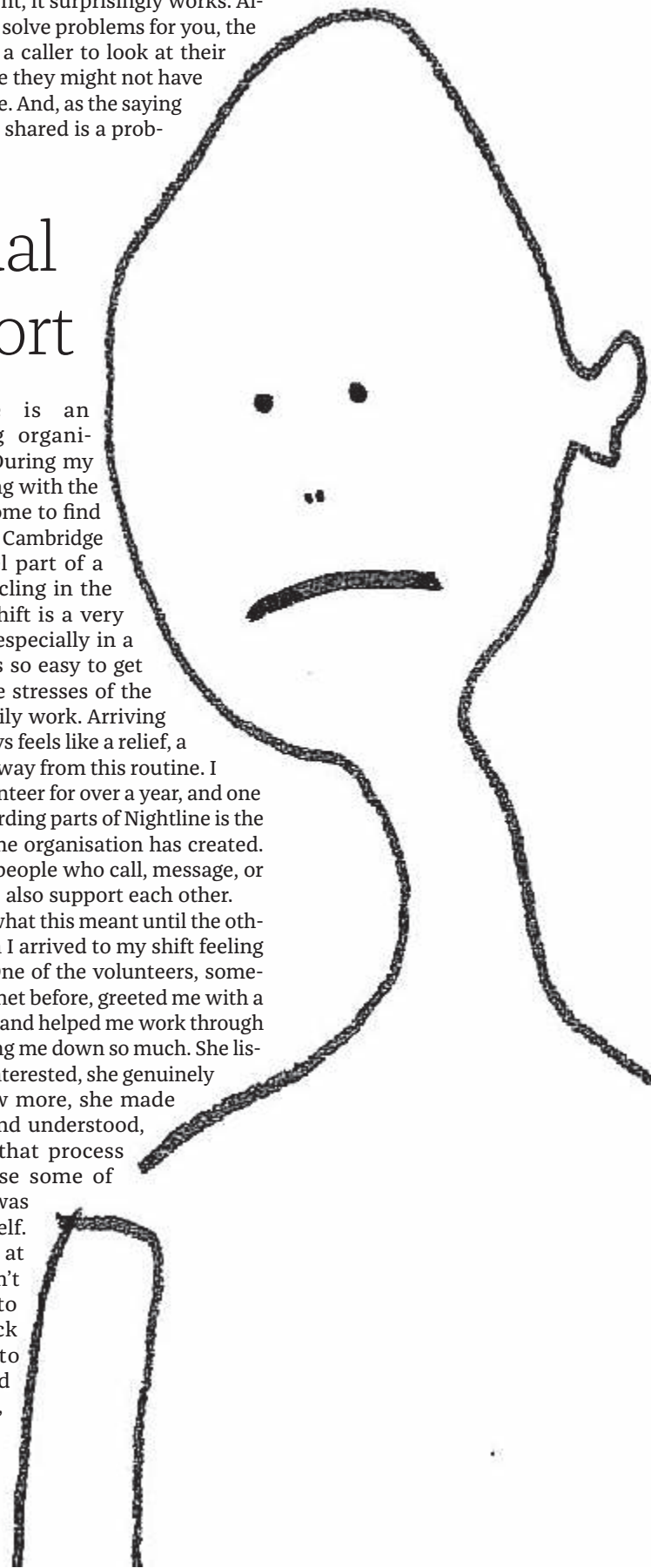
a fantastic resource. No problem is too minor to be shared with someone.

Being a listening service, Nightline does not advise. As difficult as it is to imagine a conversation in which no advice is given to a suffering student, it surprisingly works. Although we don't solve problems for you, the process enables a caller to look at their life from an angle they might not have considered before. And, as the saying goes, 'A problem shared is a problem halved'.

## Mutual support

Nightline is an amazing organisation. During my time volunteering with the service I have come to find a refuge from the Cambridge buzz and to feel part of a large family. Cycling in the dark to go on shift is a very special feeling, especially in a place where it is so easy to get caught up in the stresses of the never-ending daily work. Arriving to my shift always feels like a relief, a chance to hide away from this routine. I have been a volunteer for over a year, and one of the most rewarding parts of Nightline is the sense of home the organisation has created. We support the people who call, message, or email us, but we also support each other.

I wasn't sure what this meant until the other evening when I arrived to my shift feeling overwhelmed. One of the volunteers, someone I had never met before, greeted me with a warm cup of tea, and helped me work through what was bringing me down so much. She listened, she was interested, she genuinely wanted to know more, she made me feel heard and understood, and somehow that process managed to ease some of the pressures I was putting on myself. Being a student at Cambridge doesn't make it easy to take a step back and reflect, to switch off, and think. However, that evening, I felt like a user of Nightline, and I had a safe space to just offload.



► Original  
Artwork by  
Sophie  
Buck

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# your mind?

## listening service

I think this is what Nightline aims to create: I have seen Nightline grow as an organisation, and watched how carefully the loving committee and its volunteers look after every small detail to make sure it can best support its users and everyone involved. It somehow feels like belonging to a warm, large, loving family, and I hope this resembles the experience of its users.

## Self-fulfilment

What's being on shift like? Once you've met the other person you're volunteering with, eating commences (invariably chocolate), chit-chat and occasionally a bit of essay-writing gets done. Then the phone rings, or IM pings up, or both at once, and you're away and in the active listening zone. Because of the non-directive policy you tend to end up making lots of empathetic sounds and generally repeating people's thoughts back to them. I find it's quite therapeutic, and there is something weirdly disconnecting about the process. You know that you're doing something for someone in need, and you are really engaged with them, but at the same time the anonymity and mode of listening makes it less emotionally hard-hitting than you might think.

We get all manner of calls at Nightline: someone telling you about their day, to someone who is silent on the other end or someone in a more extreme situation. Instant messaging feels remarkably different from the calls. Because of the medium, people tend to say more and leave less space for you to respond, also the conversations tend to last a lot longer and can often start really late at night. In a way, they are easier for us as volunteers because we have more time to respond, but equally I find them a lot more draining purely because more information tends to be conveyed.

Some shifts can be busier than others, and, yes, at times you don't get much sleep. But, if no one is call-



ing or messaging you're snuggled up in the volunteer beds in the office. In the morning you get up at 7am to disconnect the lines, and might either cycle home to shower and go to lectures or you might have a lie-in at the office and then shower there. And then, before you leave, a compulsory polaroid with your co-volunteer is taken, to add to the collection on the walls.

Leaving the office into the bustling Cambridge streets is a bit surreal, but I always am super fulfilled after a Nightline shift. It takes a little while to snap out of the active-listening mode of talking to people, and sometimes you're tired, but it has no impact on my Cambridge life that isn't positive; even the sneakiness hiding it from friends is exciting (in a really mundane way, of course). I love it ●

### About Nightline

Nightline is run by students at the University of Cambridge and Anglia Ruskin University. The listening service is open 7pm-7am every night during term time.

If you want to talk, you can call 01223 744 444, email [email@cambridge.nightline.ac.uk](mailto:email@cambridge.nightline.ac.uk) or chat via the website [linkline.org.uk](http://linkline.org.uk).

### COLUMN

## GABS MCGUINNESS

### Our chemical library romance



I'm not here to tell you that many students are taking study drugs to pack more work into the average day – that's old news. Most will have heard of Modafinil and know there's little point in me looking into whether it works, because it really does expand your mental capacity. It won't make you Einstein, but it is a sort of chemical equivalent of Hermione's time-turner: it will help you get through that stack of articles you were meant to read but couldn't quite squeeze in between lectures.

Maybe you don't feel like you need it right now but it goes without saying that during exam term many change their stance on study drugs, being stuck in the maths library at 2am desperately trying to cram more revision into their day, powered by black coffee and Modafinil. I've been there, too.

You can buy Modafinil legally at the moment in the UK, but it is illegal to sell it without a prescription. Although it has been called the "world's first safe smart drug" by Harvard and Oxford university researchers, scientists don't fully know what its long-term effects might be. In terms of the short term, users often report a loss of appetite, headaches, and heightened feelings of jitteriness and anxiety as some of the side effects. Thing is, it's not really that interesting to think about how it works, what it is, where to get it or who takes it. What is interesting, though, is the culture we operate within that tells us that we, on our own, are not quite enough.

First thing: Modafinil is used for people with narcolepsy. But students are using it just to focus that bit extra on their work. What does this say about the standards that are expected of us? Every time we take a study drug it is as though we are saying to ourselves: "I am physically incapable of achieving what this University wants of me on my own." It says that waking hours are not enough time or that, by the middle of the term, we become so sleep-deprived that it doesn't feel like there are many alternatives but to keep our eyes open with chemical assistance. It is to studying what steroids and protein powder are to bodybuilding. But when our degrees cost £9K, excluding the interest in accrues and maintenance loans, finding a way to ensure a grade at the end that makes the debt worthwhile is completely understandable.

All this harks back to the deep structural problems within the Cambridge system that are putting strain on our mental and physical states. These issues range from the unrealistic

demands placed on us by supervisors and other members of staff to the impossibility of juggling packed academic timetables alongside extracurricular activities. Not to mention the fact that the university experience, beyond studying, comes with its own set of new experiences and personal struggles that can make facing a weekly essay seem like the most unachievable task. Then to top it all off there's the full dirty clothes basket in the corner of your room screaming at you to be washed.

At the heart of it all is the deadly eight-week term, offering little in the way of breathing space. Like academic automata we hop from lecture to library to seminar to supervision to dinner and then to bed, only to repeat it again the next day. We are only human after all and, in many cases, ones that have only just come out at the other end of their teen years. Some might be bored about hearing people complain about the eight-week term but, frankly, we will continue to do so until the University takes the complaints seriously. The fact that we're taking study drugs just to be able to cope is a telling sign that something should change.

When seen in these terms, the decision to take a study drug seems logical. Our workloads are unbearable and we, as students, often feel inadequate. Taking Modafinil is an attempt to make the endless list of tasks we face become manageable. Some think drugs like Modafinil will become even more prominent in our futures, transforming us all into an unstoppable workforce. It is as though we all become Bradley Cooper in our own version of *Limitless*. But I'm not sure this is a culture I'll be greeting willingly.

It's not hard to imagine the daily takeaway coffee in the morning being replaced with a 'smart drug.' Businesses globally would be overjoyed at the increased productivity levels, higher profits and more efficient workforce it would generate, but it's at the expense of making dystopian science fiction become a sort of reality. It doesn't require you to be a passionate Marxist to see that we'd start looking like robots, and where's the lasting satisfaction in that? Modafinil might be helping many to get through their degrees, but hopefully the drug and the lifestyle that comes with taking it doesn't feature too heavily in our futures ●



▲ Are pills the answer? (AMANDA MILLS)



# Photography



## Order

First Prize winner: **Yahya Aitabi**

**An authoritative command or instruction.**

“ Last year I travelled to a conflict zone in the Middle East with the purpose of understanding a highly polarizing conflict from the eyes of the indigenous people. I spent a total of 5 weeks in a territory which many consider to be an active war zone.

During this period I witnessed the large scale control of movement imposed by the military on an indigenous people in their indigenous land. The military enforced tight control and strict orders on people wishing to cross a 10-meter wall in order to visit family and pray in sacred temples. This forced order fascinated me. I spent countless days photographing this large scale movement of people under this authoritative command from the military.

I hope the photographs captured reflect this unique perspective to the word order. ”





Varsity/PhoCUS inaugural  
Lent Photography Award 2017

## Online



### Runner-Up

Mathias Gjesdal Hammer

### Special Commendation

Felix Peckham

Xelia Mendes Jones

Kaye Song

Luke Braidwood

Basil Ting

Thanks to PhoCUS  
for their partnership  
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[varsity.co.uk/culture](http://varsity.co.uk/culture)

See our commended  
photographers





# Culture

## Don't Miss ▶▶

1

### **The Leys School / PULSE: CUTAZZ Dance Show 2017**

17th-18th February,  
7:30pm

A showcase of CUTAZZ Dance  
Society's range and talent in tap,  
jazz, lyrical and street dance.

### **ADC Theatre/ Cambridge Shorts** 21st February, 11pm

Cambridge Shorts returns for another  
night of student short film, in collabo-  
ration with the Cambridge Film Asso-  
ciation and hosted by Joe Shalom.

3

2

### **GU/CUSU Lounge / Art for Mental Health #2**

21st February,  
7pm

A relaxed art work-  
shop to relieve stress  
through creativity,  
at the CUSU Lounge  
at 17 Mill Lane. All  
materials provided.

## Summer Certificate Program in Applied Literature Translation



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## **Anna Moody** discusses responses and solutions to sexism within the art world and beyond.

“What does a primary school do when the prime minister comes to visit? They put up paintings and they sing,” said Eliza Bonham Carter, one of the speakers at CAMWIB's ‘Women in the Arts Panel’. This quote almost says it all. But let's start at the beginning: waking up this morning to the radio blaring news of Trump.

As the world builds more walls around us, the message of partnership and of thinking creatively to open up communications and create that magical meeting point of art with its audience has never felt more important.

In the lunch break of Cambridge's ‘Borderlines’ conference, my friend and I spoke to Sir Jeremy Greenstock, the former UK correspondent to the UN. Fired up by a morning's discussion about the unsettled world, we asked him: but what can we do? Where do we start? He gave us a piece of advice that has stayed in my head since. There are so many different aspects to our identity. We are not defined by one thing at one time. When part of ourselves feels threatened, we can't forget the broader picture of who we are. So don't be angry ‘because I'm a woman’, but ‘because I'm a human being’.

To use a friendly cliché: easier said than done. “The market doesn't trust women,” said Valeria Napoleone, who spoke passionately about the challenges faced by women forging careers in the arts business. It may be no surprise to you that women's art continues to be treated differently, whether it's lower prices or the gendered lens through which people view it. The nub of the matter, to use Bonham Carter's words again, is that you have to “insert it into the male world” and, although things have improved, “you remain the other”.

At school, I boycotted the mock election which was run to mirror the country's election for Prime Minister. I stood independently because all of the candidates running were male. “That stupid woman-girl”, “What even are her policies on tax?” - not the responses I had been hoping for perhaps. “Should I vote for you because you're a girl?” Good question. In the light of the issues raised by the inspiring women who spoke at CAMWIB's panel, I'm realising what an important one it is.

It feels more vital to talk about art and the issues it raises than ever before. Yet we can't just use the language and perspectives of the West, according to Touria El Glaoui, one of the speakers and founder of the African art fair 1:54. Issues surrounding things such as technology are given a different perspective when considering how social media has enabled African artists to find an audience.

Like many of us at this event, you might be wondering where to start with pursuing a career in the arts, wondering if you're good enough and if it's ever possible to do enough. Frances Christie, Senior Director at Sotheby's, who studied at Cambridge, told us about when she went to a careers adviser and said she wanted to do an MA in the arts: “You what?” There were no options. In fact, she said



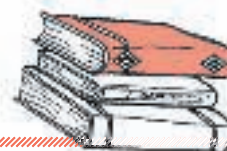
that she experienced the gender issue more at Cambridge than in her profession.

It's time to change our conceptions of the art world. So start with the real thing, take away the screen and experience it. “Feel it on your body”. We have many reasons to be optimistic. “It's normal for women to be successful today,” says El Glaoui - things are changing. Grab all the possibilities. Take advantage of all of the lectures available and go to different ones in other departments every now and then. You need a range of views and so many different aspects of knowledge to succeed in the art world.

I was eating beetroots on a wonderful friend's bedroom floor the other day, talking about life and the world with a group of people who had never all been together before. We had just been to ‘Love Art After Dark’ at the Fitzwilliam Museum. It struck me that these moments are starting points. Stepping outside of the ‘my essay’ bubble and creating things with each other, empowering one another. Partnership is the most powerful tool that we have and art is one of the most powerful ways of creating this. As the world is shaped more by lies and deceit, we must learn to trust again, to listen to life on the other side of the wall. It's all about creating a loyal “web of support”







Find more cultural content online at:  
[varsity.co.uk/culture](http://varsity.co.uk/culture)



## Women in Art

### 'Things are changing'

▲▼ CAMWIB's recent 'Women in the Arts Business' panel discussion (GEE KIM)

around you", said Napoleone, and our community is our starting point.

The shape of leadership shouldn't be a pyramid anymore, said Sir Greenstock. We don't need a wide base of sheep and a sharp point of leaders. We should start thinking in circles. Leading and listening rotating equally. I would like to add something: each time you listen, change the way you lead, just as each time we experience art it inspires what we give back. This circle should not be a comfortable form which rolls along, gathering sheep on its way. Don't let us get trapped in a cycle of recycled language, recycled views. Keep adjusting your lens as you stand in front of those paintings, or sit on the benches of Corpus Playroom or accidentally-on-purpose be the English student at the back of a law lecture.

Stepping out into the art world, how can you begin to convince people that you are serious? The message was clear. Passion and energy, of course, but above all you need a sense of humour. As an incredible friend told me before that election, "anger can change the world, bitterness can't." And if you haven't already done so, check out Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's TED Talk, 'We Should All Be Feminists'. Her anecdote about being class monitor is a particular favourite ●



## COLUMN

### WORD UP

Georgie  
Thorpe  
on  
feeling  
blue



There's been a lot of debate over whether Week 5 blues are a self-perpetuating myth or not. Are we just persuading ourselves that we feel worse because we expect to – and are we ignoring serious mental health concerns by giving them such a title? Whatever your opinion on the topic might be, you probably haven't thought that much about the name. What is it about the colour blue that has led us to associate it with feeling down?

To be or look blue has been in dictionaries since as early as 1785, when it appeared in *A Classical Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue* along with the definition "to be confounded, terrified, or disappointed". Though we have such clear early evidence of the phrase in use, it's a lot more difficult to pin down where it comes from. Early usage suggests it may be linked to illness and pallor. Corpses tend to be pale, and might even be a little blue-tinged, so the colour blue has long been associated with ill health. If someone is badly bruised, we might describe them as 'black and blue', demonstrating another way in which to be blue wouldn't be a very fun situation. It's entirely possible that to feel blue simply comes from this.

If you have as little agricultural experience as me, you probably don't know that wheat can become 'blue-moulded' if it isn't threshed properly. Threshing grain traditionally involves beating it against the floor, and if the grain isn't beaten sufficiently or isn't dry enough, it can become bruised in the process and discoloured, leading to the name 'blue-moulded'. We might all be describing ourselves as pieces of wheat when we say that we're feeling blue, as one suggestion is that our idiom comes from 'blue-moulded' grain.

Another theory hinges on a link between blue and divine anger. According to myth, if Zeus, the Ancient Greek god of the sky and thunder, was annoyed or upset, he would make rain. Though rain is not literally blue, it's often depicted as being blue, and some thinkers have suggested that it was Zeus' blue rain of anger that led to the colour being associated with unhappiness. This explanation would certainly predate the 1785 dictionary entry, but is perhaps a little spurious.

One suggestion that makes a lot of sense but sadly doesn't work chronologically is that the phrase came from blues music, which often involves telling a sad story. Unfortunately, the first copyrighted blues composition comes

from 1912, rather a lot later than the dictionary. It's more likely that blues got its name from the same source as the phrase feeling blue, though the origins are just as unclear in this context.

As per usual in a case of uncertain etymology, there is a naval theory to be put forward. Once upon a time, if a ship lost a captain or another important officer while it was out at sea, the custom was to fly blue flags while returning to port. Ships would also often have a blue stripe painted along the hull to mark the loss of the sailor. This meant that the colour blue came to be linked with the death of important figures and was a sign of mourning, and so might have led to a description of oneself as feeling a similar way. It appears, however, that this was used in such a specific context that it would be difficult for it to have become a widespread phrase, and while the two do seem to be connected, this naval practice probably didn't give rise to our idiom.

In fact, it's probably the case that alcohol is to blame for our describing ourselves as blue. Before 'feeling blue' became a phrase, people talked a lot about 'blue devils', which were feelings of sadness, and is a phrase that has been recorded since the 1600s. It originally referred to hallucinations brought on by alcohol withdrawal, and the idea is that if you were bad enough to be seeing them, you probably weren't feeling too great. Over time, the 'devils' part of the phrase was dropped, and it lost its direct link to alcohol and instead came to mean a generally grim feeling. Blue is still associated with alcohol today – the phrase 'blue law', for example, which is a law preventing alcohol from being sold, comes from the meaning of 'blues' as drinking alcohol. 'Blue devils' is both old and common enough a phrase to be a plausible origin for 'feeling blue', and so it's most likely – though not definite – that our idiom comes from this.

So, after looking at gods, grains, and boats, it turns out it all goes back to alcohol and hangovers in the end. However you choose to take care of yourself as Week 5 rushes towards us, you can reassure yourself that drowning your sorrows is totally just being authentic, right? ●



▲ Captain Francis Grose, author of *A Classical Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue* (D. O. HILL)

## Online .....



Bedroom Art:  
snapshots of  
girl habitats  
from Boston to  
Beirut  
by Ruby Reding



# Fashion



Check out Varsity Fashion's Instagram photos:  
[instagram.com/varsitycambridge](https://www.instagram.com/varsitycambridge)



## Review Cambridge University Charity Fashion Show 2017

The annual Cambridge University Charity Fashion Show is a philanthropic student-led showcase of both fresh talent and established labels, now in its third year. The committee promised that this was a night not to be missed, and they were certainly right: for fashionistas from across the university and beyond, it was a showcase of sensational

styles.

Opening with a futurist collection from UAL graduate Yui Jiang, there was a sense of abstract ethereality as the faces of the models were obscured by wind swept moulded masks. The celestial inspiration was repeated near the end of the show, with a fantastic fibre optic dress by Tae Gon Kim. Paraded along the catwalk in complete darkness, the fuchsia

glow emitted from the knitted web of glowing strands was mesmerising to watch.

The biggest impact was made by the assemblages of clothing which were more conceptual. Alessandro Trincone's collection of Japanese-inspired garments blended sharp tailoring with adornments of frills and bows, finished with elaborate headpieces. Angel Chen's vibrantly coloured designs were predominantly co-ordinating sets of long hooded coats with matching cropped trousers, embellished with glittering lizards and stars and made out of tribal inspired fabrics. Abzal Issa Bevok's compendium layered oversized tailored pieces, featuring turned up hems and paper-bag waists, over PVC garments, finishing each look with a pair of matching tailored, structured gloves. It worked, albeit in an unusual way.

Streetwear was another one of the main themes, with offerings from Stüssy, Gianni Mora, Yeezy and the Hood L a b . Between them, relaxed track-shirts, suit bottoms, oversized T-rucks,

were the items of choice, but what they all shared was a sense of 'wearing' perhaps from the hoodies and the sense of breaking down the boundaries.

Ben and Esongkuo were the two standout male models, for their infectious attitude added a little extra sass to the show. Xelia and Emma were the noteworthy female models, although all showed an admirable confidence when walking in

front of hundreds of people.

Despite special guest Richard Browne Jr pulling out of the show last minute due to personal reasons, there was still a focus on beauty beyond conventional boundaries. Undoubtedly this was inspired by the chosen charity, the Douglas Bader Foundation, which focuses on supporting amputees and those born without limbs. There were visual and audio interludes from influential individuals, not to mention a special appearance from amputee blogger Mama Càx, who gave an inspirational speech about loving your body.

In terms of entertainment, Calvin Schmidt-Rimpler Dinh provided the catwalk soundtrack, a role he filled perfectly, and he then went on to provide the audience with a hypnotic performance as part of Kikoband, one of Cambridge's most exciting student bands. Unfortunately Princess Nokia's headline set finished abruptly, bringing a premature end to a great night: she felt she had been 'disrespected' by a crowd member, and while it's hardly unconventional for fashion shows to have a political com-

ment, it was unfortunate that this long night suffered an anticlimax due to her abrupt exit.

The 'unlimited' alcohol might have run dry, and the headline act cut short, but the fashion was very much in full flow: CUCFS 2017 was a real appreciation of both professional and student talent, and definitely lived up to expectations ●

Ellie Mullet



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## Trendspotter CUCFS Makeup

When you are creating a makeup look for a show like CUCFS, where the segments are entirely disparate, both aesthetically and culturally, it is often wise to err on the side of the abstract, where the incongruence of the look is exactly the desired effect. Within only 15 minutes, and a few false starts involving copious amounts of blush, Elizabeth Arden 8-hour Cream, Vaseline, makeup wipes and rose water, the final look was settled upon. Hyper-real glossy skin fitted well with the post-apocalyptic metropolis of the Stüssy collection, while a blown-out pink blush swept up to the temples and around the eyes, which were otherwise bare of makeup, evoked an air of intriguing innocence that created an interesting tension with the so-

phistication of the clothes. Finishing with a healthy spray of rose water ensured the gleam would stand the test of ultra-bright show lights

●  
 Flora Walsh





# Theatre



More reviews are available online at:  
[varsity.co.uk/theatre](http://varsity.co.uk/theatre)



FEATURE

## A Week 5 love letter to Cambridge theatre

Within the stress of a hectic eight-week Cambridge term, essays can become overwhelming, planned experiments might not always go according to plan, and the equations sometimes stop adding up. In the spirit of the student journalism zeitgeist that is Week Five, I'm here to remind you that it is essential to remember to take some time out and relax: to switch off, to do something different entirely, to take yourself away from the world of academics. In fact, immersing yourself in another world entirely is not a bad place to start – and where better than the world of the theatre?

In the fast-tempo, high-pressure, insular space of Cambridge, it is worth reminding ourselves of those famous Shakespearean words: "All the world's a stage, and all the

men and women merely players." As a staff reviewer for *Varsity*, going to see a new performance each week this term has been a wonderful experience, an outlet for stress, and a regular enjoyment that I can look forward to. It allows me to know that for that one evening I can take time out and enter a different world entirely.

The four walls of the theatre enclose around you, creating an alternative world. I've been embroiled in the tragedy of ancient wars as enemies collide and star-crossed lovers are torn apart thanks to a brilliant dramatisation of *Othello* that I was lucky enough to see at the ADC two years ago. I can thoroughly recommend distraction via numerous, hilarious collaborations of sketches, wound brilliantly together by a small skilled cast – in particular one that I recently enjoyed by the Foot-

▲ A five star production of *Hamlet* is the perfect study break  
 (VANESSA UPTON)

lights. Some biblical drama perhaps: *Darkness Falls* at the West Concert Hall was spectacular and another treat. I can even continue to look forward to more modern drama – look out for *The Importance of Being Earnest*, soon to appear at Trinity Hall. A witty Wilde play never fails to excite and leave you laughing.

Watching performances – but also getting involved in them – can enable escapism from the 'Cambridge Bubble'. "Theatre gives me an escape from work in that it gets me out of my room and out of my head", says third-year English student, Eleanor Mitchell. She describes how her involvement in a current total of 30 shows has enabled her to do something "completely unrelated to [her] degree". As she succinctly puts it: "It's nice to remind yourself that you're not just a reading and writing machine!" As well as breaking the bubble of work, Eleanor has "found theatre to have a really friendly and welcoming community made up of people who have all kinds of amazing talents and ideas for putting together a fantastic show."

So this Week Five, go wild and increase the drama in your life, whether that means losing yourself for a week in the character of another, meeting new faces backstage, or just going to see a performance. Cambridge's incomparable theatre scene can offer you that space in your week for pure relaxation. No guilt, no worries – and it's unlikely a director will ever set you an essay ●

Genevieve Cox

## Opening in Week 5

**Tuesday 21st**

*Anything Goes*  
 Cripps Auditorium  
 7:30pm (until 25th Feb)

*Footlights Spring Revue*  
 ADC  
 7:45pm (until 25th Feb)

*The Tempest*  
 Yusuf Hamied Theatre  
 7pm (until 25th Feb)

*Laugh Why Don't You?*  
 Pembroke New Cellars  
 9:30pm (until 22nd Feb)

**Thursday 23rd**

*Jerusalem*  
 Robinson Auditorium  
 7:30pm (until 25th Feb)

**Friday 24th**

*Macbeth*  
 Michaelhouse Church  
 2:30pm (until 27th Feb)  
 ...and many more

## Deciding what to watch in Week 5?



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Jack Green  
Teacher





# Music



## Vulture TUNES

with **Siyang Wei**



Packed with driving grooves and light, airy melodies, this diverse playlist ranges from the powerful Latin rock of Santana's 'Hope You're Feeling Better' to ABRA's bubbly-gum-flavoured darkwave R&B track 'Atoms'. Hopefully these buoyant beats will help keep us all afloat through the next relentless week of term.

Summer Hair = Forever Young

**The Academy Is...**

Thinking of You  
**Mabel**

Last American Virgin  
**Summer Camp**

Boy Problems  
**Carly Rae Jepsen**

Blessings  
**Chance the Rapper**

Atoms  
**ABRA**

Never Quite Free

**The Mountain Goats**

Hope You're Feeling Better  
**Santana**

Rose Golden (ft. Willow Smith)  
**Kid Cudi**

Heartbeats  
**The Knife**



THE  
#ZLATIA  
ZLATIA  
ALL  
ETERNAL  
PEAK

### Pick of the Week:

*The Mountain Goats -  
Never Quite Free*

The Mountain Goats' huge discography spans the full range of human emotion, and always strikes at the heart. The bittersweet 'Never Quite Free' shines a defiant light in the dark.

Got your own **Spotify playlist**?  
Email it to [music@varsity.co.uk](mailto:music@varsity.co.uk)

## Ben Haigh discusses vegan food, the American artist, and infiltrating the male gaze

It's midafternoon at the bar above Goldsmiths University Student Union, and Laura Marling is playing a song from her new album. It's incongruous for an artist as prolific as Marling, who has released six albums, won a Brit award and been nominated twice for the Mercury Prize, to be performing in a venue usually reserved for local music and comedy acts - but, then again, this is a particularly unusual event. It's a student-only press conference, with young journalists from all over the country attending to ask Laura questions and hear her perform new songs.

The new album is called *Semper Femina*, a title cropped from a longer line by Virgil: "Fickle and changeable always is woman". Marling's abbreviation changes the meaning to "always a woman", and her clear, feminist intentions are indicative of much of the discussion at Goldsmiths. Ever an artist interested in the status of women in creative industries, she comments that there is "a lot more to catch up on for women" and that rectifying such inequalities would give us a "more balanced understanding of the world". However, her views are rarely so defined. Indeed, she says that she often feels too pressured to hold a "firm opinion" on issues relating to femininity, and has used projects like her Reversal of the Muse podcast to "keep asking questions" rather than come to definite answers.

She has previously said that the new album came from a "particularly masculine" time in her life and that she initially tried to approach it like a man writing about a woman - a sort of infiltration of the male gaze. But when Varsity asks for more details, she is hesitant to answer. Eventually, she says something rather interesting: that we are "accustomed to seeing women through men's eyes", and that her first inclination was to "try and take some power over that" by emulating a masculine perspective. But then she dismisses this approach, calling it a "stumble", and says that she ultimately found it more "powerful to look

at women through a woman's eyes". It's a candid, thoughtful answer, and one that shows she is happy to experiment in order to find the best solutions to questions of gender.

The lyrics to *Semper Femina*, which was written on the road, are "based in thought" as opposed to the American "landscape" of her previous album, *Short Movie*, which addressed living in Los Angeles. There is a moment here where politics threatens to enter the conversation as she comments: "I love

"I love America and find America very infuriating for the same reason"

America and find America very infuriating for the same reason". But she makes a more personal point as she gushes: "I love [Americans] because they give a lot of value to artists, which is quite nice if you've devoted your career, inadvertently in my case, to being an artist." However, she also says that the country "gives a very strange, over the top reverence to people who have lived very self indulgent lives



and demand to be called artists". Despite this duality, she comes to the firm conclusion that "America gave me freedom to express myself", but her cautious answer makes it clear that she's an incredibly self-analytical person.


Similarly, she says that her songs have gradually become more informed by her own experience than by the gothic and romantic literature which coloured her earlier lyrics. In fact, she hasn't "read any fiction for a while". She cites touring solo as one such influence: "[It's a] big mental and physical exertion, and it can be a little bit scary". She feels this is particularly true for women: "That innate sense of fear is really quite constricting, and perhaps more of an affliction to women than to men." It is surprising that an artist who has spent so much time on the road still fears it, and her honesty in sharing this feeling is reflective of the tone of the whole event.

She's happy to take lighter questions too, telling us about cooking vegan food to impress guests and about her favourite song to play live, 'Rambling Man'. She's chatty and funny

▲ Marling spent an hour taking questions from students

(SONIC PR)



To listen to Siyang Wei's playlist, find our account: [musicvarsity](#) 

# An afternoon with Laura Marling



throughout, frequently affecting a baby voice to reflect her internal monologue, but takes the questions seriously and gives considered answers to all of them.

She plays three songs from the new album. Sitting on the front row just a few metres away from Marling, the sense of intimacy is palpable as she strums her guitar before the silent audience. That silence helps to bring out the songs, removing any distraction from her words, which are of such a fine quality that they really do speak for themselves. 'Wild Fire' is perhaps the best, a gorgeous character sketch of a girl who "keeps a pen behind her ear because she's got something that she really really needs to say". It's an apt lyric, because the most important takeaway from this conference is that Laura Marling is continuing to develop artistically and is becoming more and more interesting in her approach. And she certainly still has a lot to say ●

Semper Femina by Laura Marling is released on March 10 via More Alarming

## Album **Process**



★★★★☆  
Sampha

Sampha Sisay's name may be unfamiliar to you, but if you've been keeping up with R&B and hip hop for the last few years, chances are you've heard his voice before. It's heavy, husky, sonorous – you can imagine it easily filling up any room that Sampha happened to be in – but although the voice is undeniably powerful, it's also vulnerable, uncertain, and insecure.

Process features cascading layers of futuristic synths and jittery, skeletal percussion, which are combined with a traditional West African lute-like instrument on 'Kora Sings' creating an airy, kaleidoscopic symphony. Sampha is playing with the boundaries of the genre in a way that very few artists are, and it's exhilarating to see that kind of creativity at work ● *Ian Wang*

## Concert **Mahler No.4**



★★★★☆  
11 Feb, Jesus Chapel

The newly founded Malcolm Street Orchestra gave an elegant and precise performance of Mahler's Fourth Symphony at Jesus Chapel. This work is a symphony of contrasts, constantly lulling the audience into sweet melodic reveries which are then thrashed about by the booming of a bass drum or the triumphant

rally of the whole orchestra. Woodwind and brass solos flickered into life throughout, with a memorable trumpet funeral call in the second half. The whole performance was a display of virtuosity from some of the best musicians in town, with conductor Jack Bazalgette keeping everyone wound up like clockwork in front of a very intimate audience ● *Thea Sands*

## The week in music

**Friday 17th**  
*Fun Lovin' Criminals*  
The Junction  
7PM

*Echo Trails*  
Mumfort Theatre  
1:10PM

### Saturday 18th

*The Lost Vaults/  
Catholic Action/Mad  
Mary*  
Portland Arms  
7:30PM

### Tuesday 21st

*Open deck night*  
Portland Arms  
7PM

**Wednesday 22nd**  
*Clock Opera*  
Portland Arms  
7PM

## Online .....



**Kendrick Lamar  
archived at  
Harvard: why  
he deserves it**  
by Gianamar  
Giovannetti-Singh

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# Film & TV

## FILM



## Walled in by 'Fences'

**Alex Izza** finds that Denzel Washington successfully captures the isolation of August Wilson's play in this screen adaptation

Dir. Denzel Washington  
In cinemas now  
★★★★★

A dysfunctional family struggling in the grip of poverty: the premise of *Fences* is a tale as old as time. Yet Denzel Washington's screen adaptation of August Wilson's play feels fresh and potently relevant. It beautifully balances tight family drama and sweeping exploration of societal change, charting the life of a small African-American family in Pennsylvania in 1956 and their attempts to build a life in the tumult of post-war America.

Washington plays Troy Maxson, the brooding patriarch of *Fences*. He brings a glorious intensity to every scene he inhabits, casting a shadow every time he opens the door. Each stride forward has purpose, as Washington uses his physicality to present this character wedded to control over the domestic space where he is the boss. Viola Davis as Rose is a brilliant foil to Washington, providing a subtler performance that mellows his physicality and portrays hints of genuine affection between the pair. However, as their broadly functional marriage descends into abuse, thinly veiled submissiveness on Davis's part evolves into roiling anger – delivered for the viewer in several stunningly performed pieces of dialogue between Washington and Davis.

"Times have changed, you just came along too early." By setting itself in the post-Second World War era, *Fences* teases out the evolution in aspirations created by the war. Washington's baseball bat lying in the yard has an idol-like quality, portraying the lost dreams of a man who lived 'too early' under rigid segregation to become a baseball star.

This creates a gulf in identity between father and son, with Adepo's earnest efforts for his father's acceptance met with steely

resistance. Washington, therefore, becomes a check on his son's lofty ambitions in the desegregation of post-WWII America, projecting his own resentment at being too 'early' to truly benefit from these changes, and clamping down on his son's dreams of playing college football.

Visually, *Fences* is largely set in the Maxson family, creating a suffocating closeness that allows the theatrical quality of its long monologues and extended dialogue to shine.

“However, as their broadly functional marriage descends into abuse, thinly veiled submissiveness evolves into rolling anger”

By using such a tight portrayal of space, Washington's dislocation is reinforced for the viewer as he begins to lose control of the domestic domain where he is the boss. The titular subject of *Fences* is a reaction to this seeming assault on his rigid, pre-war patriarchal identity, with Washington constructing the fence around his home to build an ark against the tide of modernity.

The film is not without its problems. Time skips and scene changes away from the house seemed arbitrary, losing narrative momentum and the theatrical closeness that elevates the family drama. This has the effect of making *Fences* have a disjointed quality, becoming a series of beautifully acted scenes that

lack the thread to hold them all together. Regardless, in a year when *Hidden Figures* and *Moonlight* have put the performances of actors of colour deservedly back at the forefront of awards-worthy pictures, *Fences* is a worthy addition that puts the often neglected post-war period back on the screen.

**Despite its structural limitations, stunning performances by Viola Davis and Denzel Washington mitigate these failings. Through their performance they give voice to powerful themes of race, family, and identity as relevant today as they were in the 1950s**

## TV ROUND-UP

### Call the Midwife, Pt.1

Written by Harriet Warner,  
and Carolyn Bonnymone  
BBC1, 8PM, Sundays

Call the Midwife does strange things to a person. I sit down at 19.55 on Sunday evening as a balanced human being. My brain contains a healthy level of cynicism. My nerves tingle with a familiar sense of irritation. Four pregnant women, eight doses of gas-and-air, and several babies later, however, and something's changed. The world gives off a golden glow.

We are into season six of the BBC's Sunday night drama, based on the memoirs of Jennifer Worth, a midwife who worked in the East End during the late 1950s. If anything, the programme is twee-er than ever. Episode one reached fever pitch when Nurse Gilbert's pottery demonstration went awry. Sister Ursula, meanwhile, sparked outrage in episode two after confiscating Sister Monica-Joan's packet of bon-bons.

It's not the case, however, that *Call the Midwife* is devoid of social grit. The latest episodes have dealt with domestic violence, disability and mental illness. Nor is it the case that tragedies are avoided. However, there is always an underlying, irrepressible sense of optimism. In a gentle way – usually involving rich tea biscuits and dubious knitwear – the residents of Nonnatus House champion liberal values. Indeed, this is perhaps the key to *Call the Midwife*'s success. Enlightened, modern attitudes reside in a cosily retro setting. We are allowed to have our cake and eat it.

The programme's premature liberalism, however, is offset by the BBC's own, bizarrely prudish, disposition. Over the last two seasons, romance has blossomed between Patsy, the midwife, and Delia, the paramedic. Although happy to show the worst birth scenes since John Hurt's ribcage exploded in *Alien*, however, the BBC are still too squeamish to show two women kissing. Without exception, the camera turns away – red faced – from anything beyond a sly hand-hold.

This spotlights a fault line in *Call the Midwife*'s apparently faultless model. Ultimately, the programme appeals to two, very different, audiences. A liberal-minded set of (often younger) viewers is counterbalanced by a stuffer audience, all too willing to be scandalised. Reluctant to throw the baby out with the bathwater, the BBC plays it safe. However, in doing so, it never fully pleases anybody. As the credits roll at 9 o'clock, a niggling sense of cynicism and irritation has returned ●

Jemma Slings

▼ Charlotte Ritchie having the time of her life (BBC)





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## Sport

## CURUFC sink Royal Navy in season finale

Cambridge

22

Royal Navy

19

Devarshi Lodhia  
Chief Sport Reporter

● Cambridge University Rugby Union Football Club, Grange Road

A last-minute try was not enough to deny Cambridge University Rugby Union Football Club (CURUFC) a 22-19 victory against an incredibly physical Royal Navy side in their final game of the season at Grange Road on Wednesday night. Following a disappointing 19-7 loss to the Royal Air Force last week, the Blues showed great resilience and fortitude to overcome the reigning Inter-Services Champions and end their season with a much-deserved victory.

Cambridge fired the opening broadside in the damp conditions, taking advantage of the slick ball to put the Navy's defence under pressure with quick passing manoeuvres. The early pressure paid off as Henry King opened the scoring for the Blues within the first 5 minutes. Mike Phillips' conversion attempt was unsuccessful as Cambridge took a 5-0 lead.

The Navy struggled to gain a foothold in the game early on as a series of handling errors and a firm defence from Cambridge, bolstered by a series



▲ Blues Captain Daniel Dass is carried off after an injury (DEVARSHI LODHIA)

of crunching tackles by Tom Stanley ensured they rarely threatened the Blues' try line. When the match looked as if it was about to descend into an attritional battle between two sizeable, powerful packs, Nick Calvert passed to Simon Davies to put him through to score in his final match in a Light Blue shirt. Phillips was on target this time with his conversion attempt to make it 12-0.

Cambridge's second try sparked the Navy team into life, as they scored with their first real attack of the half. Winger Greg Welling took advantage of a gap in the Cambridge defence to score in the right corner before their full back, Jon Humphrey, made his kick to leave the score at 12-7 going into the half-time break.

Learning from their first half mistakes, the Navy started the second half stronger, with captain Greg Loydall opening the scoring for the half, levelling the scores at 12 apiece. Cambridge, however, responded almost instantly, scoring under the posts following another incisive attacking move.

Fraser Gillies somehow managed to miss the routine conversion, resulting in the match announcer comparing his effort Finn Russell's woeful conversion attempt for Scotland against France in last weekend's Six Nations.

The frustration of being a try down was starting to show, as the Navy team started to lose their discipline with Tristan Trehan and Seti Raumakita both receiving yellow cards in quick succession for high tackles. Cambridge were, however, unable to exploit their two-man advantage as the Navy's dogged defence

ensured the score remained the same.

With the clock ticking down and Cambridge in the ascendency, it seemed this would be the perfect swan song for Blues' captain Daniel Dass. But it was not to be as he was forced to come off with just ten minutes to go following an injury.

Cambridge rallied in their captain's absence as a mazy run from Ed Loftus put Henry King through for his second try to extend Cambridge's lead to 22-12 with only 4 minutes on the clock. But Cambridge could not close their lines as the Navy scored a converted try as the match ended 22-19. The result flattered the Royal Navy team who were thoroughly outgunned by the Light Blues over the course of the match.

Despite a mixed Lent term, it has been a successful 2016/17 for Cambridge, of which December's Varsity win at Twickenham was undoubtedly the highlight.

● CURUFC: Will Briggs, Andy Burnett, Demetri Moros, Tim Bond, Rowan Beckett, Tom Stanley, Brian du Toit, Daniel Dass (Capt.), Seb Tullie, Mike Phillips, Ed Loftus, Rory Triniman, Simon Davies, Henry King, Fraser Gillies, Nick Calvert, Ewan West, Tom Wilson, Matt Watson, Sam Troughton, Chris Bell, Joe Girling, Joe Story.

Royal Navy: Tom Jones, Ben Priddey, Mark Owen, Joe Staniforth, Matt Harvey, Ben Fox, Tristan Trehan, Jim Kava, Corey Moore, Greg Loydall, Dimmock Williams, Jack Basher, S Buinimasi, Greg Welling, Jon Humphrey, Tom Hughes, Joe Burton, Chris Warner, Dan Mason, Seti Raumakita, Lewis Cooper, Gareth Rees, James Griggs, Eldon Myers.

## Bayern defeat should be Wenger's last straw

Paul Hyland  
Sport Editor

When teams start enjoying themselves against you, it's always a bad sign. But at only 2-1 up against Arsenal at the Allianz this Wednesday, Bayern were already having the time of their lives. A bit of keep-ball from the German giants in the final third, Thiago Alcântara dazzling his way between Arsenal lines, a lay-off to Xabi Alonso, who brings in Lewandowski. The Pole knows that if he drops off a yard, back to goal, he'll drag his marker out of position just enough to meet Thiago's impeccably-timed run with a deft, defence-destroying heel flick. Thiago, across David Ospina. 3-1, and Bayern are cruising.

Soon it's 4-1 - Thiago's shot cannoning in off Granit Xhaka. Finally, five. Goal-hungry Thomas Müller switches feet and slots home. A death knell for Arsenal in the Champions League, and surely a death knell for Arsène Wenger's time at the club.

Wenger strolled into Highbury in September 1996 armed with an economics degree and a keen eye for statistical analysis that set him apart. He was the first manager in English football to adopt a scientific approach to player nutrition. He would sign players like pulling a needle from a haystack - crunching numbers to spot talents that no one else could

▼ Arsène Wenger has led Arsenal to only three trophies in 13 years (RONNIE MACDONALD)

identify, like a bench player at Internazionale by the name of Patrick Vieira, or a flash-in-the-pan winger at Juventus named Thierry Henry. That wonderful, record-breaking Arsenal side that went more than a season unbeaten between 2003 and 2004 was a testament to the genius of the man. Wenger revolutionised English football like none before or since.

That was his success, but also his downfall. Wenger's mathematical approach was brand new to the English game in 1996. But 21 years later more or less every top-flight outfit is doing now what Wenger was doing then, investing in statistical models to game the system in their favour.

History doesn't always remember the ones who came first. Edison didn't really invent the lightbulb, nor Bell the telephone. The Johnny-come-latelies are the ones who stick in the memory. They come along and improve on the pioneers. And pioneers like Wenger have been cast into the shadows by clubs who know that whatever he used to do, they can now do better. Bluntly, Arsenal's greatest ever manager has lost his value in a market flooded with the fruits of his own labours.

Longevity is a rare commodity in a manager. Alex Ferguson lasted so long at the top because he was willing to constantly reinvent the wheel. He could mould any team, any player to

suit whatever situation he needed them to. Clearly, if longevity is the aim, then pragmatism is the game. And Wenger seems shot of it, clenching dearly onto the same systems that delivered them a League and Cup double in his first full season, but which have delivered only three trophies in the last 13 years.

For all of their resources, the only silverware that's been displayed in the Arsenal cabinet since 2004 has been the FA Cup - a trophy that clubs further up the table are increasingly sacrificing at the altar of their League and European campaigns.

They can and should be doing better. By Deloitte's figures, Arsenal have the greatest match day income in the world, thanks to a lucrative sponsorship deal with airline Emirates, and a stadium in a London borough where the average wage exceeds the national average by more than £12,000 per year.

But Arsenal's wage bill is only the fourth highest in the Premier League - £192 million per year according to *The Guardian*. In that sense a second-placed finish last year had them punching above their weight. But that's not the point. Trophies will follow when Arsenal dedicate a higher proportion of their club turnover to player acquisition. And for that to happen, Arsène Wenger needs to abandon hope of uncovering the next Vieira or Henry and get his hands

▼ Robert Lewandowski celebrates putting Bayern 2-1 up against Arsenal (FOOTBALL REVIEW)

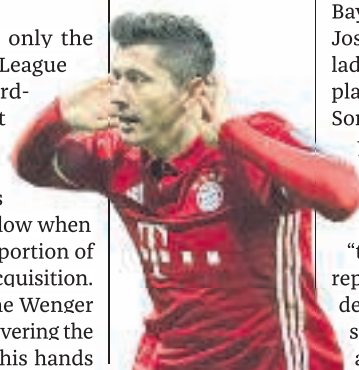
on more well-established, world-class talent. Because though stars like Alexis Sánchez and Mesut Özil are seemingly going nowhere, until they can bolster the squad with more players of that ilk, neither are Arsenal.

Tactically, heavyweights like Bayern know how to cope with Arsenal, how to get at them, how to break their resistance. On its day their style is an unearthly joy to watch - the way the ball pings and zips between men constantly running into space, one second it's here, the other it's there, the next it's in the back of the net.

But there's an easy way to defeat it: stop it happening in the first place. Bayern ran at Arsenal all night to prevent them from breaking out of defence in those neat little triangles they so love to play in.

It didn't just work. It also provided Bayern's fifth of the night, as midfielder Joshua Kimmich nicked it off Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain in the final third, and played in Thiago who nabbed an assist. Some tactical flexibility might not have yielded a win. But it would surely have prevented a drubbing.

Former captain Cesc Fàbregas once stated that he'd rather lose "than win without style". But now with reports that Wenger's future is set to be decided at the end of the season, the Arsenal board have to forget about style, and this time put substance first.





# Joe Root is a new breed of England captain

Andrew Derrett  
Sport Reporter

Two weeks ago, Alastair Cook made the less than surprising announcement of his decision to quit as England's Test captain. Just a few days later, an even less surprising decision was made to appoint 26-year-old Joe Root as his successor.

So what sort of cricketing state has Cook left the national team in? And does Joe Root have what it takes to be successful in one of the most high-profile roles in international sport? The short answer is 'we'll see'. The long answer, if there is one, is far more revealing.

Cook, 32, leaves his four-year tenure with a plethora of records broken. He led his country onto the field 59 times in Test matches, and is now England's most capped player and highest-scoring Test batsman with over 10,000 runs – the youngest ever to reach that milestone.

His personal achievements make for wonderful reading. He has reached triple digits more times than any other Englishman, a centurion no fewer than 30 times, including a high score of 294 against India in 2011 that took England to the top of the world rankings. His 836-minute double century in Abu Dhabi just over a year ago is the longest ever innings by an Englishman, a record that doesn't look

likely to be beaten any time soon.

What makes these stats even more remarkable is the almost unique style with which Cook approaches the game in the modern day. His batting belongs in the Test era of decades ago, when concentration, technique and grit reigned supreme over the power, ferocity and tenacity with which modern-day batsman tackle bowlers. The ability to grind the bowlers down, psychologically is a quality an opening batsman can never underestimate.

And so, as an opening batsman, Alastair Cook leaves very little to be desired.

But what about as a captain?

While his individual figures are brilliant, the success of his team has been a lot more mixed. Cook's win rate finishes at 40.67 per cent, nothing to write home about: Andrew Strauss, Peter May, and Michael Vaughan each have better records.

Successive home Ashes victories will always be remembered as highlights of his reign. The 2013 triumph included one of the finest Test matches ever played, an unbelievable 14-run win at Trent Bridge that will go down in history.

But with the highs came some serious lows. The famous Ashes urn which Cook had fought so hard to win swiftly returned Down Under after a humiliating

5-0 whitewash which embarrassed not just Cook, but the whole nation. Never in recent memory had such a series been so one-sided.

There have always been questions over Cook's tactics. His stubbornness, so often praised with bat in hand, brought him criticism when things went awry. One for caution, Cook will not be regarded as a ground-breaker by any stretch. In a sense, the very qualities that make Cook such a world-class opener came to his detriment with the skipper's cap on.

So, after a meek winter showing in India, perhaps Cook was right to call it quits. So, with a fresh face and a fresh start in 2017, we should give Cook his deserved legacy as one of the finest batsman the sport has ever seen.

And so, to the future. Joe Root's promotion from vice-captain was nothing more than a formality. It certainly seems the logical decision.

Root has only taken charge of four first-class matches in his brief international career, so it is true that experience on the biggest stage is somewhat lacking. But Root's exceptional national performances so far seem to negate this. Ever since he burst onto the scene in 2012, he has appeared almost untouchable. An average of 52.80, 11 centuries to date, he quickly became England's most prized



▲ Root in action (BRIAN MINKOFF)

asset and the key man that opposition fight so hard to remove.

Root's style couldn't contrast much more with that of his predecessor. He epitomises the modern-day batsman: athletic, agile, audacious – the range of strokes Root has in his armoury is countless. One of the world's most exciting athletes, he possesses a punishing, relentless ability to rack up runs in almost any scenario. An England line-up without the name of Joe Root suddenly looks orders of magnitude less daunting.

It remains to be seen how his game will be affected by the mantle of being skipper. Some in the past have been overwrought, losing all confidence, when others have excelled and pushed to the next level. I'd wager that, given enough time, Root has the tenacity to reach new heights with the nation behind him.

Root comes across as a quiet, shy character, but his leadership qualities aren't in doubt. He won't be afraid of making bold decisions or experimenting with new tactics – that's just in his nature.

So, with one England legend apparently making way for another, everyone is rooting for Joe to bring greater success to the national side. Touch wood, but I would say things are looking up with the new face of English cricket at the helm.

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## Cricket Why Joe Root's appointment is reason to be optimistic for England fans 31

# Sport

## Irresistible Cambridge keep Cup dream alive

Cambridge 3

Birmingham 1

▲▼ Cambridge are through to a second consecutive Cup semi-final (IMRAN MARASHLI)

Imran Marashli  
Sport Reporter

● Midlands Conference Cup, Fitzwilliam Sports Ground, Oxford Road

The Cambridge University Association Football Club women's team reached a second consecutive BUCS Midlands Conference Cup semi-final with a 3-1 victory over the University of Birmingham Women's Football Club. A brace from Daisy Luff on the stroke of half-time and a goal from Ceylon Hickman proved enough to thwart the West Midlands' resistance on Wednesday afternoon at Oxford Road.

Already crowned champions of the Midlands 2B League, Cambridge's calm first-half possession encapsulated their confidence, never shying away from playing out from the back and eagerly exploiting their skill and pace out wide. But the Blues' possession did not translate into clear-cut opportunities against a resilient Birmingham side in a keenly contested midfield battle. Jo Butler-Williams and Hannah Vincent stifled Cambridge's forays forward, while the excellent Marielle Brown was seemingly ubiquitous in sweeping up loose balls and supplying her more offensively-minded teammates.

Yet the match could have been very



different had the visitors taken a golden chance at 0-0. A simple ball over the top allowed the industrious Abigail Asante to race away from Beccie Graves and Linnea Gradin and bear down on goal. Opening her body up, her curling effort was denied by a brilliant fingertip save from Laura Bleehen at full stretch.

The half appeared to be meandering to a goalless close as Birmingham struggled to string together more than a handful of passes despite their good defensive work, while Cambridge's patience only brought some speculative long-range efforts. But five manic minutes before half-time turned the game on its head.

Winning the midfield battle, a direct and beautifully weighted through-ball saw Daisy Luff in a footrace with Sylvia Aske and Lydia Hickson. Bursting through the middle, she composed herself and struck the ball past Abby Cartwright to draw first blood with aplomb.

1-0 then became 2-0 almost immediately afterwards. Zoe Cohen gathered the ball in midfield and drove into the heart of the Birmingham defence, and her intelligent cut-back was received by Luff who, with all the time and space in the world in the middle of the box, set herself and calmly slotted the ball into the left corner. A clichéd analogy to London buses could not have been more appropriate to assess what had until then

been a relatively even 45 minutes.

Despite these two bolts from the blue, Birmingham came out fighting in the second half and were presented with a lifeline after Hirst gave away a penalty for tugging at a Birmingham shirt. Hannah Vincent was on hand to step up to the plate and dispatch her spot-kick into the corner to halve the deficit.

The Birmingham goal reinvigorated Cambridge, as the rest of the match was characterised by Cambridge's superiority. The two-goal cushion was almost restored straightaway, only for the lineswoman to call a narrow offside, whereupon Ashcroft and Graves, overlapping to devastating effect from right-back, began to cause havoc for Hickson at left-back. One exquisite ball from Ashcroft begged to be put away, but Ceylon Hickman – completely unmarked in the middle of the box – somehow contrived to plant her header wide of the far post.

The Light Blues were now peppering the visitors' goal and exploiting the counter-attacking potential given them by Birmingham's high line as the away side searched for an equaliser. The third goal arrived in odd fashion given the silky football that had fashioned Cambridge's previous chances. A corner from Ashcroft ought to have been dealt with by substitute Hanan Ali at the front post, but her sliced clearance found its way to Hickman, whose slightly scuffed ef-

fort crept over the line via the inside of the post.

The rest of the encounter was fairly even, but the Blues' defence remained solid and, in truth, the home team ought to have put more icing on the cake. Dynamic on the counter-attack, more chances were squandered by Luff and Hirst, but the Blues had done enough to continue their Cup run.

Speaking with *Varsity* after the final whistle, Birmingham's Abby Cartwright ruminated on what might have been: "Cambridge are a very, very strong side, but at the end of the day we just couldn't break them down. We just lost our heads a little bit for five minutes and then it all slipped away. But I thought we came back in the second half strong, so I'm a bit gutted."

Conversely, Cambridge captain Gerda Bachrati was delighted with her side's win: "The girls played really well," she said. "We were unlucky with some of the mistakes – that penalty was definitely a kick in the teeth – but I don't think it was the wrong decision from the referee, so I can't fault him at all."

"We had most of the possession in that first half, and the goals that we had were a long time coming, and they were from situations we hadn't used before, so the girls should be really proud of themselves for being so creative up at the top."