

May Week make-over

Ballers!

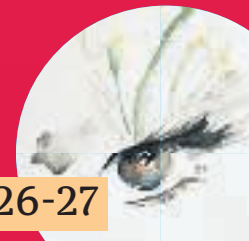
An enchanting forest photoshoot to fuel your May Ball fantasies

Fashion 34-35



Vulture

Creative Writing
Original poetry inspired by endings and beginnings



Arts 26-27

FREE
Take a copy

May Ball special

The nights you'll (hopefully) always remember

Lifestyle 19

Cambridge's Independent Student Newspaper since 1947

No. 848
Wednesday 20th June 2018
varsity.co.uk

VARSITY

Revealed How Cambridge conspired to rig the system during staff strikes

Exclusive:

- Leaked documents reveal senior figures at Cambridge attempted to collude with Oxford on staff's pensions
- Finance officials sought to steer national pensions dispute

Noella Chye, Rosie Bradbury and Catherine Lally

Cambridge attempted to coordinate with Oxford, and considered how to exploit employees' concerns, in a concerted effort to influence the higher education sector earlier this year.

Last term saw an unprecedented revolt against what staff saw as a betrayal by their institutions of their interests. 40,000 University employees across 64 institutions took to picket lines for 14 days of strike action, demanding the preservation of their pensions.

A *Varsity* investigation has found



▲ Staff rallied in central Cambridge against deteriorating pensions structures

(LOUIS ASHWORTH)

Continued on page 6 ►

No easy answers in drinking societies scandal

Anna Menin and Daniel Gayne

"What is the single biggest problem facing the Crescents in the modern age?", asked a Trinity Hall student in the now-infamous video of the drinking society's

Caesarian Sunday gathering. His answer, "inclusivity", sparked a controversy about Cambridge drinking societies that has reverberated throughout the University ever since.

The Crescents swiftly disbanded, in what initially seemed like the start of a

University-wide reckoning about whether drinking societies still have any part to play in Cambridge student life, with vice-chancellor Stephen Toope calling for university action on the issue, saying that he is "not sympathetic of any organisation where the primary purpose

is to drink."

But this apparently revolutionary culture change has so far failed to be reflected in the figures of reported incidents of misconduct. The University's 'Breaking the Silence' procedure for reporting harassment and sexual misconduct received

15 and eight anonymous reports in May and June respectively, compared to 19 and ten in March and April.

Varsity reached out to the 17 colleges whose drinking and sports societies had

Continued on page 10 ►

EDITORIAL

Institutional memory matters

So, another May Week, another *Varsity* edition has gone to press, another academic year has drawn to a close. Finalists – myself included – prepare to graduate, hopefully taking away many fond memories.

Rather aptly, many of the major plot lines of the cohort of 2015 have likewise drawn to a close this term. Class list opt-outs have been introduced for students; CUSU finances seem to have tentatively reached a more stable position. Less fortunately, the University has chosen to reject calls for full divestment, marking the end for now to a chapter of student debate and activism. Collectively, this ties together many of the overarching campaigns and issues which have preoccupied my year group throughout our time at Cambridge – a fitting, if undoubtedly bittersweet, send-off.

I don't need to say that Cambridge is an extremely old institution, with a very quick turnover rate of its students. It begs the question of how these kinds of issues, and what has been learned from the endeavours to resolve them, are remembered – and indeed, whether that matters.

One, ten, a hundred years from now, do the tactics of student occupation employed by Zero Carbon matter? Does the University-wide referendum on class lists bear relation to anything? I'm not going to repeat trite clichés about history repeating itself, but as Vivienne Hopley-Jones' year in review (p.19) so eloquently surmises, we have learnt a lot in the past year – as much from the successes as the failures of initiatives for change.

To continue pushing for the many necessary reforms to our University – from drinking societies (p. 10) to BME representation in college politics (p. 9) – institutional memory on behalf of the student body is of the utmost importance. *Varsity* as a paper of documentation naturally has a role to play in this keeping of record, as do the many student-led campaigns and organisations. Before we swan off into the endless abyss of summer and life post-graduation, we must take time to regroup, remember and hand-over properly to our successors. Cambridge isn't just a place that has left a mark on us as students, but also an institution in which we have the capacity to leave a legacy behind.

EDITOR Anna Jennings editor@varsity.co.uk

MAGAZINE EDITOR Reuben Andrews magazine@varsity.co.uk

DIGITAL EDITOR Felix Peckham digital@varsity.co.uk

BUSINESS MANAGER Mark Curtis business@varsity.co.uk

NEWS EDITORS Rosie Bradbury, Catherine Lally & Devarshi Lodhia (Senior);

Isobel Bickersteth & Stephanie Stacey (Deputy) news@varsity.co.uk

SENIOR NEWS CORRESPONDENTS Harry Clynych, Isobel Griffiths, Victor Jack,

Millie Kiel, Anna Mochar, Jemma Slingo & Elizabeth Shaw

INVESTIGATIONS EDITORS Jack Conway & Oliver Guest investigations@varsity.co.uk

OPINION EDITORS Vivienne Hopley-Jones (Senior); Maia Wyn Davies, Joseph

Evans, Jiayu Qiu & Dan Wright (Deputy) opinion@varsity.co.uk

SCIENCE EDITOR Sophie Corrodi science@varsity.co.uk

FEATURES EDITORS Niamh Curran & Owen Jack features@varsity.co.uk

ARTS EDITORS Edwin Boadu & Jamie Hancock arts@varsity.co.uk

FILM & TV EDITORS Ella Jay Jones & Rachel Tsang filmandtv@varsity.co.uk

MUSIC EDITOR Harriet Allison music@varsity.co.uk

FASHION EDITORS Gian Hayer & Olivia Neave fashion@varsity.co.uk

THEATRE EDITORS Eimear Ryan-Charleton (Senior); Shameera Lin (Deputy) theatre@varsity.co.uk

LIFESTYLE EDITORS Anna Hollingsworth (Senior); Lydia Bunt (Deputy)

theatre@varsity.co.uk

SPORT EDITORS Vivi Way (Senior) & Marcus McCabe (Deputy)

sport@varsity.co.uk

VIOLET EDITORS Leila Sackur (Senior); Anunita Chandrasekar & Shraddha Rathi

(Deputy) violet@varsity.co.uk

INTERVIEWS EDITORS Belle George, Lawrence Hopkins & Adam Rachman

interviews@varsity.co.uk

LONG READS EDITORS Noella Chye & Molly Montgomery longreads@varsity.co.uk

HEAD OF VIDEO Jonah Surkes video@varsity.co.uk

SUB-EDITORS Joseph Krol (Chief); Ciara Dossett, Haeram Jalees, Kiran Khanom,

Tom Nixon, Evie Vennix subeditor@varsity.co.uk

ENGAGEMENT EDITORS Josh Kimblin & Sophie Weinmann

SWITCHBOARD PRESENTER Raphael Korber Hoffman

VULTURE SHOW PRESENTERS Pany Heliotis & Martha O'Neill

WEBSITE DEVELOPER Edwin Bahrami Balani online@varsity.co.uk

VARSOC PRESIDENT Louis Ashworth president@varsity.co.uk

CHIEF OF DESIGN Daniel Gayne design@varsity.co.uk

ASSOCIATE EDITORS Peter Chappell, Matt Gutteridge, Aoife Hogan, Anna Menin,

Caitlin Smith & Patrick Wernham associate@varsity.co.uk

VARSAITY BOARD Dr Michael Franklin (Chairman); Michael Derringer, Dr Tim

Harris, Prof Peter Robinson; Louis Ashworth, Daniel Gayne, Elizabeth Howcroft,

Anna Jennings, Anna Menin & Patrick Wernham

© VARSITY PUBLICATIONS LTD, 2017. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means electronic, mechanical photocopying, recording or otherwise without prior permission of the publisher. Varsity, 16 Mill Lane, Cambridge CB2 1RX. Telephone 01223 337575.

Varsity is published by Varsity Publications Ltd. Varsity Publications also publishes *The Mays*. Printed at Iliffe Print Cambridge – Winship Road, Milton, Cambridge CB24 6PP on 42.5gsm newsprint. Registered as a newspaper at the Post Office. ISSN 1758-4442.

News

Behind the headlines, access efforts still provoke divisions

Analysis Access for black students has been in the news again – but will things change?

In February 2003, *Varsity* splashed its front page with an investigation revealing the “black hole” in Cambridge's undergraduate admissions. The paper reported that 25 black students had been accepted the year before, and just 12 the two years before that.

Beneath the headline ‘Colourblind?’ it reported that the access situation was “so dire” that Cambridge had accepted more students with the surname ‘White’ than black undergraduates.

Over a decade and a half later, the capacity for the University's access statistics to shock remains as present as ever: last year, *Varsity* reported that 2016 had seen more black men accepted than Etonians for the first time ever – in this year's stats, that was narrowly maintained.

The acceptance rate for black, Bangladeshi and Pakistani students have remained consistently lower than average, something which the University has historically pinned on an intersection of issues, including the type of course applied to.

Twice this year alone, the University, along with Oxford, has received criticism for its intake of black students. The first was in October, when Labour MP David Lammy blasted Oxbridge colleges as “fiefdoms of entrenched privilege”, and revealed that on average a quarter of Cambridge colleges made no offers to black British applicants from 2010 to 2015.

The second came just weeks ago, as a *Financial Times* report highlighted low intake numbers based on figures from 2011–2016, focusing particularly on low intake at St Edmund's College and Hughes Hall.

The University fired back strongly, with the president of Hughes Hall, Dr Anthony Freeling, and Master of St Edmund's, Matthew Bullock, accusing the FT of employing “misleading interpretations” by ignoring the tiny size of both colleges' undergraduate cohorts.

The FT piece was amended, but most of its findings were maintained, and the figures it reported were widely picked up in other media outlets. For a casual consumer of news, the message remained clear: black students, at Cambridge, remain an anomaly.

The kickback was strong enough this time, however, that the University re-



▲ Hylton-Pennant (LOUIS ASHWORTH)

leased its own formal response, criticising the press coverage, which they said “undermines the progress made in access and the value of a Cambridge education”.

A week later, the University released a photo – organised in conjunction with the African-Caribbean Society (ACS) – showing the ‘Black women of Cambridge’: over 50 black, female students stood on the steps in front of Senate House. The photoshoot, held to celebrate 70 years since the admission of the first black woman admitted into Cambridge, Gloria Claire Carpenter, echoed ACS's viral photographs of 15 black, male students last year.

Taken together, these incidents encapsulate the ongoing media narrative surrounding the admission of black students – caught between damning statistics, and public displays of diversity.

Dr Sam Lucy, director of admissions for the colleges, said that part of the problem was how low cohort numbers are presented.

“One of my greatest desires is for people actually to get more sensible about their use of statistics,” said, pointing to reports highlighting individual colleges' low intake of black students. “It's where a lot of misinformation comes from, because people just aren't very adept at interpreting small numbers against much, much bigger data sets.”

Part of the issue with David Lammy's criticism of individual colleges is that, without significantly more data than is currently released, low application numbers mean that for some colleges not to have accepted any black students is statistically likely – it has only been for roughly the past decade that Cambridge has accepted more black undergraduate





students than there are colleges, something the University has been keen to suggest means the fault doesn't lie at a college level.

"I think everybody has to be very careful when they speak publicly on this," Lucy said, in reference to Lammy. "Even when it might be your intention, it might be the consequence that this looks like an institution that isn't open."

She noted that the MP's comments "have produced some positive consequences, which isn't always recognised", including prompting a significant increase in interest in the access scheme Target Oxbridge, which prompted the University to give it a substantial funding boost – "as a direct result, we think, of the increased media attention around this."

"I don't think there is much incentive for much of the press to present our systems in a necessarily fair way," Lucy said, adding "there's not much we can do about that".

She said that admissions tutors would be "furious" at Lammy's suggestion that colleges remained bastions of the "old school tie", and that she felt admissions tutors were all working towards the same goals.

She said she was "increasingly confident" that college choice is becoming less of a factor in applicants' chances of success.

Criticism of colleges often results in calls for increased centralisation of the admissions process, which have come from both Lammy and CUSU, via its current access and funding officer, Olivia Hylton-Pennant. There have been murmurings within the University that it might set specific overall targets for access from underrepresented ethnic

groups, though these have not yet materialised into anything concrete.

For Hylton-Pennant, who is approaching the end of her tenure as a sabbatical officer, increased centralisation is the answer.

After declining to co-sign the University's response to the FT, she said in a post on CUSU's website: "The University has no clear plan to increase the number of British BME students, nor how it hopes to engage a wide range of stakeholders to support them in their efforts, so how can I defend its current work?"

"Bad PR should not be the driving force behind University commitments to widening participation," she said, adding "yet this too often feels the case" – highlighting the case of Abdullah Kattineh, a Syrian who was offered a full scholarship after hundreds of people signed an open letter supporting him.

▲▼ Sam Lucy, director of college admissions (above). ACS's photoshoot (below) (LOUIS ASHWORTH/ LLOYD MANN/ UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE)

“The University has no clear plan”



In a new report, she has called for Cambridge to introduce a central outreach initiative to boost ethnic minority access.

The report says "the reasons why students from these ethnic groups are underrepresented are complex," adding: "Institutional bias, lack of attainment and lack of knowledge about the institution, leading to fear of not fitting in are all valid suppositions."

Hylton-Pennant's recommendations, based on systems at other universities worldwide, include the introduction of a full-time access employee whose focus would be organising outreach with BME community leaders and organisations, and the establishment of BME student ambassadors, an idea which has found success at Harvard University. The report says: "The University of Cambridge has a real opportunity to attract more BME students by formally supporting a centralised initiative."

Dr Nicholas Guyatt, a reader in History based at Trinity Hall, reflected on his experience as an academic with issues surrounding representation require tackling at all levels of the University.

"[The] teaching and admin staff at Cambridge aren't yet fully representative of the society we're supposed to serve," he said. "In my faculty, nearly two-thirds of the staff are male and there are no black British African/Black British Caribbean lecturers – despite the fact that we have nearly a hundred full-time staff employed by the colleges or by the University".

"It's great that our student body is becoming more representative, but the goal of improving access can't be achieved unless women and people of colour are properly represented in staff and admin positions," he added. "This isn't an easy problem to solve, but I'd like to see all of us making a public commitment to tackling it. At an institution like Cambridge, which can draw the very best minds from the UK and around the world, diversity and representation ought to be within our reach."

Lucy emphasised the use of contextual data in processing admissions, but Guyatt called for this to go further. "[I]nterviewers have no data on racial representation when we do interviews," he said, "and I couldn't tell you whether my college or faculty have systematically underrepresented particular racial/ethnic groups in recent admissions."

Echoing Hylton-Pennant's suggestions, Guyatt said: "I think the University ought to have specialised outreach workers for particular racial/ethnic groups," adding "I would be amazed if we couldn't raise money for these posts from alumni who are desperate to see us solve these problems".

NEWS

Senior University figures spend thousands on luxury hotels

Page 12



▲ Stephen Toope spent over £3500 hotels in six months (SHANGRI-LA)

NEWS

Cambridge lags behind Oxford in number of BME JCR presidents

Page 9

SCIENCE

Museum of Zoology reopens after renovations

Page 14

OPINION

Ian Wang

Uni failing on BME representation

Page 15



Rensa Gaunt

Divestment is not the solution

Page 16



Connor MacDonald

The refugee crisis has not gone away

Page 17



SPORT

John's and Jesus retain bumps headship

Page 40

News

Failings in exam provision for religious students

Oliver Guest & Jack Conway
Investigations Editors

At the end of Exam Term, a *Varsity* investigation has found that some religious students feel “stressed” or “guilty” as a result of the University’s faith-provision for examinations.

Every year, students can apply through a self-declaration form to have their exams timetabled to avoid clashes with religious events, as “the University recognises that the examination timetable might clash with religious observances that restrict work.”

The Cambridge website states that “the University seeks to minimise these clashes”, but such clashes are sometimes unavoidable, however, due to the complexity of the timetable. In the case where exams cannot be rescheduled, students are told that “it may therefore be necessary to make alternative arrangements, which will be discussed with your College.”

Students who are affected by these clashes face a difficult choice between either going into “quarantine” and sitting the exam at a different time, or ignoring the religious event and sitting the exam with the rest of their cohort.

Alex Ridley, a Seventh-day Adventist who keeps the Sabbath, chose quarantine last year, and took an exam in her college the morning after most of her cohort. At the same time as others started the examination, she was escorted to a set of interconnecting rooms in Clare. To ensure that she didn’t have contact with the outside world, she stayed with an invigilator until after completing her exam in a living room area of the set the following morning. Overnight, she slept in one set while the invigilator stayed in the other.

Ridley praised her college for being supportive of her religious needs and for providing her with some privacy, through the provision of interconnecting sets and not searching her overnight bag for a phone. However, she said that the



P&G SALES GRADUATE OPPORTUNITIES 2018 APPLY NOW

Didn't get around to finding a job in your Final Year? Too focussed on your studies? Weren't sure what you wanted to do? Don't stress, P&G still have top graduate opportunities in our Sales Team starting in 2018. Working in Sales at P&G means getting your own multi-million pound business and budget to manage from Day 1 – and that means working with great brands like Pampers, Fairy & Gillette and the UK's biggest grocery retailers. For further information on available roles and how to apply visit pgcareers.com

arrangement “definitely wasn’t ideal”.

She was worried that the general process of isolation could lead to a “big disadvantage” in terms of exam performance, and noted that the quarantine conditions “can cause awkward situations”.

When friends greeted her in the college buttery as she entered with the invigilator, she was not allowed to talk to them. During the quarantine, while Ridley did not have access to the internet, eight people were killed in the London Bridge terror attack.

Before beginning the exam on Sunday, the invigilator told Ridley about the attack, saying that she felt she “needed to tell her”. Ridley thought this decision was bizarre, questioning how she would have reacted if she had had family in London, who could have been affected.

To avoid taking an exam during the Jewish Shavuot festival last year, Samuel Isaac at Sidney Sussex similarly chose quarantine, staying overnight with an Orthodox Jewish family.

He said that this was “a bit of a palaver” to organise and only possible with the support of the Cambridge University Jewish Society (JSoc): his quarantine was organised not by his college, but by Barry Landy, a fellow at Fitzwilliam, who is the senior treasurer of JSoc.

Isaac added that the quarantine system is “not simple [and] not an easy way to deal with” religious observance. The rules were stricter for him than Ridley: he could not even leave the sight of those supervising him. He told *Varsity* that “it didn’t really have... a huge effect” on his exam performance, however, and actually gave him slightly longer to read his notes. Landy similarly told *Varsity* that, in his experience, quarantine can be a disadvantage for students, but “as with all cases where students take exams under special conditions (e.g. in college) it can work both ways”.

Not all religious students choose to

▲ **Daniel Charles,**
a student at
Selwyn (LOUIS
ASHWORTH)

undergo quarantine. Daniel Charles, a student at Selwyn, filled in the form to prevent an exam being scheduled on the Sabbath, but this had “no observable effect” to the examination timetable.

He instead chose to sit his exams under normal circumstances to avoid “adding to the stress of exams”. Charles said that this gave him a sense of “guilt and psychological unease” through breaking away from his normal lifestyle.

Charles was critical of the University’s refusal to move exam dates – a sentiment shared by Ridley, who noted that the exam rescheduling form often does not work, because certain exams are held on the same date every year, regardless of religious clashes.

Landy told *Varsity* that it would “be good to complete the move started in 1990 to avoid having examinations on Saturdays”. This would dramatically reduce the number of clashes, by avoiding conflicts with the Sabbath.

Both Charles and Ridley criticised the current system, with Charles saying it creates “a psychological burden”. Ridley told *Varsity* that it puts students in a “clear position of having to make choices between their faith and their academic study”.

“
Having
to make
choices
between
their faith
and their
academic
study
”



▲ **Cambridge sets strict rules for exams** (LOUIS ASHWORTH)

STEM students and freshers are most likely to experience exam failure

Stephanie Stacey and
Isobel Bickersteth
Deputy News Editors

For many Cambridge students, failure is a foreign concept. Fortunately, for most, the prospect will remain distant throughout their University career, as between the academic years of 2006-07 to 2016-17, just 891 failed examination results were recorded, marking only a tiny fraction of students entered for examination at the University during this period.

Although student numbers are approximately equal, the sciences saw a significantly greater number of failures at 753, than the arts, humanities and social sciences, which saw just 138.

Excluding Medicine, in which most of the 332 failures came about in the final clinical examinations, rather than University-administered Tripos exams, Engineering was the subject with the greatest total number of failures, at 155, followed closely by Natural Sciences, with 134.

Engineering is a four-year course, with the second greatest number of students, with 334 students accepted in 2017. While Natural Sciences student numbers dwarf all other subjects, with 629 students accepted in the 2017 admissions cycle, the failure rates remain disproportionately large even when accounting for these factors.

Asked about the relatively high number of failures in her subject, Dr Claire Barlow, deputy head of the Cambridge Engineering department, said that the “very

analytical” Cambridge Engineering course “doesn’t suit everyone” and acknowledged that a “small proportion of students do fail: typically below 1%, and most commonly in the first year”. However, she explained that “such students typically start again at other universities and do very well indeed”.

English, the second largest of the arts and humanities according to the 2017 admissions statistics, claimed a comparatively tiny number of failures, with just four across the 11-year period. Meanwhile Law, whose student numbers are only slightly greater than English, claimed the most failures of any arts or humanities subject, with 21 failures, nine of which occurred in the first year of study. History followed close behind, with 20 failures, of which 16 took place in preliminary examinations.

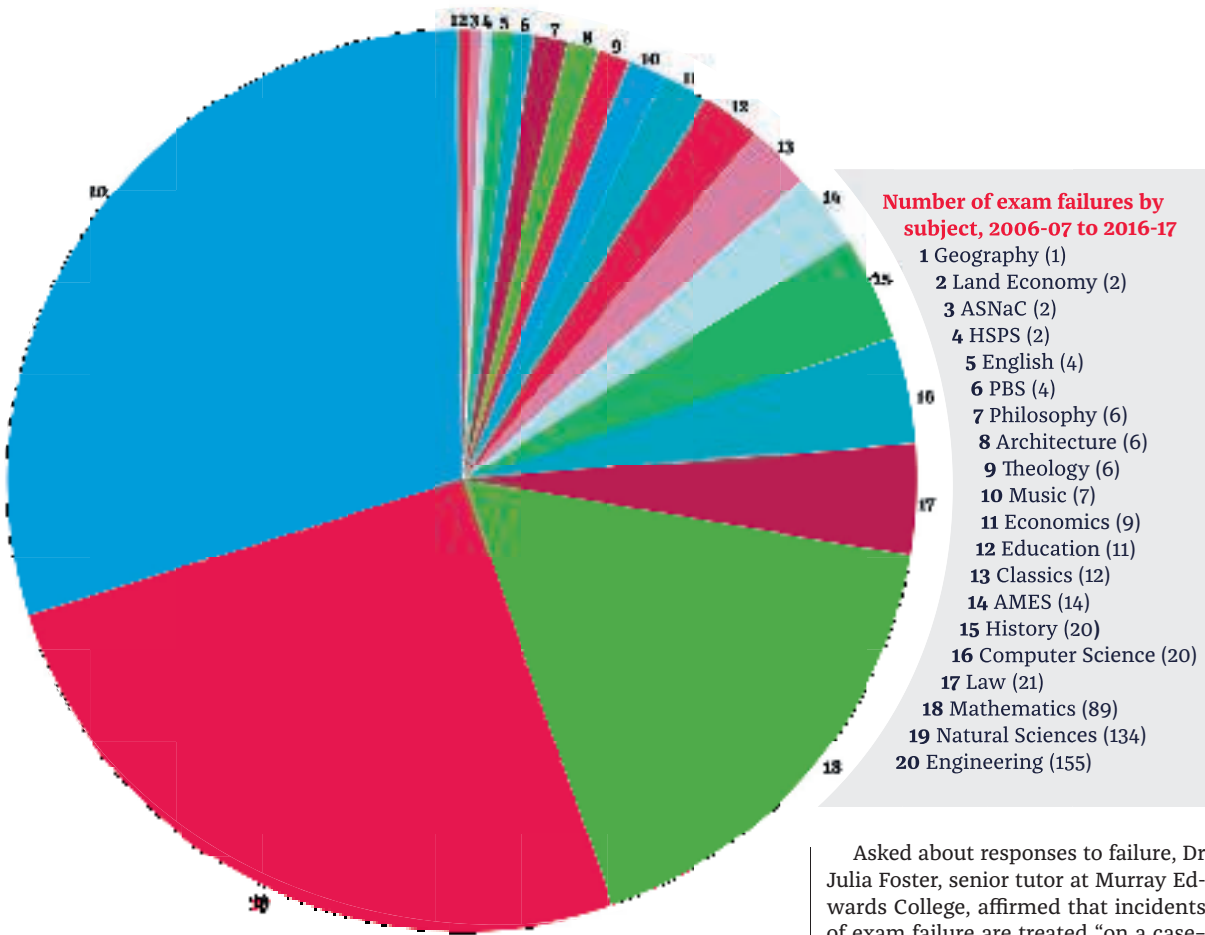
Disparities are seen too between University years, with finalists significantly less likely to fail than those at the beginning of their degrees.

The exception to this was Medicine and Veterinary Medicine, where the number of failing students increased in their clinical exams, sat at the end of their final three years. Unlike the majority of Tripos examinations, it is possible to resit these.

Not a single student failed first year Land Economy or Geography. In fact, only one student failed any part of the Geography Tripos across the entire 11-year period, the least of any subject offered at the University, despite the fact that Geography, which accepted 90 students in 2017, is far from the smallest subject in terms of enrolment.

Drop-out disparities

Geography saw the fewest failures of any subject, even those with smaller cohorts



Asked about responses to failure, Dr Julia Foster, senior tutor at Murray Edwards College, affirmed that incidents of exam failure are treated “on a case-by-case basis”, including discussion of the situation with the student and consideration of “any medical or tutorial issues”.

This response was echoed by Richard Partington, senior tutor at Churchill College, who explained that the college would make an appeal to the Applications Committee if it is clear that there are “significant extenuating circumstances”, adding that this is “usually on the basis of illness but sometimes through other, grave cause”.

Discussing the formal process following exam failure, Newnham College’s senior tutor, Professor Liba Taub, said that they take each case as it comes, explaining that “a group of senior members of the college would hear from you and your director of studies, look at your supervision reports, hear from your tutor and consider extenuating circumstances”.

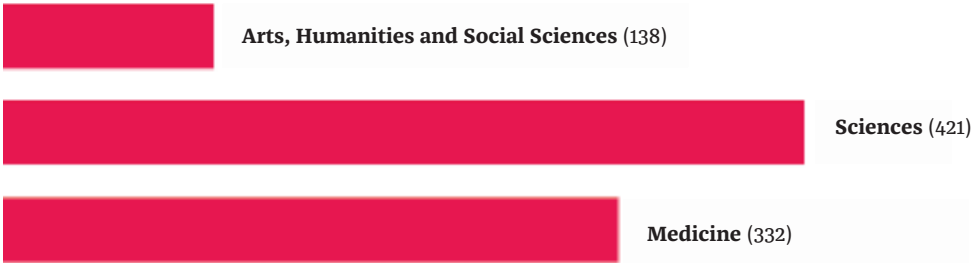
Appeals usually serve to allow a student to continue to the next stage of their degree or, if they are a finalist, to be deemed ‘Declared to have Deserved Honours’ (DDH), allowing them to graduate with an honours degree.

If this is deemed inappropriate by the University, a student may be awarded an Ordinary Degree which also allows them to graduate without honours.

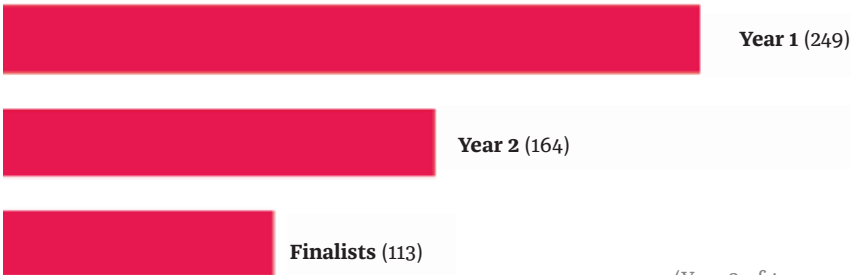
Senior tutors were keen to emphasise that failure, though it is a serious matter, is extremely rare, a message which is indeed supported by the data.

Departmental divides

Number of exam failures by department, 2006-07 to 2016-17



Number of exam failures by year group, 2006-07 to 2016-17



(Year 3 of 4-year courses has been excluded from this graph)

871

The number of
exam failures
in the 11 year
period of 2006-
07 to 2016-17

Professor Ash Amin, Head of the Geography Department, said that the “very robust teaching administration and procedures, including excellent feedback and consultation with students through students reps and the Staff Student Committee” of the Geography department “helps us pick up on any problems early on”.

Amin said that by allowing specialisation in second and third year, students were able “to work in areas suited to their talents and interests”, while the “relatively small” nature of their department means they are able “to spot anyone in difficulty early on”.

The standard University response to examination failure is to prevent a student from continuing with their course, excluding preliminary examinations, in which failure does not “debar you from being a candidate for any subsequent Tripos Examination”.

Circumstances are, however, taken into account, with allowances made for those experiencing hardship.



Breaking news,
around the
clock
varsity.co.uk

News **Oxbridge Collusion**

Cambridge sought to steer staff strikes

◀ Continued from front page

senior finance officials at Cambridge attempting to steer the national pensions dispute to protect their financial position.

Cambridge's collusion with Oxford

University Finance Committee minutes leaked to *Varsity* reveal that senior officials called for Cambridge's response to a survey gathering employers' perspectives on the national pensions scheme to be "coordinated with Oxford as far as possible".

The goal was to demonstrate that there was a mandate for a position that falls in line with their financial interests, that employers take on the lowest risk possible in the national pensions scheme.

The survey, sent out by university representative Universities UK (UUK), was intended to gather a representative view of employers on its proposed changes to the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS), the largest higher education pensions scheme in the UK.

A spokesperson for the University commented on the discussions with Oxford: "The University discussed its views on both the 2014 and 2017 USS valuations with a number of employers in the scheme."

Cambridge saw opportunity to exploit staff's concerns

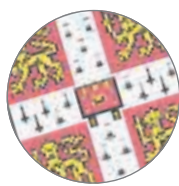
As staff struck with a desperate sense of impending financial insecurity, senior figures saw an opportunity to capitalise on their fears.

Leaked meeting minutes reveal finance officials noted that if the national pensions scheme moved entirely away from a system of defined benefits – in which employees are guaranteed an income upon retirement – "the University would be able to argue much more strongly in favour of moving away from USS in order to establish its own defined benefits scheme for future benefits."

They remarked: "Defined benefits were highly valued by the University's staff."

Officials had also dismissed their concerns. Midway through the strikes, 501 staff, as members of Cambridge's governing body Regent's House, called for the retention of a defined benefit scheme, contrary to the administration's interests.

Minutes reveal senior University staff dismissed their calls as "evidence of the poor understanding of the matters at issue."



College collusion?
Colleges with nearly identical responses to the University's:

Fitzwilliam



Hughes Hall



King's



Lucy Cavendish



St Catharine's



Cambridge considered leaving the national scheme

Notes from a meeting in September 2017 between Oxford and Cambridge bursars described Cambridge's "growing realisation and frustration that financially weaker Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) were relying on the balance sheets of stronger HEIs to support the pension scheme, and indirectly, allow greater borrowing in the sector." The document, previously available on an Oxford internal server, was later removed.

Should Cambridge leave the national pension scheme, it would mark a betrayal of the higher education sector.

Leaks revealed the University has calculated it would cost £2.5bn to pull out of the scheme, making it unfeasible for the time being.

To pull out of the scheme was seen as a last resort. Despite this, meeting minutes reveal the option was given serious consideration. If word got out that they were considering this, Finance Committee members feared, it could paint the University as indifferent to the fate of the sector.

Committee members noted: "There was already some negative press coverage of the involvement of the Colleges and the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge in the discussions to date." If their discussion of individualising defined benefits was made public, they feared, it "might be seen, wrongly, as part of a plan to wreck the USS rather than a last resort."

Michael Otsuka, the London School of Economics (LSE) academic who first raised the question of the role of Oxbridge colleges in the consultation process, was singled out. His comments in *The Guardian* were said to have "cre-

Explained Cambridge's financial committees

The University Council Finance Committee meets officially around five or six times a year. Its purpose is to advise the Council on the University's assets, such as its estates, investments, income, and expenditure.

The Finance Committee consists of 13 members, and is chaired by Vice-Chancellor Stephen Toope. Three members are elected by representatives of the colleges, four are appointed by the Council – its chief

decision-making body, one by the General Board, two by Regent House, and two are co-opted by the committee.

The pensions working group, a sub-committee set up by the finance committee, includes an independent actuary Jonathan Seed. University officials, head of the intercollegiate pensions sub-committee of the Bursar's Committee Simon Summers, and is chaired by Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Institutional and International Relations Professor Eilis Ferran.



▲ Paul Mylrea, the University's director of communications, waits outside Old Schools during the student occupation last term

(LOUIS ASHWORTH)

ated tension within the colleges, in particular with incoming fellows."

Coordination extended to colleges

Colleges too, conspired to push for lower risk. A leaked email from Simon Summers, chair of the pensions sub-committee – a circle of college bursars – provided a "suggested response" to colleges to call for less risk to be placed on employers.

Questions already exist about college collusion: the only five colleges which have released the details of their responses in full were found to have responded virtually identically, with all of them pushing to take less risk in funding staffs' pensions.

A *Varsity* investigation in March found that seven of the eight colleges which have confirmed they called for less risk, three of which have released statements but did not provide a transcript of their responses, have come forward about their decision-making procedure: bursars had submitted their responses on behalf of the college without consulting their governing bodies.

In March this year, as a handful of colleges came out with statements criticising their bursars' ac-

tions, there was a mounting sense that something was amiss in how Cambridge colleges were able to influence the pensions dispute.

Summers' email showed him advocating that bursars respond to the consultation, but that they include "a formulation to show that the responses may not have been formally approved by colleges."

He added: "You will also wish to consider how to achieve a consensus view in your College about the issues facing the scheme, during Michaelmas Term."

When questioned by *Varsity*, Summers did not address the question of why he pushed bursars to achieve a consensus, instead saying that he wished to advise bursars to "consider having that consultation [with the Governing Body] as soon as possible".

Freedom of Information requests reveal that the Finance Committee asked one of its sub-committees, Cambridge's Pensions Working Group, to "formulate a robust response acting as far as possible with Cambridge colleges and University of Oxford to ensure consistency to give weight to the responses."

Leaks also reveal they felt they had "no visibility on the University's position and would welcome the opportunity to be involved in ongoing discussions."

A spokesperson for the University remarked on discussions with colleges: "while Colleges are autonomous, self-governing institutions, it is beneficial to consider these issues in the broader context of how they affect the Collegiate University."

What was Cambridge trying to achieve?

Employers' perspectives, both that of the University and colleges, indicated a growing disillusionment with the structure of the national pensions scheme as a whole.

In the University's response to the September 2017 survey, it expressed its "strong preference" to break from the



Oxbridge collusion News

What is the 'last man standing' scheme, and why does Cambridge want to break it?

The USS operates under a 'last man standing' pension scheme system. Under the scheme rules, the liabilities of participants which become insolvent are passed to the last employer in the scheme.

Sectionalisation, which came up in finance committee discussions and Summers' leaked email, involves the legal separation of each institution's assets and liabilities.

This would allow the finances of pension schemes across the higher education sector to be separated.

In the case of one institution becoming insolvent, the funding deficit would then not be spread across the other participating institutions, which is what occurs under the current last man standing system.

last man standing scheme currently in place.

In sticking with the defined benefit scheme, institutions will be forced to make higher contributions to their employees' pensions.

Cambridge expressed concern that the current system left it vulnerable to inheriting liabilities as weaker institutions fell away.

Pensions working group members expressed concern at possible future in-



creased risk to employers if the last man standing scheme was maintained. Meeting minutes revealed members' views: "it should be pointed out that there were alternative options for scheme design" – which they expressed in responding to the survey.

Cambridge had repeatedly expressed its desire for a sectionalisation of the pensions scheme, wherein trustees would be able to segregate sections of the USS in order to mitigate the impact

▲ Staff on strike in March

(MATTHIAS GJESDAL HAMMER)

of one employer defaulting on other members.

Attempts to push for their financial interests have been years in the works

The last time this happened, it went unnoticed. Yet a network of pensions discussions disconnected from staffs' interests has been years in the works.

Freedom of Information requests reveal that for the previous USS valuation in 2014, Professor Jeremy Sanders, the former Chair of the Pensions Working Group, met with counterparts at Oxford, LSE and the University of Edinburgh. The official at Oxford had also met with administrators at the University of Manchester and Imperial College.

Minutes reveal that Sanders "hoped this would result in a number of consultation responses along similar lines which would hopefully influence the decision making process. Oxford and Cambridge would share draft responses."

An institution isolating itself

Secretive decisions by a select group of senior Cambridge officials seem to have played a key role in bringing the crisis to a flashpoint. 2018 marked an awakening for many at the marketisation of higher education, bringing University financial decision-making to the fore.

Cambridge as an institution is evolving. In doing so, it calls into question who its decision-makers stand for, if not its staff, and the fate of higher education itself.

PJT Partners



Your Future is Our Focus

You can search and apply to open positions with PJT Partners on our website: pjtpartners.com/careers

Any questions can be directed to the email address below: recruitingeurope@pjtpartners.com

Application Deadlines

- > Summer Analysts 2019
Strategic Advisory & Restructuring (London)
Applications will open August 15, 2018 and will close November 23, 2018
- > Full Time Analysts 2019
Strategic Advisory & Restructuring (London)
Applications will open August 15, 2018 and will close October 26, 2018

We review applications on a rolling basis, so early submission is strongly encouraged.

New York | Boston | Chicago | San Francisco | London | Madrid | Hong Kong | Sydney

News

CUSU presidents present and future on college inequality and Grudgebridge

Catherine Lally and Rosie Bradbury
Senior News Editors

Evie Aspinall is set to be the latest in a long succession of HSPS graduates to take up the mantle of CUSU president, as Daisy Eyre's term draws to a close. *Varsity* sat down with the outgoing and incoming presidents to talk student engagement, college inequality and Grudgebridge.

Eyre reflects on the main obstacles that stood in the way of accomplishing some of her manifesto promises, branding the University's pace of change as often "sluggish." She views the role of CUSU president as not being "some kind of magic wand that is waved and Cambridge is amazing", but in choosing key battles – to "push the University to do things you think are really important".

The limited amount of time in a single presidential term became an issue when she tried to address the issue of unmanageable student workloads in Lent Term, one of the key points of her manifesto, because of the "unpredictable and incredibly important" extended staff strikes.

Addressing a lack of student engagement with CUSU was a priority of Aspinall's throughout her presidential campaign. Beyond that, she sees the crucial policy issue of her term as tackling college inequality – from disparities in rent, down to intermission policies and tutorial support during exam term.

Aspinall outlines her desire to address the idea that "if you go to John's, your life is much easier than if you end up at Newnham." College disparities have been a persistent thread at Cambridge this year – on both rollout of Prevent policy and on rent costs, *Varsity* investigations have found stark differences across the University.

Eyre points out that college inequality "is a really hard thing to tackle" from a CUSU perspective, as the central University cannot easily standardise policies across all colleges. However, she feels Aspinall can still make a difference, but



that talking "to all the different senior tutors", and putting together "guidelines they can adopt", is a "whole year's working project."

In a similar vein, the collegiate nature of Cambridge is highlighted as an opportunity for CUSU, as well as something that makes its operations more difficult. Aspinall has found that the separation between college administrations and the University makes it easy to "pass the buck".

However, Eyre adds that the collegiate nature of Cambridge "could be the resource to make the strongest union ever because you have so many more capillary links to students" through the existence of JCR and college-level campaigning.

In theory she says, this means CUSU has access to "students in every college,

who will be able to feed back to us what students are feeling," but that the danger lies in how "students see their college making change and they don't see CUSU making change," as JCR action may be more immediately visible.

"I've never seen an opportunity like this in Cambridge," Eyre says, remarking on the level of student engagement with drinking societies. However, both Eyre and Aspinall view Grudgebridge, whose platform as a popular Facebook page has been mobilised this term to eradicating drinking societies, as a deeply flawed mechanism.

Eyre is particularly critical of Grudgebridge's refusal to attach content notes to worrying or potentially triggering posts.

"I think it should really be about the people that are affected – my percep-

▲ **Evie Aspinall (left) and Daisy Eyre talk about the CUSU presidency** (ROSIE BRADBURY)

tion from Grudgebridge was that it never was", Aspinall says.

CUSU's code of conduct, which the present and incoming sabbatical team have been collaborating on, will seek to harness the "mobilised student passion" that Eyre points to as having emerged out of Grudgebridge. The process, however, faces a predictably low level of broad engagement from drinking society members, with 25 members from a concentrated number of societies having signed up and fewer than ten expressing willingness to go to a meeting.

"There's a certain extent to which drinking society members need to match words to actual actions and actually need to put some effort in, because otherwise I think that it will be quite clear that they're not willing to make change", Eyre tells me.

ANALYSIS

Rosie Bradbury

Aspinall's policies will shape CUSU's relevance



Aspinall enters the presidential role next month at a time when student politics has taken on a new relevance: last term's strike action and this term's campaign for divestment brought structural questions of University democracy forward, while the current spotlight on drinking society behaviour has mobilised a section of the student body previously disengaged. At the start of each new CUSU team's tenure, the team's selection of which key issues they will tackle will not define the

narrative of student politics itself, but the prominence of CUSU within the broader stage of student activism. In choosing her focus, Aspinall decides whether this new mobilisation will translate into fulfilling one of her key goals: student engagement. How effectively CUSU is able to harness this newfound political energy will define its prominence in the year to come.

Aspinall notes that she sees change as originating both within and outside of Cambridge's formal institutions,

that "divestment would never happen just with occupation of buildings – it would also never just happen with going to University Council". She tells me that she views the divestment debate as seeing "a block", following Council's rejection of full divestment earlier this month. Her claim that CUSU may indirectly address divestment through other campaigns – Cambridge's accountability to students, for example – may be overly optimistic, given the Council's apparent disengagement with students'

concerns in the face of financial risk to the University. One topic of conversation which emerged in the 2018 campaign season was whether CUSU is ignoring the 'average' Cambridge student – Aspinall's campaign very effectively tapped into this concern. Indicative of her desire to address this is her defining the crucial policy issue of her tenure – aside from student engagement – as college inequality. Aspinall must now grapple with how to most effectively capitalise on the political mobilisation seen this term.

‘A lot more work to be done’ to increase number of BME JCR presidents

Isobel Griffiths
Senior News Correspondent

Just three Cambridge college JCRs have BME presidents, pointing to an under-representation of BME students in college politics.

Only Gonville & Caius, St Catharine’s and Murray Edwards JCRs have BME presidents. Despite the fact BME students make up, on average, 21.5% of the University’s intake for the past three years, they make up just 10% of JCR Presidents.

This comes in stark contrast to Oxford, where it was recently announced that 41% of colleges with JCRs will have a BME JCR president next term.

Muhammed Khan, St Catharine’s JCR president, spoke to *Varsity* about the disparity, explaining that it may arise from the differences in the number of BME students at different colleges.

He highlighted that he felt BME students were represented well by CUSU and by JCR BME officers, but that among the University staff, “there’s a lot more work to be done”. At present only 12% of staff at the University of Cambridge are

BME, which is below the Russell Group average.

Reiss Akhtar, the Gonville & Caius JCR President, told *Varsity*, that “in an ideal world a BME student will see positions of power as roles to be applied to irrespective of sexuality, race and background.”

Akhtar suggested that the lack of BME representation was because “the structures in place do not do enough to make themselves accessible”, thus prompting a low number of BME applicants to positions such as JCR presidents.

Currently, Cambridge falls below the national average of 24.7% in the proportion of students who are BME. Although Oxford lags behind Cambridge in terms of BME access, with only 17.9% of its 2017 intake identifying as BME, it is well ahead in terms of BME representation in college student politics indicating the University seems to be faring better the Cambridge in terms of representation in college-level politics.

The Murray Edwards JCR President, Lylaah Bhalerao, said “I think that a lot of the time, BME students don’t feel that student politics is the place for them, because it has been dominated by the



white middle class for so long”.

Bhalerao said she felt BME students worry about how they will be treated by university staff and fellows, or feel that “they must stick to designated BME roles or issues” rather than taking up leadership roles.

Khan said that he does not feel be-

▲ **Left to right: Reiss Akhtar, Lylaah Bhalerao, and Muhammed Khan** (ISOBEL GRIFFITHS)

ing BME has affected his experience as president, but that it has impacted the policies he has pushed for, including a particular emphasis on access. At his college, policies he has worked to introduce include a reward system for students who go to schools to give Oxbridge admissions talks, and improved admissions resources for each subject.

Bhalerao said she has found herself in some “uncomfortable situations” during her time as president. “Especially as a young BME woman, it can feel as if people have three counts on which to try to patronise me, and that thought is something I have to confront whenever I walk into a room.”

However, on the whole Bhalerao would say that being BME has affected her experience positively. At Murray Edwards, she has introduced a Race and Ethnicity Working Group, and they are working towards race and ethnicity training at all levels in the college.

13

The number of BME JCR presidents at Oxford - 10 more than Cambridge

“If we want to be a progressive society then we need to make the most of the vast talent we have in our different communities, and this should be reflected on the level of student politics. Those of us in positions of leadership have to be role models and encourage others to take the baton after us and get involved.”

FLY FROM LONDON STANSTED TO ICELAND & USA FOR LESS

VIA ICELAND

WOWAIR.CO.UK

MAG London Stansted Airport

WOW air

News

Colleges claim they don't have drinking societies. Students say otherwise

◀ Continued from front page

been mentioned in Grudgebridge posts, asking whether they had received any direct complaints related to the behaviour of drinking societies since the Crescents scandal. None of the respondents reported any complaints.

A number of colleges – Peterhouse, Churchill, St Catharine's, Fitzwilliam, and Murray Edwards – told *Varsity* either that drinking societies were banned from holding events on college premises, or that the college does not have any drinking societies.

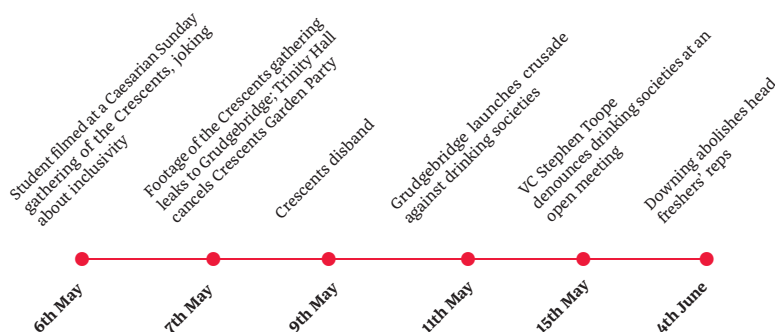
Yet it is unclear how far these rules can be policed. *Varsity* has seen evidence that two St Catharine's drinking societies, The Kittens and the Alleycatz, held a garden party on college property last week, hosted by the Kittbag, the official college sports society, despite St Catharine's Senior Tutor, Paul Hartle, claiming: "We have no drinking societies."

Varsity understands that the College regards the Kittens and Alleycatz to be sports societies, but a St Catharine's student, who wished to remain anonymous, said that the groups function as "drinking societies", which students are "secretly invited to join" on an exclusive basis, "not on the basis of sporting accomplishment."

The line between drinking and sports societies often appears to be blurred. At an open meeting earlier this term, pro-vice chancellor for education, Graham Virgo, recounted having banned a drinking society while he was Downing's senior tutor before reintroducing it "as a sporting society, open to all", a strategy which he said allowed colleges to "make sure, certainly, that [societies are] not



▲ Students celebrate Caesarian Sunday earlier this term (CAITLIN SMITH)



just there for alcoholic consumption".

However, a current Downing student, who spoke to *Varsity* on condition of anonymity, questioned the efficacy of this. They said that Downing's drinking societies – the Patricians and the Orchids – "exert a much larger influence" than the sporting society, the Griffins. The student added that, despite not being "officially recognised by the college", the drinking societies "hold an annual garden party in the middle of college organised through college officials, so I find it difficult to believe that their existence is unknown to them."

Before *Varsity* received responses from the remaining colleges, the University issued a blanket statement on the issue, in which Dr Mark Wormald, Secretary of the Senior Tutors Committee, said: "Staff and students across Cambridge's Colleges are meeting currently to discuss how best to promote a culture of zero tolerance to harassment, particularly in regard to drink-related activities of certain groups." Wormald went on to urge "any student who has experienced misconduct in any form to ask for help from their College's pastoral team, or their student social welfare officers."

CUSU has begun drafting a code of conduct for drinking societies collaboratively with drinking society members, which president Daisy Eyre said she hopes will harness current "mobilised student passion" regarding the issue. However, of the 25 drinking society members who initially signed up to be involved, fewer than ten have since responded to an attempt to arrange a meeting.

In an interview with *Varsity* (page 8), Eyre emphasised JCRs' central role in

tackling the issue. Although a number of JCRs have encouraged students to submit official complaints, some have taken a stronger stance.

Earlier this month, Downing JCR announced the abolition of the roles of head freshers' representatives in the wake of allegations about the links between the positions and college drinking societies. President, Jed Soleiman, said the JCR did not "feel it's appropriate for a drinking society to run the introduction the freshers get to the College."

Following an emergency meeting in May, Newnham JCR condemned drinking societies as an "anachronistic remnant of a drinking culture which perpetuates elitism, classism, compulsory heterosexuality, and irreparably damages efforts at post admissions access", and resolved to "implore" the College to officially disband its drinking societies.

In a statement to *Varsity*, Lola Olufemi, CUSU women's officer and head of the Women's Campaign, condemned the "exclusive and elitist nature of drinking societies" and said that they encourage "a culture of complicity where sexual violence and misconduct is encouraged".

"Colleges refuse to clamp down on said societies despite allegations", Olufemi continued, claiming that drinking societies "may even manipulate the system to get funding from their colleges". She said the outpouring of allegations did not surprise her, stressing the need for "specialist aftercare support for survivors, robust reporting mechanisms and in-house services that they can access."

If you have been affected by any of the issues raised in this article, you can contact *Breaking the Silence* here: www.breakingthesilence.cam.ac.uk



Anna Jennings Cambridge must take ownership of its drinking societies

ANALYSIS

Regardless of whether you're an avid swap-attendee or adamantly against the very concept of drinking societies, there are two facts we must all acknowledge: that there are problems with current drinking society culture as exposed by Grudgebridge, and that as an entrenched part of Cambridge student life, drinking societies are going to continue to exist for the foreseeable future.

Pragmatically, then, we must work to develop solutions to the problems which have been exposed. At the moment, infrastructure is simply not in place to deal with drinking societies. While many colleges have affirmed in recent weeks that they have policies against bullying, discrimination and sexual misconduct, drinking societies are a specific issue, and therefore require a specific, rather



▲ A still from the leaked video of the Crescents' Caesarian Sunday gathering (ANONYMOUS VIDEO, VIA GRUDGEBRIDGE)

than general, solution.

Particular problems posed by drinking societies include their pack mentality and often hostile or exclusionary attitude toward other members of the college community. Drinking societies are long-associated with privilege in its many forms, and this can give them a position of power within the college which makes complaints and disciplinary procedures less straightforward than in cases which focus on individuals.

In most colleges, drinking societies do not exist as official student societies. However, they take different guises (the boundary between drinking society and sport society is at best blurred), and events such as formal dinners and garden parties often take place on

“*Drinking societies are a specific issue, and therefore require a specific, rather than general, solution*”

college property.

This presence means that the colleges and the University have a responsibility to regulate and monitor their actions, and a first step towards this would be for colleges to more formally recognise their own drinking societies. Recognition is not the same as sanctioning the existence of drinking societies; it is merely the acceptance of a fact. This will allow colleges to introduce measures to better control drinking society behaviour, for example by requiring them to adhere to a code of conduct or constitution.

It's far from a full solution, but as the news story quiets down, we must ensure the pressure continues to create a better university for both present and prospective students.

Breaking down Cambridge's billion pound bond

- The bond is intended to hugely develop the University's real estate, expand affordable accommodation, and fund itself in the long-run
- But critics worry that if developments fail to bring in revenue, students and staff will feel the burden

Daniel Gayne and Noella Chye

Cambridge's role in the national pensions dispute and its refusal to divest, has centred attention on the University's finances. Yet one of the most radical changes that occurred within the University this year flew mostly under the radar.

In April, the University received permission from Regent House to arrange £600m of external borrowing to finance income-generating projects. This new bond will bring the University's long-term balance sheet debt to £936m (19.5% of net assets), having issued an initial £350m bond in 2012.

While the targeted use of these funds is not specified, the lion's share is expected to be invested in phase two of the North West Cambridge development, if approved in early 2019.

The North West Cambridge Development is the largest real estate project ever undertaken by the University, and upon completion will include 3,000 homes, divided between social-rented accommodation and market housing. Phase 2 is projected to cost in the region of £300-£400bn, and according to its project director, Heather Topel, will

bond's implications. Cambridge Defend Education (CDE), a left-wing student campaign group claimed that the University's debt-based financial strategy would be dependent "on mass fee increases both for home and international students, and EU students as a consequence of Brexit, and on increasing income in other areas, potentially with the Mill development or Cambridge Assessment."

Bond prospectuses outline the most significant liabilities on the bond issuer's books. The bond prospectus for the 2018 bond, leaked to *Varsity*, highlights a number of key liabilities, two of which will be of particular interest to those concerned about the tide of marketisation. The first concerns the fact that the university does not have complete control over the tuition fees that it is able to charge to UK and EU undergraduates, constituting a major constraint on revenue. The second is Cambridge's role in the current national pensions scheme.

At present, Cambridge employees' pensions are under the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS). The scheme operates under a 'last man standing' system – if weak institutions become insolvent, the remaining, wealthier employers such as Cambridge will have to make greater contributions to compensate for the loss.

In responding to a survey calling for employers' views on the national pensions scheme and proposed reforms, Cambridge expressed a "strong preference" for breaking away from the last man standing scheme currently in place,



describing it in its prospectus as "disproportionate risk".

Cambridge's tuition fees, too, were identified as a source of risk, as rates of fees for international students are largely determined by market forces. As outlined in the bond's prospectus, "If [Cambridge] is unable to maintain the current fee levels charged to these groups of students, its fee income may be reduced and this could impact its overall revenue."

Clément Mouhot, a mathematician and fellow at King's, said: "Behind the bonds of almost £400 million in 2012 and now £600 million in Cambridge, and even more in Oxford, and behind the rise of tuition fees, lies one and the same logic. That of financialisation and privatisation of universities."

He added: "In this logic, launching bonds is a natural solution to funding these expansions, and this requires the inhuman financial 'de-risking' of uni-

▲ **Housing under construction on the North West Cambridge Development**
(DANIEL GAYNE)

versities.

"In this brave new world where universities are managed like hedge funds by 200k+ annual salary managers, the two main 'risks' are us: the staff and students."

Considerations of risk, particularly that posed by funding staff's pensions, are reflected in discussions between senior finance officials behind the scenes.

A *Varsity* investigation today reveals senior finance officials attempted to co-ordinate their responses to the employers' survey with Oxford, and that some

£4bn

University's capital needs over the next 20 years

Cambridge colleges sought to be part of the plan too. The goal was to concert an effort to push harder for a national pensions scheme in which they could take on less financial risk.

Already, the University is showing signs of buckling under the pressure to keep its capital projects commercially viable. Phase 1 of the North West Cambridge project came under fire for systematic failures leading to significant overspending. The project accumulated additional costs totalling £24.7 million which breached the University's borrowing limit, arising from a number of late design changes, increases in scope and other factors.

Moving forward, the pressure on the University to reduce liabilities will only continue to grow. In a report to the Council, it was estimated that the likely capital needs of the University for the next 20 years will be around £4bn. As the University grapples with meeting the levels of revenue generation promised to Regent House through their capital projects, questions remain of who will take the fall.

£936m

University debt after second bond issue

make the University "one of the major developers" in the south of England.

The imperative behind the University's homebuilding is clear. The town's booming tech industry, nicknamed 'Silicon Fen', has seen average house prices soar to over £500,000. From October 2008 to September 2009, the University Accommodation Service received 6,780 requests for accommodation, with only 360 University units available.

The University has publicly and privately emphasised its commitment to providing affordable housing for key workers, also touting the environmental credentials of the development. At a meeting of the Finance Committee in July 2016, the committee noted a high level of interest in key worker housing and suggested that Phase 2 could include a greater concentration of this, with fewer student accommodation units.

Yet many are concerned about the

Pension problems

Why low interest rates are good for the Uni and bad for staff

Seeking the authority from Regent House to arrange further external finance this April, the University Council emphasised that the market conditions in the sterling debt capital markets were "attractive on a historic basis" and "unlikely to persist".

This is certainly true. We are living through an unprecedentedly long period of low interest. Low interest rates and quantitative easing, where the Bank of England buys bonds, has resulted in record low gilt yields (the

amount that those buying bonds earn on their investment).

While this provides the University with a cheap supply of capital for its development projects, it is detrimental to staff. The USS pension dispute was the direct result of a long-term decline in return on investments by pension funds (yields on bonds, one of the main investments for pension funds, have fallen consistently since the 1980s, from as high as 16 per cent to about 1.5 per cent today).

To compensate, funds have to spend more to get the same annual return, and the consequent increased demand also helps to push down yield. In the case of the USS, this has led some to declare the existing defined benefit system not viable and suggest moving to a more flexible, less generous defined contribution system.

ESPRESSO BAR // COCKTAIL BAR // KITCHEN

NOVI SOCIAL

TWO FOR £10 ON
SELECTED COCKTAILS
TWO FOR £5 ON
ALL TACOS
MON-FRI
7-9PM



novicambridge

12 REGENT STREET, CAMBRIDGE CB2 1DB 01223 518537

News

Five-star hotels and Aromi splurges: The spending of Cambridge vice-chancellors

Jack Conway and Oliver Guest
Investigations Editors

Cambridge's vice-chancellor and pro-vice chancellors have spent over £25,000 on five-star hotels over a 26-month period, analysis by *Varsity* shows.

The officials also spent slightly over £6,000 on less luxurious hotels. A small number of the transactions in hotels were for small amounts, and likely included items other than accommodation.

Varsity analysed the statements of credit cards provided by the University to its vice-chancellor and five pro-vice-chancellors. These statements had previously been released under the Freedom of Information Act and covered expenses in the period between January 2016 and March 2018.

The two most expensive hotel bills were both from a visit to Hong Kong in April 2017, with former Vice-chancellor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz spending £6,863.28 and pro-vice-chancellor Eilís Ferran spending £2,866.14 at a five-star Hyatt hotel.

The Taj Mahal Palace in Mumbai and Taj Mahal in New Delhi were the most commonly visited five-star hotels, with both being visited eight times by vice-chancellors or pro-vice-chancellors.

The choice to favour five-star hotels appears to contradict the University's guidance for employee expenses. According to that document, "employees



▲ The Shangri-La Hotel in Hong Kong, where Vice-chancellor Toope spent £1128 (ISLAND SHANGRI-LA)

should book accommodation, which is roughly equivalent" to a three-star level. For areas where "there is deprivation or a high security risk", employees can choose four-star venues.

When asked about the choice to visit five-star hotels, a spokesperson for the University said that "overseas accommodation for the University's senior leader-

ship is chosen on the basis of location, convenience of travel, and ease of access to multiple meeting places."

"It is also chosen to provide a meeting venue that is appropriate for the high-level business that the senior leadership team carries out on behalf of the University – including fundraising, and managing of international partnerships

and government relations."

Adjusting for their different time in the role, Borysiewicz spent the most on luxury hotels, with an average monthly spend of around £720. Borysiewicz was succeeded as vice-chancellor in September by Professor Stephen Toope.

Toope's current average monthly luxury spend is the second largest, at

around £610 throughout this academic year.

Pro-vice-chancellor for Institutional and International Relations Eilís Ferran had the largest average hotel spend among the pro-vice-chancellors.

A University spokesperson told *Varsity* that "It is not surprising that the Vice-Chancellor, who regularly represents the University abroad, or the Pro-Vice-Chancellor tasked with managing the University's international partnerships, should be incurring expenses for overseas accommodation."

£3667

**Toope's
spending on
five-star hotels
in six months**

The statements also revealed a number of other details, including Borysiewicz's visit to Davos, Switzerland and meal at a Chinese restaurant while the 2016 World Economic Forum – a meeting of global business and political leaders – was in session.

In contrast to the luxury hotel stays, some of the items in the statements reflect a much more mundane lifestyle. They show, for example, a £30 bill for Ryanair, an £11 bill on Wizz Air, and a £5.20 bill at Aromi.

They also recorded spending at the Apple Store, Pret A Manger, and Superdrug.

Wide variance in salaries of college masters

Jack Conway and Oliver Guest
Investigations Editors

A *Varsity* investigation has found significant disparities in the salaries and expenditures of college masters and their equivalents.

Based on information from a Freedom of Information Request, *Varsity* was able to compare the salaries of 25 college masters and the expenses claimed by 18 of them.

The remaining colleges have not yet responded, or did not answer in sufficient detail to be included.

The investigation found a gap of £92,951 between the highest and lowest paid masters and a disparity of £19,181 in their average annual expenses.

Details of the expenses claimed by masters showed that they spent most heavily on promoting alumni relations and fundraising activities – particularly on trips overseas and entertaining donors. Professor David Yates, the warden of Robinson, its equivalent of a master, was paid more than the head of any other college: £92,051 per annum. Only two other colleges pay their masters over £90,000, with Pembroke's Lord Christopher Smith being paid £92,627 and Trinity's Sir Gregory Winter £92,598.

These three salaries are considerably

higher than the next highest, with all other colleges except Emmanuel paying their masters below £80,000. They are also over £30,000 pounds higher than the mean salary of the 25 colleges for which *Varsity* has data, which is £50,670.

Pembroke's master was also generously compensated in 2014, when Sir Richard Dearlove, its master at the time, was the highest paid of all college heads. Since then, however, the salary of Pembroke's master has fallen by over ten thousand pounds from £103,467.

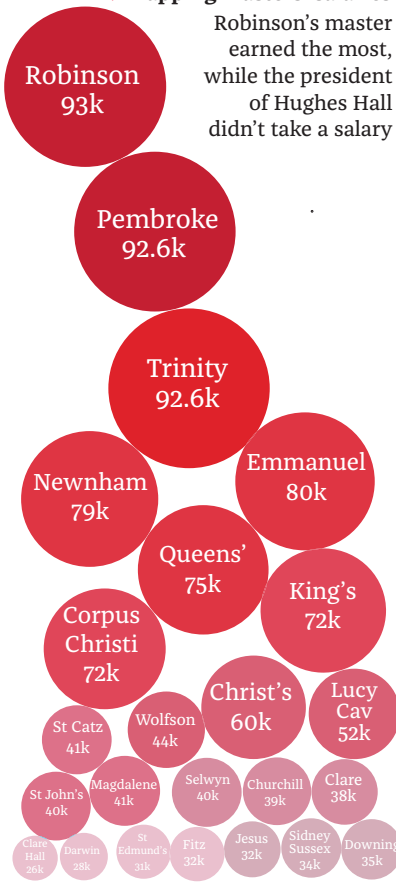
On the other end of the scale, the president of Hughes Hall does not take a salary at all and chose not to utilise a college flat. The next lowest paid college heads are Professor David Ibbetson, the president of Clare Hall, and Professor Mary Fowler, the master of Darwin, who are paid £26,600 and £27,572, respectively.

These three are the only colleges that pay their masters under £30,000.

There is a notable disparity in the gender makeup of college masters: there are 21 male masters but only 10 female ones. That said, the salary data revealed that there is not a significant gender pay gap in the remuneration of masters: male masters have a mean salary of £50,173 and female masters have a mean salary of £51,728.

▼ Mapping masters' salaries

Robinson's master earned the most, while the president of Hughes Hall didn't take a salary



Further disparities exist in the value of mean annual expenses claimed by college masters, a figure that *Varsity* was able to calculate for 15 colleges.

The highest value of expense claims came from the provost of King's. Professor Michael Proctor spent an average of £19,181 per year over the course of the last three years. This is significantly higher than the mean across all 15 colleges for which *Varsity* has data, which is £5,070 per year.

Professor Proctor's expenses were primarily claimed for development. In 2017, for instance, he spent £24,095 on development, which encompasses alumni relations and fundraising activities.

The lowest expenses were claimed by Professor Ian White, the master of Jesus, and Professor Jane Clarke, the president of Wolfson. Neither claimed any expenses.

King's College told *Varsity* that it expects the provost "to be engaged in its development effort. Consequently, he travels extensively on College business and this comprises most of his expenses. This is approved by the College in its budget and is much appreciated."

Masters often spend heavily on development, with many of the highest expense claims being for overseas fundraising trips. Common destinations were the United States and East Asia,

with trips often costing thousands of pounds.

Professor Yates, for example, visited Singapore, Malaysia, and Hong Kong once a year and spent between four and six thousand pounds each time.

Masters also tend to spend thousands of pounds on entertainment activities, which similarly are often intended to raise funds for the college.

£19,181

**The disparity in
average annual
expenses of
college masters**

The disparities in expenses claimed by the different college masters may in part be due to how colleges classify fundraising activities. They may be categorised as part of larger development funds rather than individual masters' expenses.

Besides a disparity in salaries and expenses, colleges also differ in the additional benefits they provide to their masters. Common benefits are accommodation and free meals, but Darwin, for example, does not provide a master's lodge.

Colleges are split on whether or not they provide pension contributions and health insurance.

Colleges weak on ethical investments

Oliver Guest and Jack Conway
Investigations Editors

The majority of colleges do not intend to divest their endowments from fossil fuels, claiming difficulties due to the structure of their investments and rules from the Charity Commission, a *Varsity* investigation has found. Two colleges' investment policies also question the usefulness of divestment in bringing about positive change.

Varsity sent Freedom of Information requests to the University's 31 colleges, seeking details about their investment practices. Of those, 26 responded.

The responses highlighted that almost all colleges manage significant portions of their investments indirectly. In this model, colleges do not choose companies to invest in, but rather delegate this task to external managers.

Indirect investment poses difficulties for divestment as the college itself does not decide individual investments. Caius and Girton state that the colleges do not "routinely confront" issues of social responsibility for this reason.

Direct investments are easier for col-

leges to directly manage. Peterhouse is believed to have been the first Cambridge college to directly divest from fossil fuel companies, earlier this year. The decision was made on "economic grounds and because of more general concerns about the fossil fuel industry", calling into question suggestions by some that divestment is financially unviable.

A small number of colleges recognise that they can affect the ethics of their indirect investments by deciding which manager to hire. Caius, Girton and Jesus require their external managers to have "integrity". It is unclear what this means in practice, as Caius and Jesus are both known to have large indirect holdings in fossil fuel companies.

Varsity found six policies that mentioned the fiduciary duty, imposed by the Charity Commission, for charities to maximise the return from their investments. This means colleges are unable to divest from fossil fuel investments, if they believe that doing so would decrease their income.

The Charities Commission does allow charities to accept a lower investment return, if a particular investment conflicts with the aims of the charity, or would



cause the charity to lose supporters.

Varsity found few policies that defined what specific investments are in conflict with the college's aims, however. According to Downing's, such companies "may" include those "whose activities violate human rights, the environment, and best practice in social and stakeholder matters". Selwyn and Lucy Cavendish, meanwhile, state that tobacco and arms companies should be avoided and ban direct investments in them.

A number of other colleges have divested from specific industries. Darwin's

▲ **Peterhouse was the first college to directly divest from fossil fuels** (JACK CONWAY)

policy bans the college from investing, either directly or indirectly, in tobacco companies, while St Catharine's and Magdalene have ruled out direct holdings in thermal coal or tar sands.

Some colleges express scepticism in divestment as a way of promoting ethical behaviour. Clare argues that "divestment often results in companies being owned by private investors who allow companies to continue to do what they wish, without any pressure from public shareholders to change strategy".

Colleges generally favour 'shareholder engagement' for promoting ethical behaviour. In theory, this means shareholders will use their stake in a company to persuade it to behave in a way that matches their ideals.

Seven colleges assert an intention to use shareholder engagement, either directly, or from their external managers, to have a positive ethical impact.

Churchill's investment policy states that the College "will vote to encourage responsible behaviour" in its direct investments. Where Churchill invests indirectly, it requires information from investment managers "about voting practices and how environmental, social and governance issues are addressed", saying that "new managers will be chosen, in part, on this basis".

Several colleges do not appear to have a policy explicitly promoting divestment or shareholder engagement. At least five colleges, including Trinity and King's, two of the colleges with the largest endowments, do not have any ethical investment policy.



Student Brains Required

We need people aged 18-30 to take part in our research.

You would be asked to complete computerised experiments or take part in brain scanning studies.

We will pay you £6 or £10 per hour depending on the type of study.

You will receive a picture of your brain if you take part in an fMRI brain scan.

<http://www.mrc-cbu.cam.ac.uk/take-part/>

The MRC Cognition and Brain Sciences Unit is one of the world's leading centres of research looking at the brain's phenomenal capacities in language, memory, perception, reasoning and creativity. We also study the effects of brain injuries and mood disorders, looking for new ways to help people regain function.

Science

Breathing new life into the origin of the species at the Museum of Zoology



Thea Elvin
Science Correspondent

After a five year, £4.1 million redevelopment, the University of Cambridge Museum of Zoology will reopen this weekend as a state-of-the-art celebration of biodiversity.

The museum closed in 2013 for what has been the first total refurbishment of all the displays and backstage stores since the 1960s. This was funded in part by the university as well as nearly £2 million donated by National Lottery players via the Heritage Lottery Fund. Projects undergo a competitive process to be selected for funding by the Heritage Lottery fund.

Speaking to Helen Wilson, Chair of the East of England Committee for the fund, on why the Museum of Zoology was chosen, she said that the aim of the Heritage Lottery Fund is to return the money spent on lottery tickets to the public so that they are able to engage with this “treasure trove” of a museum.

Originally built in 1865 on the same site as it stands today, the Museum of Zoology is rich in history, a touch which hasn't been lost in the refurbishment. A particularly engaging exhibit is dedicated to books of natural history illustrations, and even contains a fourth edition of Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*, with specimens collected on the

“Highlights include a spectacular array of insects, some collected by Darwin himself”

Beagle voyage and by other renowned naturalists such as Alfred Russel Wallace on display.

Many of the exhibits are antiques in themselves and some of the money spent was used to painstakingly clean and conserve every specimen presented, a process still ongoing for some of the two million others behind the scenes.

Entry to the museum is via the impressive whale hall, where the museum's largest skeleton, that of a 21 metre fin whale, is suspended from the ceiling. A sleek double-height gallery makes up the main area, filled to the brim with specimens and natural history artefacts. The modernised museum also features a new shop, discovery room and plastic-free whale café, which provides a pleasant study space for students.

One of the driving forces behind the refurbishment was to attract visitors of different backgrounds and expertise to the museum. Consistent labelling of all the exhibits explains the processes leading to the biodiversity we see today, and remain compelling from a scientific perspective. Groupings of mammal skeletons according to the branches on the tree of life also make for interesting comparison, and information on the conservation status of each species is particularly thought-provoking.

Other highlights include a spectacular array of insects, some of which were collected by Darwin himself, a colourful display of birds from around the world,

and several smaller whale skeletons hanging above the main gallery. Some exciting exhibits, however, are not on display yet: a dolphin skull with a piece of scrimshaw on the back, an egg with an example of Darwin's handwriting and rare feathers from the extinct Moa bird are among the finds made during the refurbishment.

What can we expect from the renovation? Professor Paul Brakefield, director of the museum, said that they “want to tell much more about the research which is going on in the Department of Zoology and the David Attenborough building”. This perspective aims to make the museum “much more interesting and engaging to students”. Brakefield also said “I would hope that the biggest change is that everything looks completely fresh and sparkling and new” with the complete overhaul of all the display cases and lighting fixtures expertly bringing the museum into the 21st century.

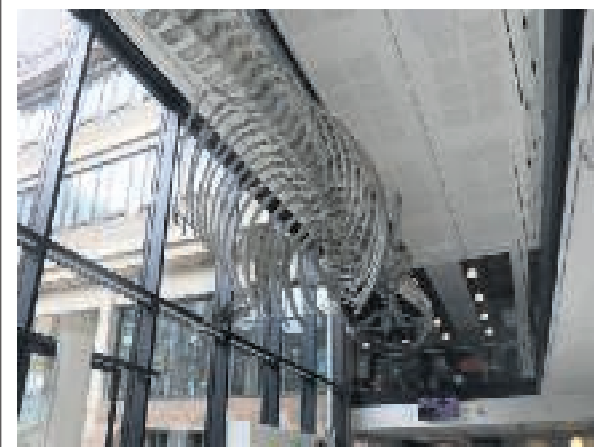
The future of the museum will be full of opportunities for students and members of the University. One of the biggest changes since the last opening is the reliance on a team of volunteers, many of whom are associated with the University, recruited to help the museum run smoothly.

Volunteering for the museum (and other museums across the University) is an opportunity that will be open to students both in term time and the va-

▲ **The David Attenborough building houses the new resource** (SOPHIE CORRODI)

cations, and they hope that in the near future volunteer-dependent opportunities such as behind-the-scenes tours will open.

The museum will be opened officially by Sir David Attenborough, the namesake of the Zoology building, on the 22nd June, at a public event. This will be followed by a weekend of events at the Zoology Live! Festival, where visitors will be able to view the finished galleries for the first time, as well as interact with living birds of prey and insects, and partake in other natural history-related activities. The Museum of Zoology is full of interesting surprises, and the free entry makes it well worth a visit.



▲ **The large fin whale skeleton hangs in the entrance to the museum** (SOPHIE CORRODI)

What summer lab work really entails

Bethan Clark
Science Correspondent

It's common for NatSci students to undertake a research placement during the summer vacation to experience working in a lab environment, particularly in the summer after second year. There's a whole range of types of placements, including carrying out informal research projects with a lab group. These projects may be supported by grants from colleges, departments or societies; structured programmes including research internships and competitions are often fully-funded, but come with highly competitive application processes.

If you don't make it on to one of these big programmes, it can be easy to worry about how the experience of a more informal research placement stands in comparison. My experience last summer in a Cambridge lab showed this worry is unfounded, not least because the most valuable lessons are not solely learning new practical techniques.

I spent four weeks with the Depart-

ment of Genetics with the Steventon group in the laboratory of comparative developmental dynamics. For me, the placement was an opportunity to test whether I wanted to continue in academia after my degree. After a surprisingly intense, content-heavy first year of NatSci, I was having doubts about my long-held aspirations to work in research. Still, I didn't want to abandon these ambitions without a proper experience of lab-based research. Given my indecision, committing to applying to big programmes didn't seem to be the best choice. Instead, I reached out to labs in Cambridge working in development – my favourite aspect of the NatSci course so far.

The laboratory of comparative developmental dynamics investigate a population of cells called NMps in the tailbud of zebrafish embryos. As the embryo's axis elongates, these cells are allocated to one of two different fates: neural or mesodermal. Here, I was examining the control of this process by signalling from different factors that the cells encounter as they move through the embryo.



▲ High resolution imaging of zebrafish blood vessels
(NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF CHILD AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT)

This involved culturing and treating the cells with various chemicals, then quantifying changes in gene expression that mark the neural and mesodermal fates. Working with these kinds of protocols later came in handy in my Part II project: even though I was working on a different organism and used different imaging methods, familiarity with the techniques gave me a very useful starting point.

The Steventon group was relatively new and still growing. The character and size of a group can immensely affect one's work experience, and preference lies with the individual. I found the small group of five to be a great environment for me.

From tea breaks to the general environment in the lab, I realised the significance of the colleagues one studies with and the environment in which one is immersed in a lab. In this regard, this research project is probably the most important thing I've done during my degree, because the experience as a whole was so strongly positive. I'm now determined to go into scientific research after I graduate.

It's probably not surprising that my advice is to do a summer research project if you get the chance. If you've just finished Part 1A, consider factoring it into your summer plans, particularly if you are unsure about research as a career. If you are undertaking any type of research placement this summer, of course use it to test your research interests, but also take the opportunity to explore what type of lab group culture suits you.

We move and store your stuff worldwide. It's Simple.



Sending Boxes & Bags Worldwide

Shipping overseas,
2 Large Boxes (minimum order) from
£59 (each box 30kg)

Moving Boxes & Bags within the UK

Sending nationwide
2 Large Boxes (minimum order) from
£84 (each box 30kg)

Storing Boxes & Bags

Minimum 4 weeks
1 Standard Box per week from
£1* (each box 30kg)

(* price varies by region- please take advantage of a free online quote to check)

If you're moving between home & student digs or accommodation, we can help make the big day a relatively smooth one with our **MoveCube®** service.

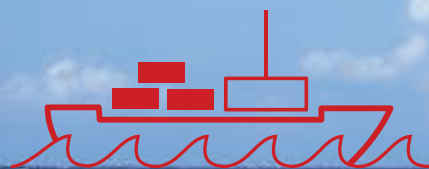
International MoveCube®

Removals overseas from
£390 (up to 1.25 tonnes)

Domestic MoveCube®

Relocation within the UK from
£199 (up to 1.25 tonnes)

All Services are Door to Door
Deliver and Collection



CALL FREE NOW **0800 21 66 98**
www.sevenseasworldwide.com/students/moving/cambridge



Opinion

The University Council has turned its back on democracy over divestment



Mathias Gjesdal Hammer is in his second year studying HSPS at Christ's

Mathias Gjesdal Hammer



Students rallied on 'D-Day' to pressure University Councillors to support divestment

(LOUIS ASHWORTH)

Last Friday, the University of Cambridge announced its decision to maintain investments in funds that hold shares in fossil fuel companies. The decision broadly follows the recommendations of the divestment working group, but rejects its call to commit 10% of the University's endowment to environmental, social, and governance funds.

The University Council disregarded the enormous pressure of student and staff campaigning, as well as the cries of public figures such as Rowan Williams, Noam Chomsky and 16 MPs, for full divestment. Divestment increasingly seems the way forward, but the University has remained unwavering by public opinion.

Having followed the divestment campaign for the past few years, I struggle to fight the feeling that the University has demonstrated an almost calculated disregard for democratic process and public engagement. This feeling hit campaigners the hardest. Last March, Cambridge Zero Carbon Society's representative on the divestment working group, Alice Guillaume, resigned from the group in response to its "anti-democratic and wilfully blind attitude."

The Council's initial decision was delayed with little explanation, while the

announcement of their final decision came a week later. As Varsity's photography editor, I have spent hours waiting outside the Old School's offices, waiting for councillors to come out, hoping for a statement and a picture. More often than not, though, the Councillors simply walked off, offering at best the platitudinous remark that they "were unable to comment on the decision". Such incidents serve to taint the whole process with questions concerning the management's lack of transparency.

Key questions remain about the University's investments in fossil fuel industries. While the University has already committed to not holding direct investments in fossil fuels, we as students do not have a clue as to the scope of fossil fuel investments in the University's funds. The decision by the Council states that these will be kept to a "bare minimum", yet it is difficult to see how such a commitment can be monitored – especially when Council members themselves have been denied information regarding the extent of these investments.

What's more, as an open letter from Cambridge academics points out, the divestment working group conveniently abstained from assessing the amount of University funding donated by fossil fuel companies. Given that the Univer-

sity quite literally has a BP Institute, it seems reasonable to assume that these donations are not insubstantial.

Beyond issues of process, the key reason given by the University Council to reject outright divestment is that "it is inevitable in a diversified and indirectly managed investment portfolio that some exposure may appear in some funds and therefore it is not possible to demand absolute exclusion." This line of argument is insulting at best. The University already excludes all investments in coal and tar sands, so it stands to reason that this ban could be extended to fossil fuel investments altogether.

Additionally, more than 60 UK universities have already divested from fossil fuels and the total value of investment funds committed to divesting is \$5.2 trillion. Given that funds of a similar size and nature to the University's have successfully been divested, the argument that fossil fuel investment is simply "inevitable" is hard to believe. Despite what the University would have us believe, it is not a decision that has been taken based on the feasibility of divestment, but rather with an active motive to prioritise profit.

The fundamental issue at stake here, however, is one of morals. Whether or not divestment is a profitable decision (studies seem to suggest that the worst-

case financial scenario is a marginal reduction in profits, though even this is unclear), climate change is the most significant threat facing the world today. By choosing to maintain fossil fuel investments, the University has chosen to remain complicit in the systematic destruction of the environment. True, this University cannot hope to change this destruction single-handedly. Nonetheless, its level of media exposure gives it a platform to denounce fossil fuel companies, inspiring change through example. Vice-chancellor Stephen Toope may have repeatedly emphasised his ideal of Cambridge University as a "social leader," but this utopian vision is sullied by the Council's decision: if the University is leading anything, it is the race towards further destruction.

While the University's decision will come as a harsh blow to the student activists of Cambridge, there are still positives to be found. In the past year, Zero Carbon has built one of the largest student movements in Cambridge and will no doubt continue to push for divestment. Indeed, it is hard to imagine that the Council would even have debated divestment in the first place had it not been for their efforts. Moreover, the University has committed to establishing a Centre for a Carbon Neutral Future and hiring an "Environmental, Social and Governance fund officer". This is certainly far less than most students would have hoped for, but it is still a small step in the right direction. Even so, the Council's decision has ensured that divestment will continue to be a serious point of contention between the University and its staff and students for many years to come.

The University Council decision is unlikely to be the last we hear on the topic of divestment. When it has taken years of student pressure on the University for for any kind of decision to be made, the unfortunate reality is that it is unlikely that the Council will reconsider its position anytime soon. One change in tactic from Zero Carbon activists might be to target individual colleges, many of which have significant direct investments in fossil fuel companies.

Given the smaller size of individual colleges and the clear-cut nature of direct investments, college-level campaigns might well prove successful. But college divestments alone would only be a partial success. With over 60 UK universities having divested, it seems unlikely that pressure on the University will ease off. If the Zero Carbon campaign continue to fight for divestment and other universities continue divesting, it seems inevitable that Cambridge, too, will eventually divest.

“If the University is leading anything, it is the race towards further destruction”

Cambridge must do more about BME access



Ian Wang is a second year studying English at Corpus Christi



▲ Earlier this month, black women of Cambridge posed for a photo (LLOYD MANN/UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE)

Ian Wang

Earlier this month, Cambridge released an open letter responding to a *Financial Times* article which accused the University of having a “dearth of black students”. Rather than addressing the article’s claims directly, however, the letter diverted towards the University’s broader ‘diversity’ strategy, a vague, bloated term that encompasses not only race but “gender, socio-economic background, geography, age and disability”.

The letter comes across, quite frankly, as tone-deaf. ‘Diversity’ is not the same as black representation, or even BME representation more broadly. Racial marginalisations are distinct from those based on gender or class, and they can’t all be lumped into the same nebulous ‘widening participation’ strategy. As CUSU Access Officer Olivia Hylton-Pennant stated in her response to the letter, the University “has no clear plan to increase the number of British BME students”.

Of the various access initiatives raised in the letter, only one – Target Oxbridge

– is explicitly aimed at increasing representation of a BME group. It is worth noting that even this initiative is outsourced: Target Oxbridge is run by Rare Recruitment, not the universities themselves, and much of the work done to improve BME access in Cambridge is undertaken by students rather than the University itself. From college BME open days initiated by JCR officers and the CUSU Caribbean Students’ Conference, to the African Caribbean Society’s photos of black men and women at Cambridge, it is often BME students themselves who are left to fix the University’s problem.

These students should be applauded, but the simple fact is that this shouldn’t have to be their burden to bear. The University needs to demonstrate that it has its own centralised plans to increase BME representation. It needs to investigate, for example, why there is so much variance in BME representation between colleges, and how to fix those disparities. Only a handful of colleges currently hold BME open days – why not make it compulsory for all colleges?

The University also needs to consider whether the admissions process itself has a problem. Studies show that BME applicants to Russell Group universities are less likely to receive offers than white applicants, even when they have the same grades and are applying to the same courses. Cambridge academics are not immune to unconscious bias and other kinds of cultural prejudices which disproportionately benefit white applicants – these must be addressed.

Another issue that must not be ignored is the existence of disparities within the wider ‘BME’ umbrella. The experiences of different racial groups are not the same and cannot be flattened into a single, uniform ‘BME experience’. Consider the fact that, while the overall Black student intake in Cambridge has more than doubled from 28 in 2012 to 58 in 2017, the Black Caribbean intake remains stagnant (7 in 2012, 6 in 2017). The University needs to understand the reasons for these inequalities, and how different groups might respond to different kinds of outreach.

Cambridge is already taking steps in the right direction. For example, it recently shared a Facebook video about the ACS’s Black Women of Cambridge photoshoot. This kind of visibility is crucial. Last term, the BME campaign ran a series of mingles during the shadowing scheme; I spoke to a group of BME sixth formers at one session who told me they were more likely to apply to Cambridge having just met people who looked like them studying there. Positive images like these are perhaps the University’s best tool in showing hesitant BME applicants that they do, in fact, have a place here.

BME underrepresentation cannot be addressed as a homogenised part of a general ‘diversity’ problem. It is its own unique issue which requires its own unique solutions.

To fix it, Cambridge needs a comprehensive plan of action which cuts across colleges and works alongside, without imposing upon, BME student groups. Concrete action like this could make a real difference; a defensive, platitudinous open letter will not.



Opinionated?
Sign up at
[varsity.co.uk/
get-involved](http://varsity.co.uk/get-involved)

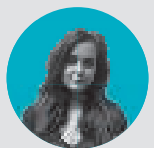
Grudgebridge has exposed drinking society culture. What next?



Daisy Eyre
CUSU President

“Well before they hit the headlines, drinking societies had been an issue for me. They had a powerful presence in my college and I wrote my dissertation on drinking societies and masculinity. Because drinking societies see themselves as ‘fun’, they dismiss criticisms, describing them as (in Sara Ahmed’s words) a “killjoy”.

Grudgebridge has provided an opportunity in which critique is taken seriously. If this moment is going to last, feeling needs to be channelled in a productive direction. Starting with this year’s freshers, we can work towards a different drinking culture in our University. I see an important role for next year’s JCR and MCR committees, and crucially, for drinking society members themselves.



Eliza Henning
Cambridge for Consent President

“From Cambridge for Consent’s perspective, it is clear that there needs to be some form of productive change. There must be more cooperation between drinking societies and colleges, and people must be held accountable for their actions, particularly with regards to violations of consent.

It is encouraging to see an increase in awareness for, and a new, positive attitude towards the importance of consent. CUSU is making important steps in this conversation, and hopefully all drinking societies will get involved with the introduction of a code of conduct, so that a positive change can occur.

Cambridge for consent is a university-wide campaign which aims to promote sexual consent. They provide information and links to further support at www.cambridgeforconsent.com



Anonymous
Grudgebridge admins

“Drinking societies are specific to Oxbridge because of the historical and structural reality that promotes this culture. These groups are based on inherent principles of exclusion: members are commonly chosen based on conscious (or unconscious) classist, racist and misogynistic biases, and exceptions to this do not break the rule. The amount of submissions we have received demonstrates how relevant the issue is. Many alumni have contacted the page in solidarity; this goes beyond our time at this university and we have a duty to improve the quality of life for all students here. The immediate plan for the page is to continue to follow the direction the submissions take us.

Grudgebridge’s Facebook page provides a platform for anonymous submissions about drinking society culture



Abdulla Zaman
Historian at King’s

“Recent commentary on drinking societies has pointed out the privileged background of its members. Yet one of their defining characteristics is that most of their members are predominately white.

With the disproportionate representation of white men in drinking societies, and the outburst of sexual harassment claims in Grudgebridge, one question seems apparent to me: why haven’t drinking societies been labelled a white problem? Addressing this question is part of what comes next in the debate about drinking societies at our University and in wider society.

Only last summer, one Labour MP wrote an article titled ‘British Pakistani men ARE raping and exploiting white girls’. Similar accusations have been thrown at black men, who have been historically blamed for raping white

women exclusively.

Both perceptions have been challenged for statistical inaccuracy. These perceptions are representative of a wider belief which exempts white men from accusations of sexual harassment.

We cannot continue to ignore the racial stereotypes and inequalities involved in debates about sexual misconduct. The claims and accusations made through Grudgebridge should not only make us more vigilant of the white privilege that often protects drinking society members from such accusations in the first place, but it should also remind us to avoid pathologizing sexual violence in terms of race more generally.

Sexual violence is susceptible to all forms of masculinity, be they white or BME. Ignoring race in this discussion allows sexual abuse, harassment and assault to continue.

Consequently, intersectional thinking must be part of the discussion in what comes next in this debate.

Opinion

The CUCA walkout is what political correctness should look like



Connor MacDonald
is a third year
studying HSPS at
Emmanuel



◀ During the
CUCA Chairman's
dinner at
Trinity Old
Kitchens,
CUCA members
walked out (LOUIS
ASHWORTH)

Connor
MacDonald

I was expecting James Delingpole to be rather bad, but certainly not that bad. Not 15 minutes into the speech, he had made some jokes about AIDS, compared himself (positively, I think) to Jimmy Savile and Rolf Harris, and had exclaimed in a voice that could only be described as genuine disgust that men did “not need to be lectured about how not to rape”. It was the kind of eyebrow raising performance one expects at a seedy late-night comedy club, not at a Cambridge University Conservative Association (CUCA) Dinner.

Then I walked out. About a third of the audience followed. Conservatives have long prided themselves on being

the party of free speech, so why did we walk out?

The answer strikes at the heart of the question of ‘political correctness’, and reveals an area where the left may have a point. The left is generally correct in claiming that no one should be compelled to listen to speech they detest. When faced with speech that is clearly vulgar, there is absolutely no reason that one would be under any obligation to continue listening, not even under the auspices of ‘free inquiry’.

It is the equivalent of saying that one must stay to watch a production of what you thought was *The Crucible*, only to discover its actually burlesque review,

simply to preserve artistic integrity.

Similarly, the claims made by the small minority who stayed to listen fell back on the tired trope of ‘challenging’ the speaker. If we were expected to constantly challenge those who make no attempt to offer a coherent argument, offering instead obvious displays of gratuitous vulgarity, life would be insufferable. This would only be exacerbated for those of a minority status, made to constantly defend their position in the face of those who, like Delingpole, say things such as “make a lot of money so you can send your kids to private school.”

However, my reasons for walking out were not straightforwardly politi-

cal – and this is key. I did not walk out because he compared himself to a sexual predator, or because of his views on consent workshops, or because of his seeming unawareness of how AIDS is transmitted. I walked out because at no point did James Delingpole ever seem to grasp the seriousness of what he was talking about. There was not even an attempt to try to say anything insightful or meaningful – it was just a litany of inane babble.

It is here though that those, often on the left, who argue about political correctness must be exceedingly careful. To dismiss someone as being politically incorrect, it is not enough to find their views stupid, or absurd, or harmful. For ‘political correctness’ to be intellectually robust, it has to demand a standard separate from the views themselves – a standard of conduct. Delingpole’s callous willingness to disregard one’s political opponent did not meet this standard of conduct.

That is why I felt the CUCA walkout had so much power. Given our commitment to freedom of speech, no reasonable speaker could have thought that we walked out because the speaker was too right-wing.

When certain groups no platform indiscriminately (as in the case of the left with Jacob Rees-Mogg), ideological conformity abounds. What’s more, people like James Delingpole believe that they are simply being ‘persecuted’, rather than seeing the standards they are failing to meet. Surely this only stands as a further obstacle on the path towards healthy political dialogue.

“
Conserva-
tives
have long
prided
themselves
on being
the party of
free speech
”

Minority students don’t always want your sympathy



Rensa Gaunt
is a third year
studying MML at
Fitzwilliam

Rensa
Gaunt

Sometimes, as a student with a long-term illness, you need to rant at someone – about how your health stops you from doing X, or makes it harder to do Y, or how abled people don’t seem to get it. As much as your friends might think they’re helping with unsolicited medical advice, interspersed with pleas to not generalise all abled people, the reality is this is not going to make anything better.

Even before my health made my university experience less ‘normal’, moving to Cambridge as someone from a working class background – with the requisite accent – was interesting enough. Other students joking-not-jokingly mocking the cleaners (and thereby my family indirectly). Or, ‘friendly’ suggestions that I was a quota girl. I had gotten used to feeling out of place.

I found refuge in making friends who also were from a similar background and shared my experience as a working class student at Cambridge. For the first time in Cambridge I wasn’t having to explain my frustrations gently. Here I was, part of a group of people with shared experi-

ences. They did not do so from a position of well-meaning sympathy, but with real, heartfelt empathy. A year into Cambridge life, I had finally received my first glimpse of genuine understanding.

Having been raised in a very ethnically and socially-homogenous area, I had never felt much need for this respite. It’s only because I was plunged into being a ‘minority’ at Cambridge that I came to understand the need for such spaces. I had simply never felt this separate before. It had never occurred to me that, in trying to convince my othered friends that I understood their troubles, I was likely reinforcing the narrative that minority frustrations are exaggerated or that people are overly sensitive.

My experiences as a working class student at Cambridge has made crystal clear the difference between theoretically knowing about unequal treatment, and feeling the impact of it through every daily interaction. Having been involved with the deaf community for years I thought I was well aware of how condescendingly people treat individuals with chronic illnesses or disabili-

“
I was
seeing my
condition
through
the
narrative
that abled
people had
painted for
me
”

ties. However, it was only through my experience of becoming a ‘minority’ at Cambridge, whereby I came to feel this identity daily, that this inequality was made clear to me.

This was reinforced after I first fell ill at the end of my second year and came to experience the stigmas which exist around disability first-hand. Comments from my closest friends in Cambridge made me doubt what both the doctors and my body were telling me. Questions such as “Are you sure it’s chronic fatigue? I mean, we’re all tired,” accompanied suggestions of laziness about those who suffered my condition. I was seeing my condition through the narrative that abled people had painted for me. This narrative downplayed the exhaustion not only of illness, but more damagingly the legitimacy of my condition.

It’s easy to discount our own needs when they don’t match the needs of those around us. Finding other students with unconventional needs was the catalyst which encouraged me to seek change not only for myself, but for others, whose situations were often much

more challenging than mine. We need to change our attitudes towards identities, as communities based on shared experiences are so important for those on the receiving end of stigma. We need to stop downplaying individual’s troubles, and instead encourage them to organise and work out their frustrations with people who can understand their struggles.

Many of us deviate from a traditional ‘norm’ in one way or another, which is why it is so important that we improve how we deal with the different experiences those of different identities have. Finding ‘my people’ allowed me to recognise the validity of my frustrations and emphasised that I was not in fact a concession or a burden.

The same forms of community created through identity are important for all who suffer from falling outside of what is deemed a ‘normal’ experience. In finding support from those who knew these difficulties I found the belonging I hadn’t realised I needed, and the drive to support others. And sometimes, that means accepting that I can’t understand every issue they face.

Timeline Cambridge 2017-18

REVIEW

- **9th October 2017**
Over 60 academics and activists sign a 'submission' calling for full divestment
- **25th October & 9th November**
Divestment working group's first two 'town hall' consultation meetings
- **24th October**
The University launches its Breaking the Silence campaign to tackle sexual misconduct
- **11th December**
University Council meets to decide on class list opt-outs
- **22nd February 2018**
Staff strikes over the pension dispute begin
- **22-28th February**
First period of staff strikes by University and College Union (UCU)
- **1st March**
Campaign period opens for CUSU elections
- **5-8th March**
Second period of staff strikes by UCU
- **9th March**
Evie Aspinall is elected as CUSU president
- **12-16th March**
Third period of staff strikes by UCU
- **15th March**
359 students and staff marched through Cambridge calling on 'Corporation Cambridge' to divest
- **13th April**
Industrial action over pensions dispute for University staff ceases
- **19th April**
Zero Carbon Society occupy the University's finance office. This occupation follows the March Cambridge Defend Education occupation of Old Schools in support of the UCU pensions strike, and precedes the May pro-divestment occupation of Greenwich House
- **1st May**
Senate House discussion held on whether the University should rely on balance of probabilities in the sexual misconduct procedure
- **9th May**
Video leaked on Grudgebridge Facebook page of a student joking about 'inclusivity', sparking debate and causing the Crescents to disband
- **15th June**
University Council confirms its position on divestment, after a week's delay, rejecting full divestment



Divestment, drinking societies and democracy: a year in review



Vivienne Hopley-Jones is a first year studying HSPS at Fitzwilliam

Vivienne Hopley-Jones

An academic year in Cambridge is often an overwhelming amalgamation of personal and political struggles and successes. This past year University politics has been dominated by issues from the building pressure on the University to divest, to staff and student strikes. On a personal level, the year has felt something like a whirlwind, especially as a fresher entering into the world of hectic essay deadlines and student politics. Whether the terms have dragged or flown by, I'm sure we can all be in agreement that a year at Cambridge really is something.

Responsive change is something Cambridge students have continued to fight for this year, and bit by bit we can look back on the ways we have shaped this historic institution. Substantial progress will be felt by all exam-taking students, as this year is the first year in which students have been offered an opt-out on class lists. A campaign that has been hard-fought on a long-debated topic, class list opt-outs have been presented as a partial solution to the academic environment that can at times be damaging to the mental well-being of students.

The power vested in the students who make up the University has also been significantly highlighted in another area of activism: through the form of Cambridge Zero Carbon Society. The student-led Zero Carbon campaign has played a large role in the debates and news of Cambridge for several years now, culminating in a series of protests and the use of direct action this term as the University's final decision on the matter became imminent. From hunger strikes to publicity stunts, some of the tactics of the student activists have sparked controversy.

Just this week we have seen the University Council finally commit to a decision on divestment. The Council has committed to partial divestment, which has left the activists who supported full divestment dissatisfied with the response. Perhaps here we can see the limits to the influence of student voices, or at least the continued pressures which exist when coming up

against long-established institutions, traditions and figures. The divestment debate seems far from over.

The difficulty of producing meaningful change has also been highlighted with drinking societies and their place within our University. Here it is not only the existence of historically-established societies and traditions that constitutes a problem in creating change, but that we also remain riddled with questions of the best way to bring such positive change about.

The Facebook page Grudgebridge, previously a space for sharing general complaints about life as a student, has been transformed into a space whereby anonymous complaints about drinking society culture, often focusing on allegations of bullying, discrimination and sexual misconduct, are shared. While the page has given a platform for issues that have been largely swept under the rug in the past in an explosive way, there is certainly room to think about how these issues can be dealt with in the long term. Yes, this has been a year of change and achievement, but it is also a year which highlights that, more than ever, we need to mobilise to create change to make our university a safer, more inclusive and more modern institution.

Efforts to mobilise as students can perhaps draw inspiration from another ongoing issue: the staff strikes of Lent Term. The time, labour and energy which was devoted by staff and students alike during the strikes that occurred over the pension dispute was remarkable to witness. It will perhaps serve as a model of mobilisation in light of other changes in higher education policy, both within our University but also outside of it. Despite some dissatisfaction over the eventual settlement and current outcome of the strikes, for many they represented a sense of unity within our University. This staff-student unity works against the misleading and troubling portrayal in the right-wing media earlier in the year of staff and students being pitted against each other in the largely student-led movement to decolonise the curricula. It will be interesting to see how this bond

between the staff and students at the University will manifest in the following academic year and beyond.

The way staff and students mobilised in support of staff pensions this year may also offer a lesson in the ways we ought to continue to work within institutions to defend and define the type of higher education we want in this country. A central facet of this is representation and access at Cambridge. Back in October, Labour MP David Lammy criticised Oxford and Cambridge as "fiefdoms of entrenched privilege" for their underrepresentation of BME students. More recently an open letter from the University emphasised its ongoing commitment to improving the representation of BME students in reaction to a piece published in The Financial Times. The picture of the BME women of Cambridge on the Senate House steps should be recognised as a symbol of how much things are changing. However, it should also serve as a reminder of the long way we still have to go.

As a new batch of freshers prepare to enter the University space, we should again think about who is populating the University and how we all got here. For Cambridge to continue to strive to be a forward-thinking and world-class institution it must continue to strive to be more diverse; this is as true when it comes to the representation of different classes and educational backgrounds as it is to race and gender. The burden does not rest solely on the institution, but we need to think more widely about the way education is treated and valued in society.

While the academic year can be tied into a neat ending with a series of parties during May Week, the handover of the CUSU sabbatical team and graduation, the debates which have defined this year cannot be drawn to a close so easily. An institution with such an expansive history must also be an institution open to change and willing to be flexible. The debates of today will continue beyond May Week and into next term, and we shall have to wait and see what the events of tomorrow will be, and how the figures of the coming year handle them.



Graduate School of Economics

Training the next generation of Economists and Data Scientists

**Nine-month
programs**

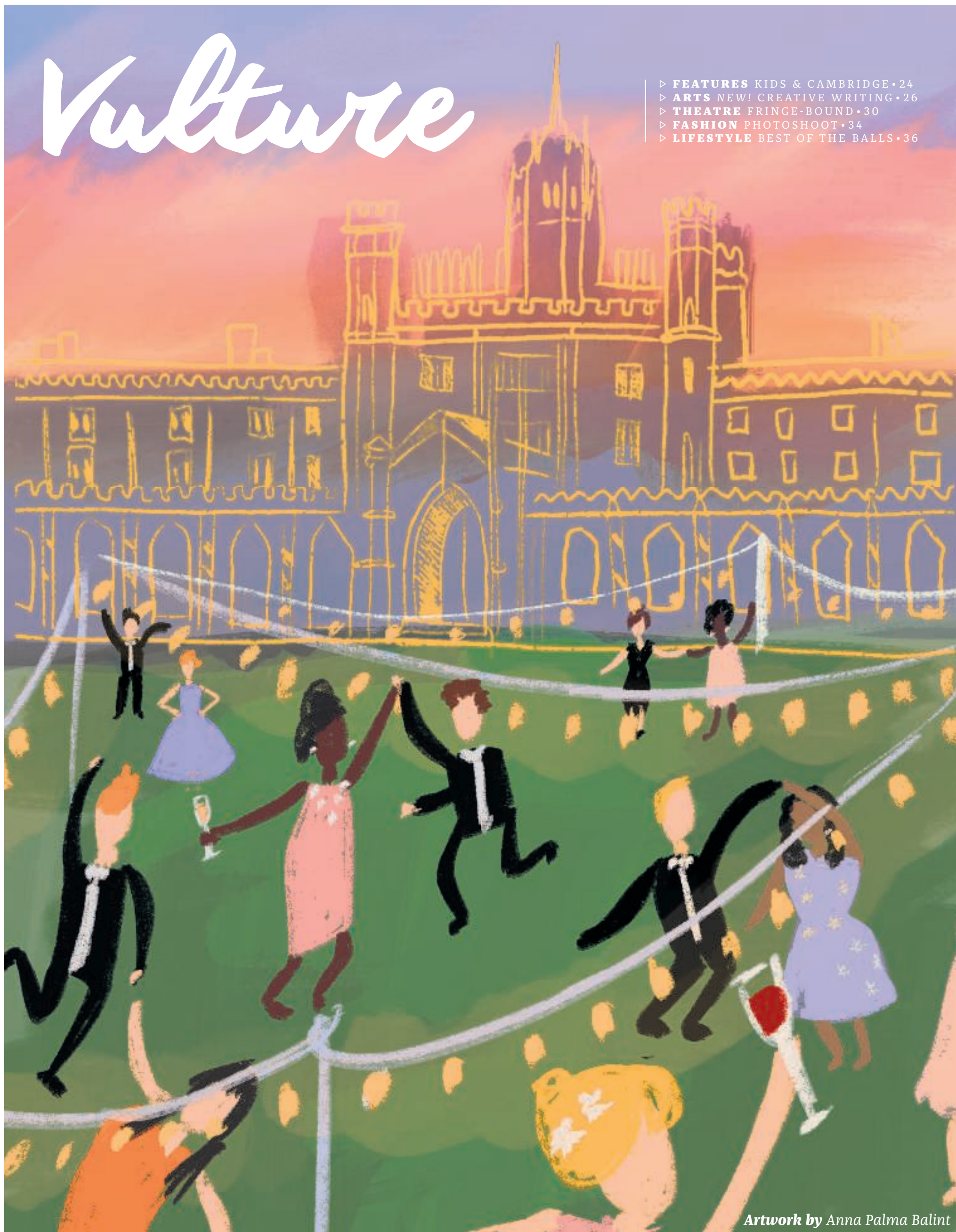
**Taught
in English**

Master's programs:

- Economics
- Finance
- Competition and Market Regulation
- Economics of Public Policy
- International Trade, Finance, and Development
- Macroeconomic Policy and Financial Markets
- Data Science

Vulture

▷ **FEATURES** KIDS & CAMBRIDGE • 24
▷ **ARTS** NEW! CREATIVE WRITING • 26
▷ **THEATRE** FRINGE-BOUND • 30
▷ **FASHION** PHOTOSHOOT • 34
▷ **LIFESTYLE** BEST OF THE BALLS • 36



Artwork by Anna Palma Balint

ONLINE THIS WEEK

STREET STYLE, SALES & SHORTS

May Week and beyond

A cultural calender for summer in Cambridge

Before you depart for the summer, take one last look at all Cambridge has to offer



On the stage

**Footlights
Tour Show**
Union, until
23rd, 9.00pm

**EDUCATION,
EDUCATION,
EDUCATION**
Corpus, until
23rd, 7.00pm

**Second-
Generation**
Corpus, until
23rd, 9.30pm

Unless you study art history, the exam period might not have been the most cultural time of your Cambridge life. It's hard to find the time to go to the Fitz or listen to live music when you're pulling your hair out over coursework deadlines.

Besides, even at college, appreciating the otherwise gorgeous architecture becomes impossible if you come to associate it with revision.

Still: that's behind us all now. All that's left of Cambridge until October is May Week and beyond. Now is the time to unwind, relax and rejuvenate.

So, before you go home for summer, whenever that is, you should take one last chance this academic year to take in all the culture that Cambridge has to offer.

From exhibitions, artistic and historical, to talks, literary and not, there is a wealth of ways to occupy your time in the following weeks. Below is just a selection of the events in store: so get your calender out, and take your last notes of the academic year!

Late June

To kick things off, Heffers Bookshop will be holding a book launch for Janet Todd's *The Radiation Diaries: Cancer, Memory and Fragments of a Life in Words* on the 20th June. The book chronicles the literary scholar's experience undergoing radiographic therapy while also fulfilling her duties as president of Lucy Cavendish college.

If you fancy something brighter, then the Fitzwilliam Museum Society garden party, this year themed as 'Flora and Frida', will be held the following day on the 21st of June in the Fitzwilliam Museum gardens. If you feel bold enough to ape Frida Khalo's individual style, along with reflecting all the summer

flora, a themed dress-code is strongly encouraged by the society. Tickets are £15 for members and £20 for non-members.

From the 24th June until the 30th November, a new gallery show is on at Murray Edwards' New Hall art collection. The exhibition, *Reproductives: remaking life*, will feature works by Gina Glover and Camilla Lyon which explore technologies such as IVF and gene editing and how they influence the way we view ourselves and human life.

Finally for June, to book-end our first event, Boyd Tonkin will be giving a talk entitled 'The 100 best novels in translation' on the 26th June at Heffers Bookshop.

Tonkin is a writer and journalist who chaired the judging panel of the Man Booker International Prize in 2016, and his talk is sure to be of interest for anyone with a passion for world literature.

Early July

If you find yourself along King's Parade on 5th July, pop into Byard's art gallery for the opening of their *Mixed summer exhibition 2018*.

The exhibition will run until the 2nd of September and will feature a rotating series of sculptures, pictures, craftwork and other artwork. If you feel like a post-exams treat, you can even buy some of the artwork.

Later the same day, Heffers Bookshop are hosting their 'What's your poison?' crime and mystery fiction party.

This evening features book chats, talks and signings from a variety of crime and mystery authors, such as Alison Bruce and Louise Candlish.

“Now is the time to unwind, relax and rejuvenate”

Along your Street

This Byard Art Gallery exhibition is a collection of contemporary art which centres around personal relationships with the streets of Cambridge. If this is your last time in Cambridge before graduating, *Along your street* could prove one last dose of nostalgia for the city you've spent the last three years living in.



Matt Smith's Flux: Parian unpacked

On until the 1st of July at the Fitzwilliam Museum, ceramic artist and curator Matt Smith explores questions of British identity ranging from our consumerist present to our colonial roots. The show combines existing sculptures in the unstable material of parian from the Glynn collection, along with new sculptures by Smith himself. The way that the old sculptures are arranged around the new sculptures changes their interpretation and forces us to question our past.



▲ ZHURAKOVSKY

SUBJECT, by Antony Gormley

Cambridge alumni and sculptor Antony Gormley brings his unique style to Kettle's Yard in SUBJECT, running until the 27th of August. The brand new exhibit explores, in typical Gormley fashion, the body, the self and our relation to space. His sculptures are accompanied by regular screenings of the BBC Imagine documentary, *Antony Gormley: Being Human*.

In the words of our reviewer Thomas Dixon, Gormley's exhibit is "sparse but rewarding", resulting in an "excellent space for reflection." If you're feeling pensive post-exams, SUBJECT might just be the place for you.

A Survival Story: Prehistoric Life at Star Carr

Running in the Li Ka Shing Gallery at the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology until the 30th December 2019, this exhibit offers us a chance to consider the mysterious 11,000 year-old headdress uncovered at Star Carr in Yorkshire.

The headdress is comprised mostly from the skull of a deer, begging the question what exactly it was used for. Additional items such as harpoons and bodkins prompt ongoers to consider the nature of looking back into our past, and the difficulties of understanding civilisations long passed.

Swish

Swish is an exhibit in the Spotlight Gallery of the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology. Curated by Ena Lilje, it takes a look at various aspects of Papua New Guinean culture, from carved belts and fibre skirts, to photos and films of their singing, dancing and clothwork.

Floral Fantasies

And finally, in line with summer vibes, *Floral Fantasies* is an exhibit dedicated to all things green. The works range from botanical watercolours and drawings, to floral miniatures, jewellery, porcelain and childrens books. The artists on show include such artistic heavyweights as Gerard van Spaendonck and Pierre-Joseph Redouté. You needn't be a budding botanist to get the most out of this exhibition. ●

Designed to Impress

Until the 2nd of September, you are invited to explore the Fitzwilliam Museum's vast and spectacular collection of prints. Artists on show range from the 15th to 21st centuries, and include old master printmakers such as Rembrandt and Dürer, as well as more modern artists including Picasso.

Do I have to draw you a picture? review

Encompassing postcards, prints and neon lights, *DO I HAVE TO DRAW YOU A PICTURE?* explores art not just as a vessel for communication but a communicative act in itself. Borrowed from a 2013 print by Mel Bechner, the question establishes the exhibition's premise: an inquiry into how artists' messages are constructed and conveyed.

This sense of inquiry creates more of a survey, amalgamating various points of view, rather than a single point of view in and of itself. The diverse range of pieces exhibited allows for many different perspectives into the themes of the show.

Dr Elisa Schaar explains that developments in communication technology have been "a challenge for art". Art, she suggests, has responded by bending its communicative capacities back on themselves. As the need for art to "communicate content" became redundant, artists began to "acknowledge that there is a need for communication but not in a straight forward way."

New, more intricate modes of exchange appear here as stories and parodies. In Glenn Ligon's *I do not always feel coloured...* (1992), Ligon borrowed the title from a 1928 essay by Zora Neale Hurston, *How it Feels to Be Colored Me*. Ligon uses a stencil to apply the words again and again with an oil stick. As the phrase is repeated, it moves from legible to unreadable, thus blurring the previously-defined edges between the black text and white page, unsettling the parameters of the colours which become allegories for the flexible and constructed notion of race. The manipulation of text from essay, etching to allegory presents an indirect and complex transmission of references used to illuminate a complex issue. The reasoning of the work occurs between the formal elements on the page which, once understood, then deliver their message.

This obscured communication is also present in Jasper



Johns' *Target with Four Faces* (1986). The work draws upon formal motifs developed by Abstract Expressionists: Johns' use of black marks pulsate on the colourful target. Johns' print presents a "complex interfacing between viewer and faces" and, in the context of the exhibition represents a disturbance in the normal relationship between senders and receivers of artistic messages. Here, both the sending mechanism (the mouth) and the receptacle (the target) are contained on the same plain. Effectively, Johns displaces the viewer.

The artworks occasionally utilise more pointed methods, addressing a perceived audience. Text is employed to present more concise messages in Wolfgang Tillmans' *Pro-EU Anti-Brexit Poster Campaign* (2016) and Kay Rosen's *She-Man* (1996-2018). Both artists aim to project a clear and direct political message. These neat graphics, in the opinion of Dr Schaar, may indicate a new age of art which rejects complicated internal reasoning and presents easy-to-read messages which are no less valid but must operate much faster due to the increasing speed of technological communication.

DO I HAVE TO DRAW YOU A PICTURE? is a dense and thoughtful exhibition. For such a small space, Dr Schaar has been ambitious in attempting to include such a wide range of objects. The result raises a number of interesting questions. To quote Marshall McLuhan, the medium does appear to be the message. ●

Thomas Dixon

► **Kay Rosen**
She-Man,
1996-2018
(KAY ROSEN,
COURTESY OF
THE ARTIST
AND PHILIPP
PFLUG CON-
TEMPORARY)

TELL YOUR STORY
FEATURES@VARSITY.CO.UK

Juggling babies and a bachelor's

Stephanie Stacey finds out about the trials of being a full-time student and full-time parent

Being both a student and a parent is “a culture clash” according to Megan Goldman-Roberts, a former Natural Sciences undergraduate at Newnham College currently undertaking a PGCE qualification. Stereotypically, deadlines are the principal cause of stress for most Cambridge students, but for those with children, priorities must be shifted, with added obligations and, for some, a sense of guilt when forced to sacrifice time with their kids in favour of academic work. Speaking of trying to find a balance between studying and caring for her two sons, PhD student Olivia Slater said, “My time is simply not my own”.

Olivia's path to studying for a PhD at Cambridge is far from typical, not least because she dropped out of school at 15. Beginning her undergraduate degree in Australia as a married mature student with a young son, she has never had the experience of ‘typical student life’, saying that she, for example, didn't go on pub crawls in Freshers' Week.

Olivia's PhD is focused on the presence and influence of indigenous Australian theatre in Australian high schools, a subject of particular personal interest for her, a self-confessed “theatre nerd” and the first Aboriginal Australian woman to do a PhD at Cambridge. The collegiate system, as well as significant division between faculties, particularly at the postgraduate level, can lead parents like Olivia to become isolated. With student parents scattered across different corners of the University, it can be difficult to find others in a similar situation.

“My children often say to me, ‘Mum, why don't we know more people with kids?’ and I say, I don't know, I'm trying! I don't know where everyone is hiding!” Although praising the University's efforts to establish supportive spaces for student parents to meet and interact, Olivia said that the majority of these initiatives fail to suit her personal situation. The spontaneity, too, of University life can create barriers for student parents seeking to form friendships with their childless peers. Fast-paced, last-minute decisions cannot easily correspond to childcare schedules and fixed school collection times.

Despite these challenges, student parents are certainly able to find friends, even if the process may take longer. After almost two years in Cambridge, “We've built a little family

here,” Olivia said, adding that her children call some of her friends auntie and uncle. Unexpected crises are an occupational hazard of raising children: illness, accidents, trouble at school. A broken arm, for example, takes precedence over a supervision, meaning both student parents and their academic supervisors must be flexible. “I make a terrible analogy of being a really great juggler and throwing five balls, but then someone throws a knife at you, and you just have to drop everything to catch the knife.”

Support from academic advisors and supervisors is vital to the welfare of all students, but particularly for those who, like student parents, are already stretched. For Olivia, the fact that her PhD supervisor offered “permission to slow down to whatever pace [she] needed right from the beginning” was “very freeing”. Olivia credits her husband for his support, and the efforts he has made as principal carer for their children during her most intense academic periods, saying “I can't imagine the kind of stress and isolation you would feel as a single parent”.

According to Megan Goldman-Roberts, it was “stubbornness” that enabled her to complete a Natural Sciences degree while caring for a young child as a single student parent. While many of us have stayed awake long enough to see the sunrise in a caffeine-fuelled essay or problem-sheet panic, children can often cause unplanned all-nighters. Speaking of her experiences as a student parent, Megan said “you learn to juggle,” but added that tiredness played a large role in her undergraduate life. She was “fortunate” that her dad was able to visit for several days a couple of times each term, offering “much-needed” opportunities to rest. Her friends, too, became vital lifelines.

While an undergraduate, Megan was CU-SU's student parent representative, a position she herself established and which is now unfilled. Like Olivia, she spoke of the inaccessibility of some of Cambridge's student parent initiatives and groups, adding that many of the meet-ups and support systems are arranged by already-overstretched students, with few full-time members of staff hired by the University. Financially, there are many sources of support for undergraduate student parents, with several University-administered bursaries, government grants and the opportunity to have independent status when



assessed for a student loan. This means the income of their family members will not be taken into account, allowing access to a higher maintenance loan. Welfare however, is more difficult to support, with student parents a “minority group,” all of whom have very variable needs. “Early parenthood is an entirely different beast to raising school age children,” Olivia said.

For Megan, the most crucial improvement required to enhance access and welfare for student parents is “greater clarity,” saying that the already present support must be made “more obvious”. In order to remedy the divisions created by the collegiate system, she called for “more centrally run events” and also emphasised the need to openly acknowledge accessibility, saying that simply tagging on “children welcome” to an event invitation can go a long way in making student parents feel accepted. Although acknowledging the added challenges presented by student parenthood, Megan tells me that her son offers motivation for studying, a constant reminder that she is working to create a better future for them both. Olivia echoed this sentiment, adding, “I don't think there's a perfect way to live a life [...] the perfect time to have kids or to study. I just think you should take opportunities where you can.” ●

▲ **Olivia Slater (top) and Megan Goldman-Roberts are student parents** (EMILY BRAILSFORD)

“Unexpected crises are an occupational hazard of raising children”

Young, married, and doing a degree: conflicting priorities



long fidelity are the most glorious things I feel blessed to have known as a student, and are all to some extent lacking from the conventional Cambridge student experience. In these last three years, I have been first and foremost a wife in a university which requires that one be first and foremost an enquiring mind.

This has felt at times like an almost impossible struggle, but it has also been a statement of faith: that life can be lived differently, that there is perhaps a more excellent way than the enticing but ultimately empty promises of freedom from the relational commitments and obligations that university often seems to offer.

I dearly want to encourage anyone reading this who thinks that marriage and Cambridge are incompatible to see beyond the transience and fear, and dive head first into the adventure of love with loyalty. My time at Cambridge University has been irrevocably different, and undeniably enriched, because I did it married. Whatever unconventional path you take, know that though yours may be the steeper learning curve and the path less trod, yours may be the richer experience. ●

Harriet Rouse

◀ **"I matriculated as a married woman"**
(HARRIET ROUSE)

In almost all ways, I am just your regular undergraduate-soon-to-graduate: I'm 22, fun loving, often disorganised, and have no mortgage to speak of. Except, I'm married, and I have been for the three years that I have been a student at Cambridge. I matriculated as a married woman and (by the grace of God alone!) I will graduate as a married woman. I thank the Lord Jesus so much that I have had the privilege of undertaking a degree with my husband by my side, yet, as my opening remarks betray, I have found it a continual challenge to reconcile the widely polarised caricatures of 'married woman', and 'Cambridge student'.

I still remember the reactions it garnered in Freshers' Week. I've had people respond in disbelief, or, in peculiarly Cambridge fashion, presume that I nabbed myself a 'college husband' right out of the starting block. Often, people forgot all tact in the shock of the revelation, for, as I have learned, it really is so *unconventional* to do Cambridge as a married student.

At times I have felt like a rare breed, with no other members of my species to socialise with. This is

because people are getting married later and later – in my generation, marriage holds connotations of financial security, career and generally 'sortedness'. I've lost count of the times peers have remarked how 'sorted' I am. The truth is, I am

only sorted in one more way than the rest of you – having a lifelong partner. Subsequently it's been a challenge reconciling my two stereotyped identities: student and wife.

Brilliantly, this challenge sped up the already intense process of sharpening my understanding of who 'me' really is. I know my identity lies in my God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and that within the love of God I am free to grow and flourish beyond stereotypes, labels and expectations; doing Cambridge as a married student, and all the misunderstandings that has generated, has been a catalyst for this knowledge.

Principally, Cambridge University has a profoundly individualistic culture, and the college system doesn't successfully attenuate that. From my experience, college life as a married woman is a uniquely Cambridge clash. As a married student I have never lived in halls (shocker!) Instead I have lived in the same college-owned couples flat with my husband for all three years of my degree. Integrating into college life is near impossible in a big college like Trinity when one doesn't live in and amongst one's fellow students.

It has, perhaps paradoxically, sometimes been a lonely journey having (in my marriage) a first priority other than my degree. Arguably few Cambridge students have split priorities, or straddle two worlds. For many, Cambridge University becomes the only thing of meaning. It has certainly been interesting observing the inability of some students to relate to my non-student husband! But I have known not only the difficulty, but also the great joy, of being committed to another person in this deeply individualistic generation and throughout this, normally transient, phase of life.

College living (halls with rooms) is *not family living* and I can't be the only student to yearn for the rhythms and fellowship of family life at university. The support of a spouse, the perspective of a family and the stability of life-

STUDENT DEALS DELIVERED 24HRS A DAY



34 HILLS ROAD, CAMBRIDGE
CAMBRIDGESHIRE, CB2 1LA
01223 355155



SUBMIT YOUR CREATIVE WRITING
EMAIL ARTS@VARSITY.CO.UK

Endings & beginnings

Creative writing as graduation looms and summer approaches

airport manuscripts

in the rigid vessel, i watch planes and people disappear
in a flash of empty blue. the year
is a palimpsest of experience;
memories braiding

into the margins of the person i had been
the last time, when my fingers traced
the ink of this golden ticket. amidst the damp
rattle of wheels carrying me
toward a place that is both
home and not-home, i am one of many pilgrim
birds, steel-boned and spread-eagled,
waiting for winter. the hushed narrow maze
of corridors
becomes drenched in nervous light. on cue,
we fasten ourselves to the mechanical feathers.

moments sketch themselves over older moments:

the silent
tiptoe of English rain across
skin that remembers the batter
of tropical storms.

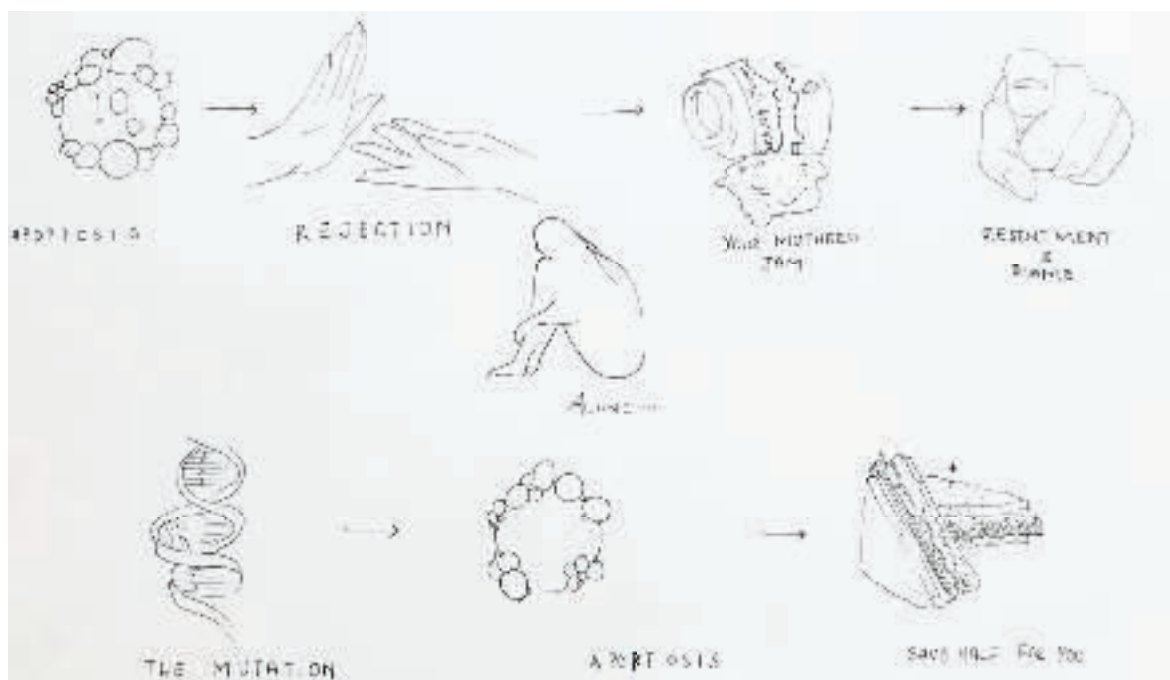
the rising lilt of
my voice as my tongue acclimatised
faster than the rest of me, and i imagined
my words, too, carried on colossal wings, beating
their way along the solitary ocean.
later, an explosion of sunburnt
leaves draped themselves over the broad, barren
scribblings of the penitential months,
and i found laughter in odd corners;

in a crack of light coloured
against the back of my palm, in the murmur of a
thousand mayflies.

as i lurch away from the tarmac
the rush of sound - the slice of metal against
sky - the unnatural levitation
that is somehow

motionless - lets my malleable
self believe, for an air-borne vacant second,
that home and not-home
has acquired a stillness, that i
have learnt to read the nearly
discernible markings, that experience
simply awaits definition.

Nicole Seto





ILLUSTRATIONS BY SEMILORE DELANO

I.

In this instant,
you feel an infinity
trapped inside your nerves
as everything-you-ever-were
(or ever-still-could-come-to-be)
starts shivering beneath your
skin.
It shouts out from within,
begging for
attention, reaching from behind
your ribs
to beat 'I am, I am, I am, I am.'
It demands the whole world
though you're afraid that, in the
end,
nothing you do will give it what it
wants.

Anonymous

To have known the beauty of ordinary things

the world of dew
is the world of dew.
and yet, and yet

platitudes glisten
in the cracks of cobblestone,
vanishing by noon,

there are sermons in
the rattle and hum of dawn,
trucks along highways,

shuttered storefronts bring
life to hollowed herloomks when
dew takes its place, but

nude eyes drag their gaze
across dripping pixels, stirred
only by moist seats.

Jonathan Chan

Confessions to a scientist

Apoptosis in biology is the death of a cell. A fragmentation of its nucleus.

One week ago today I went home to collect my gym kit and you had gone, vanished. Only 'que sera sera' was written in chalk on the board; no other words, no call. Then I found your Borges' Book of Imaginary Beings, the felt fox I made you and your basket ball - presents from me.

When cells mutate they become impervious to the control of healthy tissue. They rapidly divide becoming less receptive to signals of non-malignant cells.

Last year I lost my purpose. I couldn't hear, see or feel your advice or care. My thoughts became malignant.

- 1** I found your love suspicious, I deemed it was too soon.
- 2** I rejected intimacy to punish you.
- 3** I refused to meet your girls, as I thought it was a move for you to scratch your ex.
- 4** I spurned your mother's jam.
- 5** I believed you were jealous of my affection for my Dad (I hid behind his illness as an excuse).
- 6** I used words to manipulate you.
- 7** I often resented you. Thought my lack of path, money and problems were because of you.
- 8** I told my friends about the coldness, but not that it was tit for tat.
- 9** I lambasted you for reading Claude, she was all I had left and I was too scared to share.
- 10** I thought you were the reason that I lost my 'me' and surreptitiously made you think it too.
- 11** I was embarrassed to introduce you to friends in case you judged their esoteric lives.
- 12** I hoped you would leave (because that's all I knew).
- 13** I wanted to be alone (like you).

The mutation was the teacher telling me not to study literature. The mutation was bolting from school at 16.

The mutation was using and letting myself be used. The mutation was holding my foetus and flushing it down the loo.

The mutation was Factor V Leiden Homozygous. The mutation was my Mamma's voluntary death.

The mutation was my arrested reinvention. The mutation wasn't you.

In healthy cells there are three states of each cycle: resting, interphase and cell division. It has phases of growth or renewal, which are dependent on the successful completion of the previous turn.

I like jam again, I also enjoy mincemeat. And I would die to be intimate with you. I'm training for that run. I wish I could brush your girls' hair and could eat fruit cake with your parents, share you with my friends. I want to get lost in frosted hills and save half of my tuna and sweetcorn sandwich in case one of us slips.

I ran for twenty years but didn't clock up any miles. My dad told me I'm scared of love. Now I'm resting and in development, anew. I couldn't have got here without you.

Apoptosis also means a resolution or relaxation, a loosening of things.

Annalisa Hoadley

FULL REVIEWS ONLINE
 VARSITY.CO.UK/MUSIC

Escaping the female DJ trap

Meet the women tearing up Cambridge's clubbing culture: **Niamh Curran** investigates the gender dynamic on nights out

As someone who doesn't club, it came as a surprise that a number of my female friends were suddenly DJs. Rather cynically I dismissed some of my friends efforts as 'just a fad.' When I look back, I see the 'bad feminist' in me showing. After talking to a number of female DJs in Cambridge, I started to see this not as a fad or a craze, but as a change in the tides.

From my own experience, I have seen similar changes in the Cambridge comedy scene over the three years I have been here. I'm glad to see more often than not, there is a gender-balanced line-up at nights I perform at, and frequent women and non-binary smokers. Female DJs seem to be facing a lot of similar ups and downs to women in comedy.

There are often benefits for women who break into a more traditionally male field. A certain level of forgiveness to their novice status, but also an element of novelty. Kaye, who DJs under 'Kitkat', commented that, "I feel like expectations are lowered as you're seen as less experienced." Further pointing to the practical point that female DJs do not often get the chance to be as experienced as their male counterparts because they just aren't booked as much. She claims that this can often make the moments where you play a great set feel even better, because it defies the expectation.

Jemima, who DJs under 'just jemima', commented a similar point, "to be a woman and

► **Jemima 'just jemima' Higgins and Keira Dignan (right)** (ALEX POWER)



put on some really slammin' techno and just be like 'fuck you' is a really empowering experience." Yet, this 'forgiveness' also means that unfortunate events, like one DJ's unfortunate story of spilling water on decks, can be forgiven.

However, this obviously comes with a downside. Frequently those interviewed pointed out that despite the low expectations, women were held to a higher standard. This is both in their mixing and in what they do while at the decks. Naomi, who DJs under 'Mag', commented that often male DJs don't have to think as much about being 'perfect' in their set, where women do.

Yet this can be a more problematic issue when you come to be seen as the 'woman' DJ. As Jemima claims, "you have to form your identity as a woman DJ, men don't have to be male DJs." The aim of a lot of these nights out which focus on female and non-binary DJs in Cambridge seems to be to normalise their role in these fields. But women are then faced with the problems that all these efforts create. Outside of these nights you tend to be 'the woman'. To gain an advantage here, some of the women might capitalise on that role. As Jemima comments, while it might be 'cool right now' to have female DJs, the othering of female DJs will hopefully disappear over time.

Part of the problem might be seen to come from the atmosphere around dance music itself. It was commented by all those who I interviewed that there is a 'boy's club' feeling around dance music. Yet it's not just the dance music, but the dancefloor itself which can

“Often male DJs don't have to think as much about being 'perfect' in their set”

▼ **Debonair at the decks at Kings Bunker** (KINGS BUNKER/INEZ DALTRÖP)



Kulture TUNES

Farewell Cam

Time to Say Goodbye

Andrea Bocelli & Sara Brightman

Private Number 911

Circle of Life
Elton John & Tim Rice

Despacito (feat. Justin Bieber)
Luis Fonsi & Daddy Yankee

Intoxicated
Martin Solveig & GTA

Let it go

Idina Menzel

Green Light
Lorde

Mr Brightside
The Killers

Come on (Thomas the Tank Engine remix)
Notorious B.I.G.

become a highly masculine atmosphere.

Men tend to dominate the space, and this can often lead to the sexualisation of it – although it would be fair to say that this is not just men. This means that for these female DJs the act of DJing, of taking up space, making noise, where women normally don't, is immensely empowering.

A flip-side of this male dominated space is that it gives a sense of solidarity to the few female DJs there are at Cambridge. This is seemingly reflective of the wider world, where there are disk collectives attempting to connect female DJs. In Cambridge there are some smaller collectives for female DJs around.

Jemima commented that she felt a responsibility to try and help foster these spaces for the younger women coming into DJing, as those who were older than her had very little opportunity for this. There are more obvious attempts that to provide a space for women on nights out, particularly events which promote female and non-binary DJs, such as Playhouse, King's Bunker, and Avant Gardening. Yet despite these efforts, electronic nights outside of this in Cambridge and beyond are still overwhelmingly male.

Overall, the lot of women interested in DJing seems to be improving. Like many women trying to get into these fields, those who are in there now are paving the way for the those who come after. We shouldn't stop having women and non-binary only DJ nights, but there should be more of an effort for the club nights outside of these to include more women. We need to escape the female DJ trap. ●

ADVERTISE WITH US.

To advertise in any of our print publications or online, please contact our Business Manager:

VARSLITY

tel : 01223 33 75 75
 email: business@varsity.co.uk
 web: varsitypublications.co.uk



Lights, camera, action: get involved in student film



IMAGES: AARON KILERCIOGLU

The variety of films being created in Cambridge is truly exciting. Aaron Kilercioglu and Seth Jordan, as director and assistant producer respectively, worked on *100 Days Since* last term. The title refers to how long it's been since the mother of the film's protagonist, Mark, has left the house, and the moment he decides to take matters into his own hands. Jordan is currently also producing a short film called *The Tortoise*, a zany meditation on grief upon the death of a beloved family pet.

In the documentary sphere, Bea Goddard's thoughtful and challenging *The Cambridge Climate* had a successful launch recently at the CUSU Lounge. Though different in their styles and interests, all three are united by an infectious love of cinema and a desire to share both their films and their filmmaking.

Getting started

Bea Goddard credits a lucky turn for sparking her involvement in film. A pilot scheme for AS Film Studies had only recently been introduced at her school. Goddard, who had dabbled in YouTube in her early teens and always had an interest in film, seized the opportunity to confront a serious issue head-on and put the stories she uncovered to the screen. Coming up to Cambridge, she has continued to combine filmmaking with the issues close to her heart.

For many though, it was not until arriving at university that the prospect of filmmaking could be readily realised. Aaron Kilercioglu, current co-president of the Cambridge Film Association (CFA), made his first film in Lent Term. He already had a script written, but was unsure of how to move forward. After contacting the incumbent CFA committee for some advice, Kilercioglu was put in touch with

the right people and his short film soon came together.

If you're looking to learn the ropes of movie making, Kilercioglu recommends checking out the regular CFA mailing list, or applying to any advertised positions on Camdram that take your interest. At the same time though, don't hesitate to reach out to the directors of projects currently in production and offer an extra pair of hands. "You would be surprised how happy most people would be to let you help out on their set," Kilercioglu muses, "and it is a great learning experience to see how films are made." His advice is also not to discount the value of making trailers for theatre, describing this as a relatively low-commitment but absolutely invaluable way to hone filmmaking skills.

On set

For Seth Jordan, who works mainly as a producer, ensuring the smooth running of the production is his principal responsibility. Scheduling, organising funding and filming locations, as well as sourcing equipment and props all come under the umbrella of the producer.

"The most obvious challenge is of course the cost of filmmaking," Kilercioglu admits. "All you need for theatre, at a basic level, are actors. You can't make a film without the often expensive equipment." The good news though is that plenty of arts funding is available at both university and college level – the trick is simply to be proactive in finding and securing it. In terms of student societies, the Dryden Society and Christ's Amateur Dramatics Society (CADS) have been particularly active in supporting student films. So if you already have a good idea of what you'd like to do, you can send a proposal to the relevant committees and they'll soon be in touch.

The CFA is always on hand to help:

equipment is loaned out free of charge to all members, removing one of the great financial hurdles of student filmmaking.



More generally, Cambridge's student filmmakers view the sense of collaboration as both the central concern and most valued component in the production process.

"It's been great to create something much bigger, and not have to do literally everything!" Goddard laughs. For her short film, which focuses above all on our shared relationship as a University to environmental concerns, she made sure to involve the whole team in the big conceptual decisions. Producers, researchers, editors and presenters met at the very start of the process to discuss what they wanted the film to say.

A singular creative vision is arguably more important in a piece of narrative filmmaking, but, as Kilercioglu insists, this vision must crucially be one under which everyone can be united. He believes the director's role is not only to get the best out of the whole team, but also to ensure that all voices are heard and valued.

Why film?

After interviewing Cambridge's filmmakers, the more pertinent question turned out to be 'Why film now?' For a medium praised and blamed for its immutability, its capturing of things necessarily past, it is perhaps surprising how often our filmmakers emphasise the importance of the present. In the case of *The Cambridge Climate*, the contemporary significance of the film is easily apparent. The particular challenge, in fact, was keeping up with the University's rapidly developing relationship to divestment. At the same time though, Goddard is excited and proud "to feel a part of the conversation", and indeed to be part of a constantly unfolding story.

But one need not engage in such a topical theme to feel the same way. There is a kind of wistfulness in how Kilercioglu and the CFA see the opportunity of filmmaking at university: one may never get the chance to make a film like this again – free of financial constraints and purely for the joy of artistic creation. Nor, indeed, may we ever find such so conducive an environment to filmmaking than we do right here in Cambridge. The incredible thing about the medium of film is how naturally it takes almost all other art forms in its stride. Storytelling, animation, photography, performance – cinema can incorporate all these forms and so many more, but not without a group of talented and passionate creators, determined to draw all these strands together and bring about something special. ●

Ella Jones and Rachel Tsang

If you want to get involved in filmmaking, at Cambridge, join the CFA mailing list at cambridgefilmassociation.co.uk

REVIEWS ONLINE
VARSITY.CO.UK/THEATRE

Scottish plays: Camdram goes North

To find out more about the Cambridge student shows heading to Edinburgh this August, **Eimear Ryan-Charleton** and **Shameera Lin** catch up with Fringe-bound thespians



Rights of Passage

“There is an echo chamber in Cambridge, no one really goes to the theatre for the sake of challenging themselves,” Director Sneha Lela explains why she has decided to take *Rights of Passage* to the Fringe, after a highly-successful home run in Cambridge last Michaelmas. The play maps out the real-life stories of three LGBT+ refugees, Izzuddin, Hamed, and Miremba. Faced with emotional trauma and turmoil after arriving in the UK to seek a better future, the play addresses their reasons for having to seek asylum and the human heart within it all – directly rallying against the increasingly popular anti-immigrant rhetoric rooted in contemporary British politics.

Clare Summerskill wrote *Rights of Passage* after attending a variety of LGBT+ marches, meeting a range of individuals and befriending them in the process. Lala notes that Summerskill considered her subjects “friends as well as interviewees” and hence wrote the play in “a sensitive way” – to give agency to those stripped of a voice.

These three individuals, like many others, arrived in the UK with high hopes, only to be trampled on by the system. The system of gaining asylum currently in place is anything

but of help to vulnerable asylum seekers in need of a safe refuge – Lala believes it is “made to strip away all empathy”. Empathy is thus channelled through this play, which Lala cites as her reason for choosing to stage it in Cambridge for the first time. “These characters are not heard wherever they go, not accepted in any country, not believed,” Lala continues, “I wanted a verbatim depiction of people’s actual voices and their stories.”

As the character of Izzuddin comes from my home country of Malaysia, I ask Lala how it feels for someone like Izzuddin to witness his story being shared on stage at this point in history, given the homophobia prevalent in Malaysia. She mentions that Izzuddin was present at one of the Cambridge performances; he felt a sense of difficulty watching the intimacies of his life staged for all to witness.

Lala and her passionate cast and crew are particularly enthusiastic about interacting with those who may not necessarily be pro-asylum seekers. The beauty of the Fringe involves interacting with a broad spectrum of people, from all walks of life, behind which lies a variety of narratives. Combined with the unadulterated energy and passion from the production and the mood set by the Fringe’s environment, this production is going to touch hearts and shape minds. In fact, it encompasses everything the Fringe should be: talent, grit, and a good story to tell. Topical and real, *Rights of Passage* is set to be a highlight. ●



◀ Rehearsing the Cambridge production
(LAURA WELLS)

Netflix & Will

This summer, Will Hall brings his one-man show, *Netflix and Will* to the Fringe. Hall self-acknowledges the title is “a pun on a phrase that was popular like three years ago and which I’m sure I will regret when nobody gets it at the Fringe”. He promises better jokes in the show itself.

A regular on the Footlights stage, Hall debuted his first stand-up show earlier this term with *Netflix and Will*’s Cambridge run. The show’s somewhat enigmatic publicity blurb tells audiences to “expect stories about love, life and an old Spanish tourist called Maria.” To find out more, you’ll have to head along.

On the prospect of doing a one-man show at the Fringe, Hall describes it as “quite nerve-racking”, but also exciting, providing scope and flexibility and scope for going off script and talking to the audience.

A veteran of the Edinburgh Fringe, Hall describes it as “an amazing place”, with lots of shows to see. He sees this summer as “a great chance to do the same show over and over again and hopefully by the end of the Fringe it will have improved since the start.”

“It’s such a privilege to keep doing a show every day, so I can’t wait for that”. ●

▲ The ensemble cast of *Reigen*
(CELINE CLARK)
◀ Will Hall
(INDIGO PRODUCTIONS)

“It encompasses everything the Fringe should be: talent, grit, and a good story to tell”



Reigen

Ada Günther, translator and director of *Reigen*, has a passion and enthusiasm for the project which is difficult not to find infectious. The 1903 scandal play, detailing conversations between couples before and after sex, is on its way to the Edinburgh Fringe. There, Günther will be directing an ensemble cast of four, and heading an impressively comprehensive production team, including dramaturg, Gabriel Humphreys.

Translating an entire play is no mean feat, and Günther tells me that, when she began it, she was not intending to have it performed. Rather, having grown up in Vienna, she wished to give her friends access to a play which is not only very famous in German-speaking countries, but which also has incredibly rich, and specifically Viennese, language.

Finding the available translations inadequate, Günther sat down to do her own, often finding she would fly through a scene or two an evening. Eventually, having decided to stage the show, she consulted other translations in parallel, creating the script the actors are currently working with. Even so, the final work remains in a state of creative flux. Günther tells me, for example, about her struggles with contractions: too many I'ms, it's, and could'ves, and the play sounds too modern, too few, and it appears archaic. Adjusting this mix to the perfect balance is a process which will continue throughout the rehearsal period.

Rehearsals will begin with a week of ensemble building, focusing on movement and physicality. Costume Designer Georgia Humphreys is hand-sewing the costumes, which are designed to encourage free movement, while incorporating some period features. Günther highlights the importance of movement, explaining the centrality of physical interaction to the play, and her aim to incorporate physical theatre into the verbal conversations which make up the script. Indeed, the recalls for auditions consisted of a physical theatre workshop, and the cast were chosen not for their suitability to a particular part, but rather for their versatility.

The four actors will be playing a total of nine or ten roles, and Günther still isn't sure who will be playing what. This freedom allows the team to play with switching around characters, gender bending some, or merging others.

Günther appears particularly enthusiastic about the gender-bending element, telling me that Schnitzler's play was new and modern at the time, and this sense of newness and modernity can be taken into the 21st century. What is more, challenging the gender of the characters has allowed the team unexpected insights into their impulses, and has served, in some places, to heighten the emotional intensity.

Reigen, when it was first performed, was a scandalous play, which nonetheless encapsulated the spirit of Vienna. Günther has taken this Viennese whirl and brought it to Edinburgh, a city she has never visited before. There, it promises to be, if not a scandal, then certainly a resounding success. ●

Vulture tips for Edinburgh adventures

1

Establish boundaries Establish your own spaces, and keep your possessions tidy, but don't insist on an excessive standard of cleanliness in every communal space. Let your flatmates know if you're coming home late or if you want to have guests. Make an effort to engage with your flatmates, and when a problem crops up, always be direct!

2

Take some time for yourself Constant partying and communal living gets tiring, so don't forget to take some time to yourself. There's more to the city than just the fringe, so why not take a solo walk around Holyrood Park, or visit the National Gallery for free! Edinburgh abounds in independent cafes which can be quiet reading spots in the morning.

3

Stick to a daily budget With so many good shows to see, and so many fantastic pubs, it's easy to fall deep into your overdraft after a month of the fringe. The best way to avoid this is set a daily cash budget, and be careful not to go over that. Keep expenses low by seeing free shows, and cooking for yourself, or better yet, as a flat. Earn money by picking up paid flyer gigs or temporary bar work.



10%
STUDENT
DISCOUNT*

*Valid NUS card to quality

Need to store your stuff?

- 🔒 We collect **FREE** from any ground floor Cambridge address
- 🔒 No deposit or hidden charges
- 🔒 Cambridge base for easy, convenient access
- 🔒 Discounts and offers available
- 🔒 Safe and secure - 24 hour CCTV, fully alarmed site

Student self-storage, sorted.

Book your space today, **CALL**

01223 210691

enquiries@peaks-storehouse.co.uk

peaks-storehouse.co.uk



WIN!

Like us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter or write a Google+ review and we'll enter you into our prize draw for a **month's free storage!**



STUDENT ■ DOMESTIC ■ COMMERCIAL ■ ARCHIVE STORAGE



Mud, glitter and music

Whether you're a first-time festival goer or a seasoned lover of the big names, *Juliet Martin* has you covered

The essence of festivals can't be collected into a neat summary. Of course, there will be highlight moments that stand out. Noel Gallagher at Latitude 2016 is one of mine: as the set finished and he sung the opening lines of 'Don't Look Back In Anger', we belted it back to him pressed together in a haze of high spirits breathing in the charged, cider-scented atmosphere; yet, like a kaleidoscope, festivals tend to splinter into myriad colours, sounds, sights and smells until you're left with a chaotic tissue of memories fashioned from mud and glitter in equal degree. Their appeal is their fast-burning brevity, that unknown singer, that Mexican food truck, that heady evening sunset lying in the grass with music in earshot and drink in hand. Praise be! Festival season is now upon us.

With so many to choose from both at home and abroad, it's getting trickier every year to pick the best festival. Prioritizing your own particular taste and budget is crucial. A ticket to the big players like Reading and Leeds will set you back more than £200; scour the line-ups and photos from previous years before you buy to ensure you'll be getting just what you're after. My favourite is Latitude for its combination of music with literature, comedy and dance, not to mention the idyllic lakeside location and woodland 'Solas' healing area where you can exchange campsite porta-showers for bubbling jacuzzies. For a beach-side vibe, Boardmasters is home to some sick surfing action, or go urban at London's Wireless for the hottest names in grime, hip-hop and rap. Slightly cheaper options include the feel-good pop party at Sundown, or Truck Festival, still packing a punch despite its smaller scale with headliners including Friendly Fires and George Ezra.

After making your choice, prepare yourself appropriately, as practical packing can make the difference between a stellar weekend and a decidedly shambolic one. It's tempting to question what more one really needs other than baby wipes, toilet paper and a flower garland. While this might be slightly optimistic, you will probably have to trek a long way from your transport to the campsite so pack as light as you can. Expensive clothes and shoes

are a rookie, as it's likely that whatever you bring will end up well-acquainted with the ubiquitous mud. Wellies are your best friend, as are bum bags for valuables like money and ID. Luckily, we can always rely on the Great British summer to be unreliable: sunscreen and a rain poncho are essentials. To make sure everyone gets to see the bands they're most keen on, print off a list of the schedule with all the different stages, times and artists. A great way to familiarise yourself with unknown bands is to make a playlist of all their singles; this will also help get you all in the fiesta mood a few weeks early, letting the hype build to fever pitch by the weekend itself.

Choosing a pitch for your tent upon arrival is maybe the most important decision you'll make. The key is to get there early – after all, you might as well get the wear out of the wristband you splashed out on. Don't be lured into a spot next to the toilets, as the perceived convenience will very quickly lose its logic in the odours of unsanitary foulness wafting into your tent. Similarly, proximity to main paths will keep you awake with staggering 4am footfall. Look for a pitch that's near to the festival site and, because a friendly camper is a happy camper, extend the hand of friendship to your neighbours. You never know: they may in turn extend a sizzling frying pan of breakfast to you one morning. Buying festival food can be outrageously expensive, but it's also a big part of the festival atmosphere and uni life may well have made you never want to look at another Pot Noodle. But be sure to suss out the best value fare before you spontaneously fork out £12 for some mac and cheese.

The festival itself will likely pass by all too quickly in a giddy blur. And while it's important to get the most out of the weekend, don't fret about seeing and doing everything. Dip into small tents if something curious catches your ear, or skip the big headliner you were never that sure about and instead join the crowd for a new up-and-coming artist doing an intimate set. Even if your immediate memories are hazy, or clouded by a mud-splattered hangover, the shimmering summer revelries of a festival won't quickly be forgotten. ●

Cashing in on the summer

Earning money and enjoying your summer can seem like a paradox, but *Chloe Bayliss* knows how to have your cake and eat it

With the long summer break looming ahead, many of us plan to do as little as possible, in order to recover from the pain that Tripos has inflicted over the year. Some of us, however, have grander plans to go gallivanting off around the globe to shake off the stench of Cambridge. But to do that, earning a bit of cash is a prerequisite. If you're anything like me, earning money during the holidays is something that has to be flexible, with relatively few hours so it doesn't get in the way of summer fun! Here are the best ways to earn money without sacrificing too much of your free time.



Online tutoring

This one is a no-brainer for Cambridge students. It takes various amounts of time to set up profiles on sites such as Blue Tutors, Super Prof or Tutor.com, as some require you to pass a mock session; yet, this is an excellent way to earn a lot of money in a short space of time, teaching a subject you (hopefully) love. The hours are flexible, as you can arrange online appointments or home visits that fit around your schedule. One thing to look out for is how much commission the website you go through charges, which can either be a one off payment when they match you with a client or a hefty portion of each session. Another way to go about tutoring is to advertise on social media, and get your parents, grandparents, and any other families you may know to share it. Informal clients mean you get to keep all of the cash!



Fruit picking

If you want to earn some serious money in an intensive few weeks and aren't afraid of physical labour, fruit picking and packing is for you. Work in apple orchards usually begins in early July, and carries on in August, though work can be temperamental as it all depends on the weather – which you can be exposed to – and how fast the fruit grows. While intensive, this work is only seasonal and pays relatively well,

and this is a job that can be combined with your travels, as you earn while you explore other countries. Finding fruit picking jobs locally can be a challenge, but enquiring at local farms if you live in a rural area or just a simple Google search can provide you with a lot of information.



Match betting

Although not for the faint hearted, if you're willing to put in the effort, match betting is a legitimate, mathematically risk-free way to earn some money. It involves signing up to betting sites and placing opposing bets to cover all eventualities of, for example, a football game, which qualifies you for a free bet without losing any money. Then, using that free (matched) bet they give you, as well as other offers, you manipulate the system and can earn a fair amount. While you may need to grab the nearest mathmo to explain the ins and outs of how it actually works, sites such as Profit Squirrel provide step by step tutorials, and for a small fee, give you information of other deals you can take advantage of. It may take a while to take to get your head around what's going on, but if you stick with it, this can be a way of earning hundreds of pounds from the comfort of your own bed! However, while it earns you money, quite a bit goes out of your account at one time which is worth noting.

It can be said of the Cambridge routine that, though sometimes painful and exhausting, it is varied and busy. Heading home for a long summer can be a daunting prospect, as none of us want to be sat at home, twiddling our thumbs watching reruns of Bargain Hunt and Come Dine With Me after the craziness of exam term and the excitement of May Balls. Having a job is a way of keeping your routine varied and giving purpose to the day, as well as providing you with a bit of extra cash! So whether something to alleviate the boredom, or something to line your pockets: happy earning, and more importantly, happy spending. ●



▲ **Best of the bunch** (PETR KRATOCHVIL)

Look North: A midsummer night's pancake

Looking to pimp up your picnics? **Anna Hollingsworth** brings a Nordic touch to your summer soirées

From the lands of *hygge*, *lagom*, flat-packed furniture, and a social welfare system that Americans think is communism, I bring to you yet another *Waterloo* moment: summer pancake parties. I realize that the expression is firmly trudging into oxymoronic territory in a country where pancake dos are strictly a Shrove Tuesday affair – and Easter is never as late as June. I'm also very aware that when Mary Berry set 'picnic fit for a queen' as the final challenge on *Bake Off* 2016 as an epitome of good ol' British summer times, it was all scones, quiches and tarts, with pancakes as absent as soggy bottoms. But please trust my inborn Nordic chicness, this summer you want to ditch the old sausage roll and get squirting cream on pancakes instead.

The defining feature of my summer is when it's warm enough (no, you don't need your Nordic knit all year round,

even in Finland) to bring out my *muurinpo-hjapannu* – an outdoor griddle pan. Think of its importance this way: while Jamie mucks around with his sausages on a BBQ, I embrace the pan; when Gordon fucking marinades his smoke fucking pork ribs, I'm fuc... sorry, *flipping*, pancakes. You get the picture.

Now, the recipe is nothing out of the ordinary, and probably comes in as many variations as there are pancake makers. Mine is nowadays a vegan marvel with oat milk, flour, sugar, an extra kick from sparkling water, and believe it or not, no egg replacer. But any vaguely crêpe-like recipe will do, because what really matters is, just like on Love Island, not what is on the inside, but what is on the outside.

I've always taken pity on those poor British souls who believe that sugar and lemon juice are sufficient top-

pings on Pancake Day. I mean, Shrove Tuesday marks the last day before Lent, not the first day of fasting, right? A Nordic-style summer pancake party has no Scandinavian minimalism about it, and offers a smorgasbord (see what I did there) of toppings: berries, ice cream, whipped cream and jam form a standard line-up.

However, if you find yourself in want of a marvelous *muurinpo-hjapannu*, or pancake flipping just isn't in your oeuvre, worry not. There is a less-hassle but equally oh-look-at-how-Nordic-I-am alternative: the Åland pancake to you. Like its home, the Åland islands – a little bit of heaven in the sea between Sweden and Finland – this member of the pancake family is a, thus far, well-kept secret. Think of emphasising the 'cake' in 'pancake'. You add some rice or semolina pudding to your standard pancake batter, pour it all into a baking tray, pop into the oven, *et voilà*, you have yourself a trayful of super thick pancake with practically no effort at all.

Have your Pimm's and sausage rolls by all means, but in the words of another Nordic miracle: take a chance on me. So, go on, give the BBQ a break, and follow this highway to guaranteed pancake bliss. ●

Åland pancake

Ingredients

1dl sugar
3 eggs
¼ tsp salt
1 tsp cardamom
1 ½ dl flour
2dl semolina or rice pudding
7 dl milk

Method

Beat the sugar and eggs, and add in the salt and cardamom. Mix in the flour. Add the rice or semolina pudding and milk, and mix until smooth. Pour the mixture into an oven tray (roughly 20cm x 25cm), sit back, relax, and watch it bake in the oven at 225°C for roughly half an hour (or go on Netflix while waiting). For my fellow vegans, just substitute the dairy milk with your preferred plant-based alternative – I'm an advocate of oat milk in this case – and instead of the eggs, mix in roughly one dl of soya yoghurt; save your hand for other activities with no eggs to beat.



luis

barbershop

Student discount:

Mon-Fri £11 - Thurs £10

upon production of valid student I.D.

01223 566663

5a Pembroke St - Cambridge - CB2 3QY

www.luisbarbershop.co.uk

South Expedition Africa



Embark on an authentic African adventure

East Africa is the cradle of civilization and a natural, beautiful area where tribes and clans have been left untouched by the ravages of today's global nonsense. If you believe in the philosophy of ecological tourism to explore countries in a more humane way, then South Expedition Africa is the right budget tour operator for your trip.

South Expedition Africa offers a wide range of services and tourism activities in Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania.

To those looking for adventure, we will guide you through fabulous landscapes, a lifetime experience at an affordable price.

Contact Nathaniel Taffere

www.south-expedition-africa.com

Tour Operator & Owner

www.facebook.com/south.expedition.africa

sales@south-expedition-africa.com

Telephone: +46760967856



ENCHANTED FOREST

This May Week we step into a shaded, dusky clearing and invoke the magic and mystery of a fairy tale in elegant evening wear.

Classic satin and rich colours are the order of the day, providing timeless grace. Be it flowing or tailored, find a silhouette that gives you a confident glow, and be the main character in your own enchanted tale. ●





PHOTOGRAPHER
Olivia Buckland

MODELS
Jai Shende
Nusrath Tapadar
Aakash Mohindra
Alfie Crowley-Rata

STYLING
Gian Hayer
Olivia Neave

CLOTHES
Bowns
24-25 Magdalene Street,
Cambridge CB3 0AF

Purveyor of British
designer accessories
and clothes

ADDITIONAL CLOTHING
Model's own

FULL MAY BALL REVIEWS ONLINE
[VARSITY.CO.UK/LIFESTYLE](http://varsity.co.uk/lifestyle)

Five ultimate May Week essentials

Julia Davies is here to make your celebrations stress-free

As you may have spotted, May Week is upon us. A whole week where the students down tools and celebrate the end of exams, party the night and day away, and get in the Daily Mail for doing perfectly innocent things like having 'gathered on a bridge'.

Anyway, the thrills and spills of the term may have caused you to overlook certain items that might make your May Week much more stylish, comfortable and all-round enjoyable. To ensure you can enjoy the festivities to their full, I have collated a list of what you may need.

Handheld electric fan

I bought one such bad boy from Tiger last year, for the princely sum of around £3. It was invaluable during queues at the start of events, when it was really quite hot and there was no shade. Hopefully the weather will be as wonderful as it

was last year, and if so this fan will see you through garden parties, May Balls and hangovers in comfort.

Blister plasters

There is nothing snakier than a shoe that compensates for its beauty by lacking in comfort. Painful feet can ruin your night, so take every opportunity to protect them. Having blister plasters on you could act like a talisman and ward off blisters, and even if you don't need them someone else is sure to.

Fold-up pumps

This is my pro-tip to you. If the shoes you choose are the sort that are too beautiful not to wear, but too vertiginous to move in, get you some fold-up pumps and keep them in your clutch. I discovered these when I was very little, both in age and stature, and they have been a godsend, both when wearing heels, and generally when trying to walk in cobbly Cambridge.

To be able to slip off the torture devices called photogenic heels and boogie carefree is a delight that you should not deprive yourself of. There are some on Amazon for under £10 – you actually waste the cost of your ball ticket if you can't enjoy it due to footwear. Get the pretty shoes in your pictures, and then party in pumps.

A decent bag

You are going to need: your phone, ID, Cam-card, ticket or programme, some make-up, electric fan, blister plasters, safety pins, fold up pumps... at the minimum. A decent bag should be pretty, of course, but

also functional. I advocate a clutch that has a strap, so that you can party hands-free. Zara and ASOS always do a wonderful selection of these. And a word to the wise: go for one with a soft body, so that you can cram any last-minute essentials in there that you may need.

Dental floss

Imagine getting something stuck between your teeth at the start of a May Ball and not being able to do anything about it all night.

Enough said. ●



Best of the balls



A fun-filled shellebration at Medwards

From the sticks of rock handed out to eager queuers before speedy entry when doors opened at four, to the strings of shells dangled from leafy branches, attention to detail made this Garden Party a sand-filled success.

The gardens of Murray Edwards were successfully transformed into something between the 'lively tropics' and the 'sandy beach of Blackpool' that the committee took as inspiration. Decorative highlights were the artificial beach and coloured lanterns suspended between trees, which blended well with the greenery and made the theme cohesive. Efforts at decoration mingled the showy with the subtle and contributed to the fun yet relaxed atmosphere of the party. Whilst friends who had attended last year's event suggested

that the decorations this time round were not quite as impressive, I enjoyed them as a first-time attendee.

Equally, the entertainment on offer did not fail to impress. Seaside games like a coconut shy, hook-a-duck and the 'test your strength' hammer were paired with a surf simulator and volleyball court, which many were queuing to enjoy. The glitter tent was also a must-visit, and shisha under canopies provided a welcome respite from enthusiastic dancing amongst the throng at the main stage. Aside from smaller acts on the Beach Hut Stage, Colonel Spanky's Love Ensemble put on a typically feel-good and well-received performance. Sam Parker's saxophone-playing mingled with contemporary beats also went down a storm at sea and provided an exciting, bubble-filled climax to the haze of a beach afternoon. The Garden Party slid effortlessly between the moods of sandy chill and beach party, meaning there was plenty of variety and something for every guest to enjoy.

Needless to say, there were also plenty of culinary treats on offer, with fish and chips, candy floss and Mr. Whippy ice cream tending towards the seaside theme amongst the well-loved classics of sweet potato fries, burgers and mac n' cheese. Whilst some food stalls seemed to run out or close fairly early in the evening, the bar was free-flowing with a variety of bottles and beachy cocktails right up until the end of the event, meaning guests could enjoy the building beats with VK or 'safe Sex on the Beach' in hand.

The committee used the beautiful natural setting of the gardens to its advantage, making the Garden Party perhaps not the only, but certainly one of the best garden-located 'shellebrations' of the end of exams. It certainly kicked off my May Week in coastal style. ●

Lydia Bunt



IMAGES: LYDIA BUNT



No-frills fun at Robinson

With standard tickets just under £100, Robinson was one of the less pricey balls. The resulting party was a case of you get what you pay for: I went expecting not oysters and bespoke molecular drinks, but rather less class and more fun, and that is exactly what was on offer.

The theme was Suspicion, a murder mystery, which was delightfully refreshing compared to the usual vague magic gardens and barely pronounceable polysyllabic words (Corpus's *Phantasmagoria* in 2013, I'm looking at you). Murder was dotted around here and there – a finger print on the programme cover, mystery scribbles on the walls, a mug shot height chart – and made up a refreshing storyline for the ball, with guests invited to solve a whodunit. Maybe it was just my lack of Poirot grey cell prowess, though, but the presence of a puzzle was a bit too well hidden in the ball, mainly noticeable from the introduction in the programme.

The food and drink, on their part, had definitely nothing to do with mystery. For the most part it was a case of going back to the (very) basics rather than any attempt at broadening culinary horizons: drinks-wise, it was vodka and coke, G&Ts, Sex on the Beach, and the rest of the usual suspects in generously sized plastic cups, while the food focused on pizza, burgers,

doughballs (after a drunken friend described these as “small testicles covered in diarrhoea”). I had to give them a miss, even if I very much appreciated the vegan option in principle), ice cream from Jack's Gelato, and a generous chocolate fountain. I'm not asking any ball committee to take two fish and five loaves and feed the multitude, but a bit of variety would've been welcome: I love all things doughy, but when you have stalls for meat burgers, veggie burgers, pulled pork burgers, breakfast bacon patties and breakfast veggie patties – oh and toasties thrown in for good measure – I was getting a bit too much of carb-fuelled repetition. The star of the show for me was therefore the non-burger option: the butternut squash katsu curry (vegans, rejoice!) was perfection for Wagamama aficionados, with rice sticky and curry spicy enough to score full points in the westernized Japanese dish league.

What the ball was lacking in culinary variation, it made up for with its ents that were all no-frills, no airs and graces, actual fun. The human table football continued previous years' theme of taking humans and using them as entertainment (thinking of zorbing a couple of years back here – I'm starting to get a bit of an Ancient Roman theme of doing gladiators and chariots and other, well, high-risk spectator sports), the crazy golf and swingboats brought in a festival vibe, and the bouncy castle bubble served as a place to release your inner child (or, a dark place for dark deeds, as it was inexplicably hidden away in a corner of the garden).

The underground silent disco was a bit of a sweat pit, making me regret not bringing an industrial-sized can of Axe with me, and the

DJs could have done with some extra mixing basics: why would you cut the *Friends* theme tune short and, instead of smoothly rolling into the next upbeat number, have a break, followed by painfully slow starting riffs? But in the end, there was enough ‘Mr. Brightside’ to keep everyone happy (and some guests had clearly prepared to add their own chemistry to the mix, what with bags of white powder making their rounds through nostrils). Mahalia with her mellow tunes as the headliner was a welcome change to so many balls opting for electro beats and dodgy DJs. The real strength, though, lay with the student performers. The acoustic duo Nicola & Jono really owned their love song covers: it says a lot of their appeal that even when at 3:30am I found myself third-wheeling, sharing a table with a couple and feeling that being on *Love Island* would probably be a less awkward social situation, I stayed and listened to them. Another gem, Daniel Fannelli, had the bar dancing to his jazzy, rocky and poppy covers, even when the venue offered sofas and armchairs as an option.

The ultimate highlight of the ball was what most balls falter at: the last hour before the survivors' photo. Dream ABBA played tribute to, well, Abba, and turned the guests on their last legs into dancing queens, only 17, and undoubtedly increased the survival rate of the ball considerably (even if stiletto heels stabbing my toes, elbows smashing my belly button piercing into my intestines, and rogue sunglass frames blinding me made me doubt the ball tagline, “a little party never killed anyone”). Whoever dunit, I salute you for this. ●

Anna Hollingsworth

“
The
headliner
was a
welcome
change
”

QUALIFY AS A
U.S. ATTORNEY
OR AS A SOLICITOR
IN ENGLAND
& WALES

INTERESTED IN EXPANDING YOUR CAREER OPTIONS GLOBALLY?

RELY ON BARBRI, THE LARGEST LEGAL QUALIFICATION EXAM PREP COMPANY IN THE WORLD.

In today's increasingly globalised world, demand continues to grow for those who understand the workings and complexities of the law of more than one jurisdiction. Qualifying as a U.S. attorney or as a Solicitor in England and Wales adds valuable credentials to an ambitious international young lawyer's C.V. and enhances career prospects.

BARBRI is a leader in legal education and the #1 bar exam preparation programme in the U.S. and Internationally for more than 50 years.

Visit **BARBRI-International/Why-BARBRI** or contact **internationalenquiries@barbri.com** to learn more.

barbri
INTERNATIONAL
LEGAL QUALIFICATIONS

THE MAYS

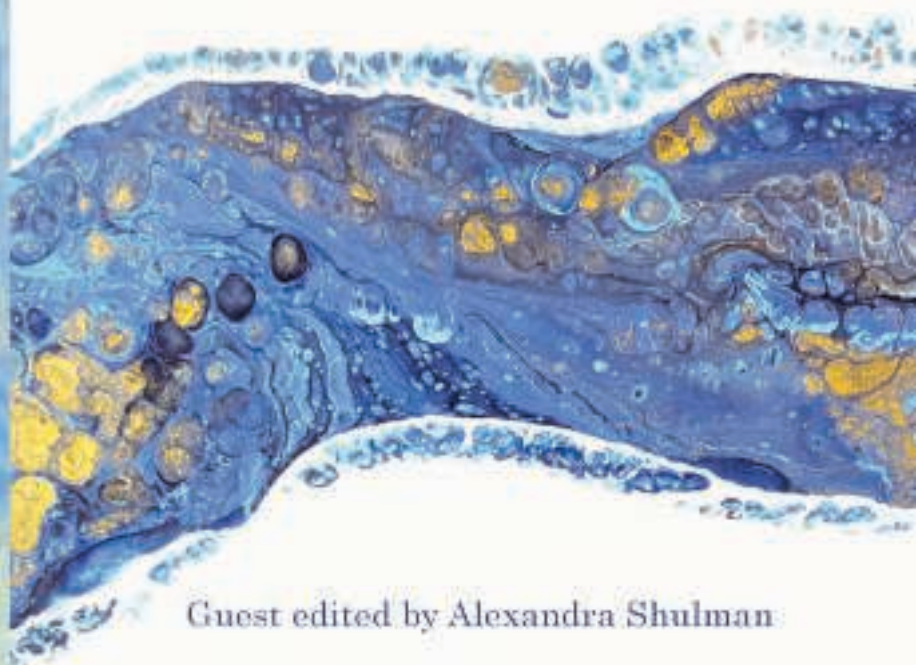
THE BEST NEW STUDENT WRITING AND ART FROM THE
UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE

GUEST EDITED BY
ALEXANDRA SHULMAN

.....

The Mays XXVI

New Writing and Art from the
Universities of Oxford and Cambridge



Guest edited by Alexandra Shulman

.....

AVAILABLE IN ALL GOOD
BOOK STORES AND ONLINE AT:
WWW.THEMAYSANTHOLOGY.CO.UK

New to a Blue: CU Ice Hockey

Sophie Corrodi

Most people would be forgiven for being ignorant of Cambridge University’s prowess on the ice-skating rink. Along with Oxford, the club makes up half of the oldest rivalry in ice hockey history, as recognized by the International Hockey Hall of Fame in Canada. Since the first Varsity match in St Moritz, Switzerland in 1885, Cambridge University Ice Hockey Club has gone from strength to strength and the men celebrated their 100th Varsity just last year. The women’s club (CUWIHC), founded in the 1980s, boasts a slightly shorter history, but no less distinguished. It was one of the first women’s teams in the UK and remains one of two registered all-women’s teams.

Women’s ice hockey is still growing exponentially in comparison to the men’s game. While women’s teams are commonplace in the US and Canada, with tens of club teams per state and many high schools having their own team, the UK has around 20 female club teams competing each year, including the top semi-professional league. Though the sport is significantly less popular than these North American powerhouses, it is becoming increasingly well known, as marked by a popular professional men’s league. The Great Britain Men were recently promoted to the top division of World Championships, placing them in direct competition with teams such as

USA, Canada, Russia and Germany.

Despite this, CUWIHC does not only draw on international students, but includes almost 75% UK students. While a few have played the sport before, many are drawn to the club as ex-figure skaters, or even just interested athletes who think that it looks fun. Historically, both the men’s and women’s ice hockey teams travel to Peterborough every Sunday night, leaving Cambridge around 7pm to return around 1am, for an hour of on-ice practice. This is followed by two or three fitness sessions a week and a roller hockey session to practice stick handling skills. However, notably, this is all about to change: an ice rink is currently being built in Cambridge, to be ready for Michaelmas 2018. Located near the airport, this will revolutionise ice hockey in the area and nearly triple the clubs’ current ice time. Particularly for the newer players on the women’s team, this is sure to incredibly benefit the women’s side and yearly performance.

This change further places Cambridge on an equal playing field with Oxford, who have had an ice rink in their centre city for a long time. This is reflected in the Varsity results, as to date Oxford have won about 75% of the women’s matches (although the men’s results are more 50/50). However, CUWIHC does not let this history get to them. This past year, incredible dedication and commitment from newcomers and returners alike managed to rocket Cambridge to a land-



slide victory of 16-2, hopefully marking Cambridge’s fortunes as being on the up, especially with the arrival of the rink to look forward to. While the women’s team presents a team of mixed abilities, from newcomers to those who have played the sport for over 20 years, Cambridge still competes at a high level in a mixed gender league. Playing in the second division of non-checking (women’s rules) hockey, the team normally place about mid-table

▲ The women’s side enjoyed a 16-2 win in this year’s Varsity match (DUSHANTH SEEVARATNAM)

against many all-male teams, an impressive result from a women’s squad. The club’s increasing success has been recognized by the selection of members for international sides. The squads currently contain two members competing with the GB University squad. This international representation is new for the club, and again demonstrates its growth as a

3 The number of discretionary Full Blues awarded to women’s players last season

club in performance level and popularity of the sport nationwide.

Although there is no Cuppers tournament at the moment, once the new rink is ready, a new one is in the pipeline to start next year under the name ‘Stanley Cuppers’. Named after the National Hockey League trophy, the team hope this will help to gather support for the club and scout fresh talent in Cambridge. Despite this, the sport is still well recognized in Cambridge, with the men’s Blues currently possessing Full Blue status due to their consistent outstanding performance, and the women’s Blues possessing Half Blue status. However, the women recently were awarded three discretionary Full Blues for their international competitors and are planning to apply for Full status due to growing popularity of the sport and improving facilities.

If you want to get involved with the sport, be sure to contact Cambridge University Ice Hockey Club on their Facebook page or come and find them at the Freshers’ Fair in October. They are always on the lookout for new talent, so if you are prepared to embrace the cold and skate on thin ice (pun intended), ice hockey could be the sport for you.



Cardboard boats set sail and sink on River Cam

Marcus McCabe
 Deputy Sports Editor

The fifth annual Cambridge cardboard boat race took place on Sunday afternoon as part of Suicide Sunday celebrations. Several hundred spectators eagerly gathered along the banks of the River Cam at Jesus Lock to watch the event with a picnic. They cheered on around 30 innovative cardboard craft as students competed to stay afloat and race to collect a “mystery item” from a punt 100 yards upriver before returning to the start.

For some, it looked as if more time

had gone into decoration rather than practicality; many got creative with cans of spray paint. One crew even opted to use past exam papers as a sail in a telling purge of Exam Term misery. In the end it was Alex Watson, Roy Navid, Saim Saeed and Sam Holdsworth, second-year engineers from Trinity College, who rowed the aptly named ‘HMS Soggy Biscuit’ to victory.

Alex Watson told to *Varsity* that the team had been planning the boat since last year, following a calamitous sinking in 2017. Nevertheless, within 20 minutes of the start, all boats had been sunk. The carnage was over – until next year.

▲ Many creative boats took to the River Cam, but no one went home dry (MILLIE KIEL)

Cryptic crossword: Cambridge edition

1		2		3		4		5		6	
7							8				
9							10				
						11					
	12		13						14		15
16						17					
					18						
19					20						
21											

Across

- 1 Naturalistic one of 12, two hours before lunch, sees places like Camden (12)
 7 Controversial foodstuff; eating it hurt me! (7)
 8 Dry going in, and irate coming back (4)
 9 Boat is gloomy and hot inside (6)
 10 Poetic one of 12, initially publishing lines as Ted Hughes (5)
 11 Thespian one of 12 to cook whitebait (3)
 13 Essential NHS training tips for otorhinolaryngology (3)

- 16 Unseated one of 12 gets member in, around midnight (5)
 17 Political one of 12 can be found in a field, by the sounds of it (6)
 19 Gloom/nihilism is all-encompassing (4)
 20 Wet saxifrage mixture, filtering out tips of fresh rhubarb and green echinacea, is most inviting to bees (7)
 21 Philosophical one of 12 reconsiders sentient twig (12)

Down

- 1 A painter, crazy at heart, evokes naval fleet (6)
 2 Decrypting one of 12 going around without direction (6)
 3 In gig, hen produces farmyard noise (8)
 4 Six successful deliveries described in oratorio verses (4)
 5 Can be heard when speaking out loud (6)
 6 Sting left in; agony in flashes (6)
 10 Excuses given before reading material (8)
 12 Disgruntled core group of Illuminati were familiar faces around here (6)
 13 I go east without a self-centred person (6)
 14 Comic one of 12 re-elects fanatic without help from Russia Today (6)
 15 Scientific member of 12 in the current century (6)
 18 Pretty model (and petite) (4)

● Devised by Aneesh Naik. Check our Facebook page for solutions.

Disaster on the Cam as all cardboard vessels sink

Cambridge students' engineering prowess may have hit its nadir over the week (p. 39)



Sport



▲ (Above) Women's second division boats take their position, (below) Wolfson found success on the river

(LOUIS ASHWORTH)

St John's and Jesus hold headship

- No change at the top despite some big moves
- Wolfson College wins coveted Pegasus Cup

Matt Gutteridge

Lady Margaret Boat Club and Jesus College Boat Club remained at the Head of the River in the men's and women's divisions respectively as May Bumps finished on Saturday. This achievement reflects their excellent form all season because both crews also finished at the top of the Lent Bumps table.

Despite promising showings from Pembroke in the men's division and Newnham in the women's, in the end neither headship was seriously threatened as LMBC and Jesus rowed over comfortably at the top in all four races. Pembroke bumped Caius and then Clare to start Saturday in second position, but were then rebumped as Clare finished the week where they had started, behind LMBC in second place. In the women's division, Newnham bumped Caius and Emmanuel to climb to second, but rowed over on Friday and Saturday without seriously challenging Jesus for the title.

Behind them, Magdalene bumped four times to finish fifth in the men's division, bumping Downing on the final day. Emmanuel finished level in seventh, while First and Third rose two places to eighth. After Thursday, all the positions remained the same in the top half of the women's division, as Downing, Caius, Clare, LMBC, and Girton all rowed over twice.

Three other first boats, Clare Hall M1, Trinity Hall M1, and Wolfson W1, also achieved their blades by bumping up on all four occasions. The Pegasus Cup, awarded for the best overall performance by a college, went to Wolfson, whose four boats gained an aggregate total of 14 positions, celebrating 50th anniversary of their boat club in style. It was a Bumps to forget for Peterhouse and Murray Edwards, who both saw every single one of their crews bumped down every day.

In the lower divisions, this May Bumps will be remembered for two remarkable overbumps. On Wednesday, Wolfson M2 achieved a double overbump on Girton M2 to gain five places in a single day, and finished the week up eight by bumping Corpus Christi M2, First and Third M3, and Selwyn M2. Not to be outdone, Magdalene College M4, who started the week at the foot of the river, achieved a quadruple overbump on Thursday on

LMBC M4. The quadruple overbump was the first since Peterhouse W1 in 1986, and only the second in the 131-year history of Bumps.

Safety once again was a concern this year, and on Wednesday the M5, W4, and M4 divisions were all stopped because of carnage on the river. Two coxes were banned for collisions with a stationary crew. On Wednesday, Anglia Ruskin M1 rowed into crews trying to clear the river in the Gut, the narrowest part of the



course, while on Friday, Pembroke W4, pursuing Trinity Hall W3, collided with a crew that had bumped out on the exit of Grassy Corner, hospitalising a rower who was hit with a blade. In both cases, the offending crews received a £75 fine and a bump against their name.

More photos can be found on our Facebook page



Men's top division

1.	Lady Margaret	Lady Margaret	.1
2.	Clare	Clare	.2
3.	Caius	Pembroke	.3
4.	Pembroke	Caius	.4
5.	Downing	Magdalene	.5
6.	Peterhouse	Downing	.6
7.	Emmanuel	Emmanuel	.7
8.	Jesus	First and Third	.8
9.	Magdalene	Jesus	.9
10.	First and Third	Peterhouse	.10
11.	Selwyn	Queens'	.11
12.	Queens'	King's	.12
13.	Robinson	Robinson	.13
14.	Christ's	Christ's	.14
15.	King's	Selwyn	.15
16.	Lady Margaret M2	Wolfson	.16
17.	Churchill	Lady Margaret M2	.17



Women's top division

1.	Jesus	Jesus	.1
2.	Emmanuel	Newnham	.2
3.	Caius	Emmanuel	.3
4.	Newnham	Downing	.4
5.	Downing	Caius	.5
6.	Lady Margaret	Clare	.6
7.	Clare	Lady Margaret	.7
8.	Christ's	Girton	.8
9.	Girton	Churchill	.9
10.	First and Third	First and Third	.10
11.	Peterhouse	Pembroke	.11
12.	Churchill	Christ's	.12
13.	Fitzwilliam	Fitzwilliam	.13
14.	Pembroke	Homerton	.14
15.	Queens'	Peterhouse	.15
16.	Jesus M2	St. Catharine's	.16
17.	Homerton	Queens'	.17