

# Conversations with bedders.

Working with students can be both 'rewarding' and frustrating. College bedders share their experiences.

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Cambridge's Independent  
Student Newspaper since 1947

# VARSITY

## 'We'll lose our edge': academics express fears over Brexit

Kiran Khanom  
Senior News Editor

"All faculties are concerned about funding," said Professor Catherine Barnard.

"Brexit doesn't just take us down a dead-end, it takes us into the danger zone", said Dr Victoria Bateman.

In light of the current uncertainties surrounding Brexit, *Varsity* has spoken to several academics at Cambridge about their opinions on the UK's departure from the EU and its effects on the University and higher education.

Research was a primary point of concern for many, with both funding and collaboration across Europe potentially affected.

Barnard, Professor of European Union and Employment Law, said: "Clearly [Brexit] will be serious in that we will lose access to EU funding, although current EU funds will be underwritten by the UK government."

Cambridge is likely to be particularly affected by any changes in funding from the EU. According to the University, EU research grants account for almost 18%

of Cambridge's total research income.

Professor Gerard Evan, Head of the Department of Biochemistry, described the European Research Council (ERC) as "one of the great achievements of the EU", saying that it has "allowed scientists to build an independent research council" that isn't "run by politics". He said that ERC grants "have become very much part of the woodwork of what we do".

The ERC is part of the Horizon 2020 funding programme. The UK government has given assurances that it will fund any programmes enrolled in the programme up until 2020, but no framework has yet been confirmed for future funding partnerships.

ERC grants account for nearly 60% of the University's EU research funding, and therefore around 10% of Cambridge's total research income. According to the University, Cambridge and Oxford, which receive equal levels of funding, have more ERC grants than any other university in Europe.

Wolfson fellow and chief scientific

Full story Page 7 ►



▲ Europe Day in May saw a pro-EU rally in Cambridge (LOUIS ASHWORTH)

## Fitzwilliam overrules JCR election of intermitting student

Stephanie Stacey  
Deputy Editor

Matt won a JCR election, but his College overruled the result on the grounds - unknown to the students involved - that intermitting students, even those living in College, cannot be members of their College's political body.

According to Matt, who requested that he be referred to by his first name only, the decision was a case of "not allowing intermitting students to participate in the political life of the University or College", with senior members "intervening in the otherwise healthy functioning of the JCR".

Although he intermitted early in Michaelmas Term, Matt, who is an HSPS student at Fitzwilliam College, continues to live in Cambridge, in part due to his lack of permanent address. When, midway through term, JCR elections opened up, he was persuaded to put himself forward for the role of Male Welfare Officer.

Matt was "really excited" for the JCR position, noting that he has "a lot of experiences which would have been very informative", having gone through many College and University support systems

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# News

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# Fitzbillies co-owner Tim Hayward on taking over a Cambridge institution

*The restaurateur and food writer talks to **Todd Gillespie** about pretentious food, learning from American diners – and where he likes to eat in Cambridge*

**W**hen a pair of former foodie rat-racers slogged up to Cambridge from Camden for a meeting about a restaurant in 2011, they hadn't quite predicted what would happen. As the landlord of an ailing Fitzbillies, the austere then-master of Pembroke College led Tim Hayward and his wife Alison – raised in the town with birthday cakes from the shop she feared would shut forever – for a stroll around the Pembroke quads.

"It felt like Lord So-and-so interviewing me to marry his daughter," Hayward recalls, perched on a window seat at the Bridge Street branch, which he opened in 2016. "Or, I thought, this must be what it's like getting tapped to join MI6. It turned out, of course, that he had been head of MI6."

Almost eight years since he was handed the keys to the cake shop after lengthy scrutiny, a lot has changed for Hayward, 55, bald, bearded and garrulous. As well as opening a new branch, the former advertising executive has published three food books and become widely followed as a restaurant critic for the *Financial Times*.

"We're probably the youngest institution in Cambridge at nearly 100 years old," Hayward says, sipping a very modern flat white. "But we're acknowledged in enough people's PhDs as where they wrote it that we've got our place in history."

He has rejected circling investors begging to open franchises in Oxford, Singapore and Saudi Arabia. Hayward in-

sists Fitzbillies is not leaving Cambridge, though he doesn't rule out a third branch in the town.

As I darted out of my room to head to this interview, I bumped into Elaine, the formidable housekeeper on my college staircase. She recalled how in the early 1960s she'd leave school and walk to work as a window dresser, stopping off at Fitzbillies to pick up some famous Chelsea buns for her colleagues for sixpence each. (The secret Chelsea bun syrup, by the way, comes from a small company in Croydon which also sells it to Theakston for its ale.)

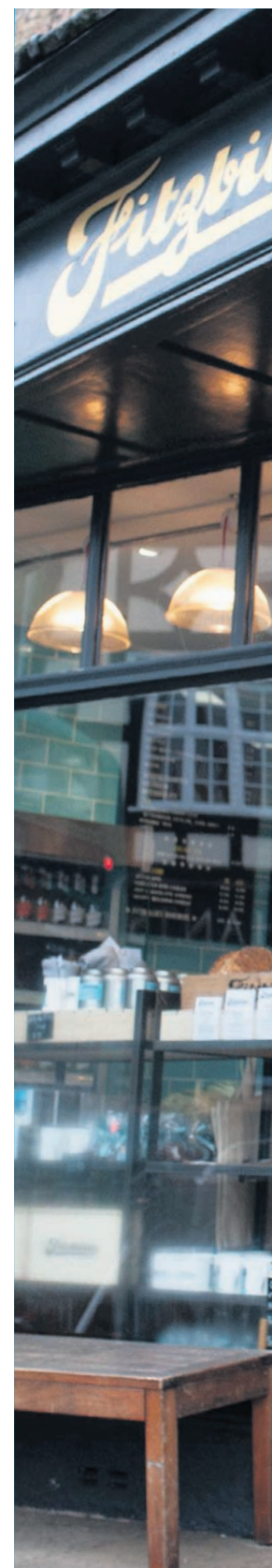
Fitzbillies is not Hayward's first experience of making good grub. After art college in Bournemouth he ventured across the Atlantic and met his first wife in North Carolina ("she's now a pilates instructor to Madonna"), escaping shortly after her father took one look at Hayward's Volkswagen Rabbit and made him buy a truck. The duo worked illegally in diners across the country to pay their way. "I would sling hash and she would roll around on roller skates dishing it out."

Hayward worked as a fashion photographer on the side. "I was going to gallery openings and surviving off canapés. Then I got a job as a bouncer in a Tex-Mex restaurant called Break for the Border, which should've been called Break for the Bathroom – it was that bad."

He learnt lessons from the experience and tries to make Fitzbillies emulate the role of the American diner. "People think diners are rock-and-roll and jukeboxes – they're not," he explains. "They're proper



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“*I thought this must be what it's like getting tapped to join MI6*”





community restaurants which work by understanding the community they're in."

But is he pricing it right at Fitzbillies? I doubt many students are ecstatic to pay nine quid for an eggs benedict or seven-fifty for avocado on toast.

Hayward umms and ahhs, before mumbling something about free range eggs. His is far from the cheapest breakfast spot in town. Scrolling through its TripAdvisor reviews, the two words which jump out frequently are "delicious" and "pricey". (He ignores TripAdvisor religiously because, he says, it is "poisonously warped towards negativity".) But it's hard to call Fitzbillies overpriced. The expert staff, who seem genuinely to adore Hayward, are paid well and trained properly, and they stick assiduously to proper food regulations.

"If you really know why it costs so much for an eggs benedict, it's the number of times you've got to remake

the sauce because the time it can [legally] be held is so tiny. There's a tight set of rules for how long you can hold a hollandaise for. Or you can buy a premade hollandaise that's been sterilised and you can squirt it out of a plastic tube."

Picking at my truly sticky but very scrumptious three-quid Chelsea bun, I worry I have betrayed my (probably far more savvy) student audience by insisting on paying my own way in the name of journalistic integrity when Hayward kindly offered me his goods for free. While he gets a generous splurge allowance from the FT to "write about what rich people have for tea", Varsity has not given me a penny for my coffee and Chelsea bun. Young and bitter, I bite hard into another syrupy sultana and chide myself for thinking squirty hollandaise wouldn't be all that bad if it improved my fraught relationship with Student Finance England.

Perhaps surprisingly for a food writer,

“If you really know why it costs so much for an eggs benedict, it's the number of times you've got to remake the sauce”

Hayward rarely eats at high-end places when he's not reviewing them. Restaurant 22, Trinity, and the rest of them? They're just not his thing. "Out here, there's an element of local audience, led by TV programmes, who think that if you're going to spunk £70-a-head on a restaurant, you want to see 14 courses and you want to see it piled high," he says, calling it "little-blobs-of-stuff plate painting".

Rather, he loves Parker's Tavern ("smashing" though not cheap), Steak and Honour ("amazing burgers") and Nanna Mexico ("their burritos are the size of a fucking baby"). On pubs, he has soft spots for The Cambridge Blue and The Punter.

Conflict of interest means he generally never reviews Cambridge restaurants for the FT. This week, however, he has made an exception. He has snuck in a review of Noodles Plus+, a plain-looking joint on multicultural Mill Road

▲ Hayward is considering opening a third branch in Cambridge (DOMININKAS ŽALYS)

with front windows as steamed as its dumplings, which he is comparing to Din Tai Fung, an international Michelin-starred chain which has just opened in Covent Garden.

"It was a local farmer who tweeted me and told me to go to Noodles Plus+," Hayward says, adding it's now probably his favourite restaurant in Cambridge. He adds that many people at the University have a sceptical attitude towards Mill Road due to its distance, which he does not share.

Meanwhile the enduring Fitzbillies represents all that is safely 'Cambridge'. No roller skates in sight, it is conservative in a way, but heart-warming.

You can leave with a smile, fattened up and a fiver down, and you don't even have to write a PhD there – any old essay crisis will do.

The original Fitzbillies is reopening on 18th January after a renovation.



# News



## Uphill battle

On Tuesday, over 60 cycling protestors took to the streets as part of the Extinction Rebellion Group. They cycled as slowly as possible through Cambridge to protest climate change on "Earth Strike" day.

(JOE COOK)



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# News



## HANDY TECHNOLOGY Cambridge designs pianist robot hand

Scientists at Cambridge University have designed a 3D-printed robot hand which can play Jingle Bells on the piano among other tunes. The hand cannot move its fingers individually, but it can play music by moving its wrist. The robot hand was “taught” to play simple musical phrases in order to test its dexterity and show how intricate human movement can be. Researchers, funded by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council, will continue developing the hand.

## RE’VOTE’LUTIONARY ART Original suffrage banners recreated

Artist Annabel O’Docherty, a former Girton student, has recreated two replicas of a banner used in women’s marches in London in 1908. The original banner was made and carried by students of the two colleges. It features the slogan, “Better is wisdom than weapons of war” to reflect the non-violent approach of female suffragists at the time. The original banner is now in protective conditions due to its fragile state, however, the replicas made by Docherty can be found on display in Newnham and Girton.



## IS IT WHEELY OVER? Ofo bikes rumoured to pull out of city

Ofo, the Chinese bikeshare company, has announced their decision to pull out of London. The company has allegedly decided to curtail their operations in the rest of the UK. Cambridge MP Daniel Zeichner has slammed the overall lack of regulation and planning of Ofo’s operation, such as missing bikes and bikes found in unsuitable places such as railings. He is also worried that the pullout will also impact Cambridge soon.

## CHILLING NEWS Cambridge expecting “big freeze”

Experts are warning of a significant chill throughout the upcoming week due to the cold arctic winds. The temperature drop, is meant to be more severe than any in the past 30 years. In Cambridge, temperatures are expected to fall more than 10 degrees below their current status. Weather forecaster John Hammond believes that the cold front will continue until the end of January, possibly the beginning of February.

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## News

# Last year saw soaring use of Cambridge foodbanks

**Kiran Khanom**  
Senior News Editor

Last December saw around 1,050 people receive food parcels from foodbanks in Cambridge, according to estimates from Cambridge City Foodbank, an organisation which has eight Foodbank Distribution Centre locations across Cambridge. This was an increase of 17% from December 2017, when 896 people visited Cambridge foodbanks.

The average number of people visiting foodbanks between January and October in 2018 was 680, with November seeing a rise to 837 users.

“We generally see a peak in visits during December as cold weather sets in and people are worried about having no food during the holiday time when little other support is available,” said Jon Edney, foodbank coordinator for Cambridge City Foodbank.

Foodbank use in Cambridge has grown every year since 2015, with about 8,600 people using foodbanks in 2018 compared to 6,458 in 2017 – a 34% increase. This increase is significantly higher than the increase in national foodbank use, which was 13%.

Mr Edney linked increases in foodbank use to the erosion of benefits in real terms, but added that: “a major factor is low income and insecure employment,” explaining that “the most frequent reason now given for people needing the foodbank is low income.”

He added that the Cambridge-specific increase in foodbank use is “probably linked to the high cost of housing in Cambridge and poor growth in wages.”

“People in low-income situations live on a cliff edge so a small negative impact on their financial situation can result in a disproportionately high increase in foodbank use.”

The introduction of Universal Credit last October saw concerns about the increasing use of foodbanks. Mr Edney commented that “the foodbank is seeing a lot of people who are facing issues with Universal Credit”, which was introduced in Cambridge last October but that it was “too early to assess the overall impact”.

The Cambridge University Foodbank Society, which aims to increase foodbank donations from Cambridge students and the University and reduce food waste, commented: “It is a tragedy that, in one of the richest cities in the UK, so many families have had to rely on foodbanks this Christmas.”

“These stories are often invisible to use in the student bubble, but they play out all year round.”

Foodbank donations are encouraged by Cambridge City Foodbank, although Mr Edney was keen to point out that “we do ask students not to empty the contents of their food cupboards into the foodbank bin at the end of term without checking expiry dates and the suitability of the items for regular families who need nutritious food”.

He added that the most needed items are listed on the organisation’s website.

Whilst Mr Edney said that the increasing demand for foodbank parcels has “place[d] significant strain on [foodbank] volunteers”, he noted that most Cambridge students would not be able to consistently volunteer at Cambridge foodbanks throughout the year, and so



▲ **Cambridge City Foodbank distributes to eight locations around Cambridge**  
(CAMBRIDGE CITY  
FOODBANK)

said the most important way for Cambridge students to help is “by raising awareness of poverty as a long term issue that needs to be addressed both by government and the private sector – especially in supporting fair wage initiatives.”

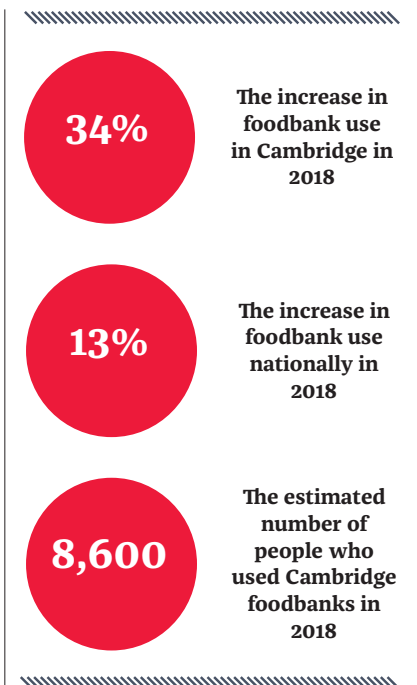
The CU Foodbank Society echoed this sentiment, stating that “most of the underlying issues around foodbank use require political solutions.”

“Student support for the foodbank and other charities is vital, but we should

▲ **Cambridge City Foodbanks and CU Foodbank Society encourage donations of food** (ANNA  
LAWRENCE/CU  
FOODBANK SOCIETY)

also demand action from local and national politicians to tackle problems like chronic poverty, high rents and inadequate social security.”

Daniel Zeichner, MP for Cambridge, said: “The recent sharp increase in foodbank demand is worrying, especially as it cannot be explained simply by the usual rise in use at Christmas... Cambridge is an expensive city in which to live and wages have been stagnant in recent years, but I believe that the underlying cause of rising foodbank use is



the long-term consequence of the callous welfare policies that have been pursued by this Government and the Coalition Government since 2010, and the cutting of many key preventative and support services.”

He added: “Governments are meant to devise policies that support people when times get tough, not create a situation where working people have to rely on the generosity of their local communities to be able to feed their families. It is simply unacceptable. This Government needs to take a hard look at their obsession to cut welfare support and realise it is them causing misery for communities up and down this country.”



# Cambridge academics on the possible impacts of Brexit

► Continued from front page

adviser to the Prime Minister in the Czech Republic Professor Rudolf Hanka, is less concerned about EU funding, seeing Brexit as an opportunity to get rid of bureaucracy. He said: "From my experience it is usually hardly worth having EU funding because of the excessive administration that acceptance of any EU grant requires."

Professor Hanka, alongside Professor Robert Tombs, Emeritus professor of French history at St John's, both advocate a no-deal Brexit. They recently, alongside 13 other academics, co-wrote a letter in *The Guardian* criticising what they view as the scaremongering of certain higher education bodies, including the Russell Group, about the effects of Brexit.

Professor Tombs is confident in the ability of Cambridge academics to continue to have access to EU funding. "Sixteen non-EU countries take part in [Horizon 2020] programmes, and Britain will doubtless continue to do so after Brexit."

However, according to the UK government, "third country participation does not extend to some Horizon 2020 calls", including ERC grants and some MCSA grants. "The government is seeking discussions with the European Commission to agree the details of our continued participation as a third country."

Professor Barnard said: "The trouble is a lot of these programmes are connected with having free movement."

Professor Evan, meanwhile, has "no confidence whatsoever in the fact the British government will make up the money."

He is concerned that the UK government will focus on "worth-generating projects", and that it will not properly understand the nature of innovative research.

"Most people out there who don't do research think it's a process rather than a discovery... Discovery is not something that our political masters like because it's not predictable and it relies on smart people doing weird stuff and supporting them."

"Cambridge should be a bastion of a place where smart people are supported to do weird out-of-the-box stuff... and I think if that dies, then we'll lose our edge as the pre-eminent university in the world."

Dr Bateman - an Economics Fellow at Gonville and Caius, who has frequently criticised Brexit, most recently in a talk delivered on Monday entitled 'Brexit: the Naked Truth' - said that the possible effects of Brexit on research go way beyond funding. "Collaboration across borders is central to Europe's ability to

remain at the scientific frontier, pushing it ever forwards."

The University has sought to mitigate this: Vice Chancellor Stephen Toope has said that the University has signed strategic partnerships with the Max Planck Society, the Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich and Sciences Po in Paris, and "will continue to seek out collaborations with organisations that share our aspirations."

"I think the greatest concern to the University is the future immigration policy," said Professor Barnard, adding that "the cost and associated bureaucracy are vast."

Whilst the details of immigration plans after Brexit have yet to be determined, freedom of movement is one of Prime Minister Theresa May's 'red lines', meaning that she intends any future relationship with the EU to at least partially restrict immigration between the UK and the EU.

20.3% of Cambridge staff (2,459) are from non-UK EU/EEA countries and 24% of its postgraduate students (2,462) are non-UK EU/EEA nationals.

Silke Mentchen, a Senior Language Teaching Officer at the MML Faculty, acknowledged that the effect of Brexit on the recruitment of academics to the MML Faculty is "impossible to predict", but warned that "not knowing how a country will be governed is not necessarily conducive to academics wanting to work in that country."

Although the number of undergraduates from the EU at Russell Group universities increased marginally, by 1%, in the past academic year, the number of taught postgraduate students fell by 5%, and the number of postgraduate research students, on whom many science departments rely, saw a 9% decrease.

Professor Tombs, however, is confident that this is only a temporary drop: "postgraduate students come to British universities from all over the world, as well as from the EU."

He added that "this basic fact will not be changed by Brexit, even if present uncertainty may cause a blip."

Professor Evan, however, is a critic of lax attitudes to student recruitment that place confidence on the University's standing.

"It won't be places like Cambridge that suffer immediately", he said, but raised concerns that damage would be done throughout the UK's higher education sector, eventually harming every institution.

"This is my greatest fear - complacency."

However, both Professor Tombs and Professor Hanka emphasised the democratic effects of Brexit.

Professor Hanka remarked that, even if the UK leaves the EU, "we can participate in EU programmes [and] mutual academic exchanges without surrendering sovereignty or accepting destructive conditions."

"We should not primarily be approaching this issue in terms of particular interests," said Professor Tombs when asked about the positive effects of Brexit on higher education, "but in terms of the general welfare of democracy and society, both in Britain and in other parts of Europe."

Dr Bateman was, however, more pessimistic: "What society has upped the volume on anti-immigration rhetoric - as well as leaving the most basic freedoms of millions hanging in the balance and - gone on to be a happy and successful one? I can't think of one."

Explaining his view on Brexit, Professor Geoffrey Smith, Head of the Depart-

ment of Pathology, was concise: "It is a disaster, and certainly will not be good for the Department, or the University."

In May the University released a report on possible strategic responses to four Brexit scenarios, covering the issues of funding, people, collaboration, commercial operations and infrastructure and buildings.

Stephen Toope said in October: "We draw ever closer to the enactment of a decision that could dramatically change the UK's place in the world. But there should be no doubt about Cambridge's place in the world. We are and will remain a global university."

► An EU flag waving on Europe Day in May (LOUIS ASHWORTH)



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“I think the greatest concern to the University is the future immigration policy”



## News

# ANALYSIS

# Cambridge and the national media: an uneasy relationship

Elizabeth Haigh and Oliver Rhodes  
Deputy News Editors

Cambridge's place in the national imagination has often put the University under the spotlight of the national media. In the past year, students and academics at Cambridge have found themselves at the centre of some of Britain's most divisive national debates, exposing sharp fault lines in our national conversation.

Oxbridge access investigations and commentaries frequently feature in the pages of the UK's newspapers, often used in general commentaries on social mobility, or the lack thereof, and elitism throughout the country. The past year, as always, has seen many varied pieces revealing different statistics about the state of access to the University, almost always providing further evidence to support the same conclusion: Oxbridge, despite the efforts of the universities and their students, continues to be unrepresentative of society at large, with disproportionately high numbers of students from affluent backgrounds and independent schools.

The access conversation is often rather narrow in its focus on Oxbridge, while many other major universities across the UK continue to face similar issues. Although the disproportionate influence Oxbridge graduates have been proven to have on the country cannot be denied, considering the small proportion of the total number of UK students that do in fact attend these universities, a broader conversation is required.

While access remains a serious issue for the University, often rightly called to attention by the national press, at times, even the most innocuous of stories have



“Debates within the University have been spun into incidents of national, and even international significance”

made the national headlines. In Easter term, Lucy Cavendish College obtained guinea pigs to help ease its students stress levels during exam term. This became the following headline in the *Daily Mail*: “Snowflake Students at Cambridge University are being given GUINEA PIGS to help ease their stress levels including three named after feminist icons”.

Concerned by the apparently new lows of moral dependency among millennials, some readers expressed suitable exasperation. “Frightening to think that these snowflakes could be our next world leaders”, one commented, with another asking, “Where’s the calming goat? Seriously, how will these students get on in the real world?”. The use of ani-

▲ Cambridge has appeared frequently in national media coverage (ROSIE BRADBURY)

mals for calming purposes is common across universities, with puppy petting days available in many UK universities. However, certain media outlets chose this specific case to discuss their perception of societal ills and ‘snowflake’ culture, perhaps capitalising on the Cambridge name to add weight. Perhaps it was also to heighten outrage due to the stereotypical perception of Oxbridge as a serious place, which has produced disproportionately many of influential figures in our society, past and present, ranging from government figures to corporate magnates.

National press coverage of Cambridge is not always, however, so seemingly frivolous. The handling of certain incidents by the national press has led to targeted harassment of students.

In October, students attracted media attention when CUSU Council rejected a proposal to actively support the commemoration of Remembrance Day. The original motion, proposed and seconded by members of CUCA, sought to commemorate British war veterans, but some members of the student union desired a more internationally-oriented proposal, amending the original motion to include “all those whose lives have been affected by the war”.

Irresponsible journalism saw newspapers distort the facts of the event in order to provoke outrage, undermining student safety and even invading student privacy. The *Daily Mail* ran the headline: “Mayor slams Cambridge University students after they turn down call to promote Remembrance Day and to encourage people to buy poppies”. The *Times* argued that Cambridge was “rejecting Remembrance Day”. Students who supported the proposed amend-

ment received death threats on social media, prompting the University to issue a statement on Twitter: “We understand issues like these provoke strong views but we condemn the extreme online abuse of our students.”

Then in December, hundreds of academics and students signed an open letter calling for an investigation into the appointment of Noah Carl, a research fellow at St. Edmund’s with a background in eugenics work. At the time, *Varsity* reported that students at Eddie’s had raised concerns at Carl’s research interests, including his attendance at the London Conference on Intelligence, which has previously hosted academics associated with discredited “race-science”.

National coverage of the story landed the University in the centre of a debate over academic free speech which has gripped commentators on both sides of the Atlantic. Although some news outlets supported the open letter, many right-wing publications used the situation to fuel their narrative.

Frequently, debates within the University have been spun into incidents of national, and even international, significance, and have been employed by some commentators, often in the right-wing media, as emblematic of things they consider to be societal problems.

In an age of increasingly polarised public discourse, exacerbated by the propensity of media, particularly online, to create echo chambers, Cambridge is unlikely to cease to be examined and questioned by media any time soon. Whether this examination will seek to improve the accessibility of the University, or rather simply to fuel certain prejudices and stereotypes, remains to be seen.

# Cambridge lags behind on original carbon emission reduction targets

Katy Bennett  
Senior News Correspondent

The University of Cambridge is on track to miss by a wide margin its original ten-year environmental sustainability target set in 2010, of a 34% reduction in its carbon emissions by 2020/21 against a baseline year of 2005/06.

Ahead of a meeting of the University’s Environmental Sustainability Strategy Committee (ESSC) set to take place later this month, the CUSU Ethical Affairs Campaign has criticised the significant curbing of the University’s carbon emissions reduction goals last year, and has called for Cambridge to set a goal of carbon neutrality by 2030 – the University is currently committed to carbon neutrality

by 2050. In the University’s 2017 Environmental Sustainability Report, it found that emissions had in fact increased by 3% since 2005, and the ESSC’s original target of a 34% reduction by 2020/21 was subsequently lowered to 6%.

A Cambridge spokesperson said, “experts have been working [on] how we can bring the University’s target date for carbon neutrality forward by a decade in recognition of these issues”, to be presented in a report to Council later this year. They described the original targets set in 2010 as “arbitrary and unrealistic”, and that they are planning a move to science-based targets, which are institutional targets recommended by an initiative led in part by the UN Global Compact.

The 2017 report calculated that the

“[The targets] are inadequate and misleading”

University’s total carbon emissions from energy and fuel use reached 74,489 tonnes in 2016/17, down from 80,788 in 2014/15 and 77,586 in 2015/2016.

The carbon emissions targets themselves have also been criticised by CUSU Ethical Affairs Officers Jake Simms and Alice Gilderdale as “inadequate and misleading”, as they exclude the carbon emissions of individual colleges and other organisations associated with the University, such as Cambridge University Press.

The targets also only take into account ‘Scope 1’ and ‘Scope 2’ emissions – direct emissions and those produced by purchased electricity – and do not include indirect ‘Scope 3’ emissions, such as investments and staff travel. Scope 3 emissions accounted for 28% of the University’s total energy use in 2016/17, and had increased by 37% compared to the previous year, though the University has noted Scope 3 emissions are difficult to accurately measure, due to “a lack of robust data”.

The University’s 2017 report also noted that the University’s water consumption has increased 10.8% from 2005/06 and is expected to just exceed 2005 levels by 2020/21. The University’s waste has also increased since its base year, due to high levels of construction waste.

In the longer term, although the University is currently committed to reaching carbon neutrality by 2050, its executive decision-making body, University

28%  
Difference between original carbon emissions reduction target set in 2010, and Cambridge’s revised goal set in 2017

Council, accepted recommendations to change this goal to carbon neutrality by 2040. The Council also agreed last June to establish a Centre for a Carbon Neutral Future, to bring together strands of research on sustainability taking place across the University, which a spokesperson described as “promot[ing] a global move to a carbon-neutral future”.

CUSU President Evie Aspinall criticised Cambridge’s target as “weak” in having too narrow a scope and lacking coordination across colleges, arguing the current goals “amount to a failure of leadership on the most pressing ethical issue of our time”. Simms and Gilderdale further demanded that “[t]he University must commit to immediate radical action” on their carbon emissions reduction.

University Councillor Marcel Llaverio Pasquina argued, “Cambridge is part of the social elite that has contributed most to the problem, [and] it is now our duty to show respect and pay our debts to the people most impacted by climate injustice”, calling for the University to cut emissions to zero before 2030 and divest from fossil fuels “within the next 5 years”. A petition calling for Cambridge to bring its goal for carbon neutrality forward to 2030 has received over 240 signatures, while CUSU Ethical Affairs campaign has said it plans to “build pressure on the ESSC and University Council ahead of upcoming meetings”.



# Fitz barred intermitting student from JCR position

► Continued from front page

and processes himself. He was unsure, however, of the implications of his intermission, but he and the then-JCR President checked the constitution of the Junior Member's Association (JMA), the overall union representing the views of those in the College, of which the JCR is a constituent association, and could find no regulation forbidding his candidacy.

The former JCR President, whose role was also up for election, then reached out to the staff and fellows of the JMA to confirm whether those in Matt's situation are able to take up JCR positions. They had, according to Matt, "a very weirdly negative response to the whole thing", but did not make any firm decision, or update the students.

"They didn't explicitly say to me that I couldn't stand," Matt said, so in the end he chose to run for the JCR position anyway, trusting the decision on whether to elect an intermitting student to the voting members of the JCR.

However, after voting closed – with Matt's winning vote count then visible to all students of the College – the JCR President was prevented from announcing him as Male Welfare Officer, despite his majority in the election. "I won the vote, but they overruled it," said Matt.

Although he noted that the other



“Intermitting students shouldn't be silenced”

candidate, who has now taken up the JCR position, is "great", Matt was disappointed to be denied a position to which he had been elected.

Paul Chirico, Fitzwilliam's Senior Tutor, told *Varsity*: "Intermitting students are not formally members of the JMA (Junior Members' Association) during the period of their intermission, and so are not eligible to vote in elections or hold committee positions."

Matt, however, confirmed that he was not, at any stage, informed of this

▲ Matt studies HSPS at Fitzwilliam College (VIVIENNE HOPLEY-JONES)

information, suggesting that the College made "no effort" to make this clear. Furthermore, he noted that he was in fact permitted to vote in the same JCR election that he stood in, and his vote went towards the final result for those elections: "My voting ability wasn't challenged in any way."

"It's weird to deny someone a vote or a position due to health reasons", he added.

The Fitzwilliam College Junior Members' Association constitution, approved in 2013, states that "all junior members of Fitzwilliam College in residence shall be deemed, on payment of the appropriate subscription, to be members of the Association", rendering them entitled to use its facilities and to vote in elections.

Matt was, and is, in residence at the College during the course of his intermission, therefore the only apparent constitutional reason for a student intermitting under these circumstances to be excluded from the JMA is this undefined "payment of the appropriate subscription".

"Intermitting students shouldn't be silenced," Matt said, suggesting that this incident, and the JMA's reasoning behind it, amount to "disenfranchising a particular group of people". He noted that his situation – intermitting while living in college – is unusual and, speaking about the JMA's reaction, said: "It's obviously not something they've thought about

or considered much, hence the surprise and extreme reaction."

Senior Tutor Paul Chirico, said: "Fitzwilliam College values all students equally, and works hard to provide support before, during and after a period of intermission."

Matt added that overruling of the election result was not student-led, and, in his view, the negative reaction largely came from a small group of fellows on the College's JMA. "The student community at Fitz is a very friendly and supportive one and [...] the problem lies with the JMA, and the JMA alone," he said.

Ellie Brain, the current Fitzwilliam JCR President, reached out to CUSU for advice, remarking that both CUSU President Evie Aspinall and CUSU Disabled Students' Officer Emrys Travis were "very helpful" in attempting to challenge the College's ruling, but did not succeed in altering the decision. She said that both sabbatical officers and College JCR members "did everything they could".

Matt also emphasised that, despite this incident, Fitzwilliam, and specifically the JCR Access Team, have been making wide reaching efforts to increase access to the University. He remains uncertain of why the College seemed so opposed to his decision to stand for election, but remarked: "I do feel that at least part of it was a wish to not publicise or encourage intermitting."

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## News

# A government-commissioned review is considering tuition fee changes. Here's what that could mean.

**Rosie Bradbury**  
Associate Editor

Recent leaks have revealed that a government-commissioned review is considering plans for a tiered system of tuition fee rates, in what is said would cast a blow to budget sheets for universities across the country.

The Augar review, commissioned last year by Prime Minister Theresa May and led by financial services expert Philip Augar, is expected to publish its recommendations for the sector next month.

It remains unclear, however, whether the review will translate into concrete government policy, given present uncertainty around Brexit and current political priorities.

### What is the review rumoured to propose?

Included in the review are rumoured plans to cut tuition fees for arts and humanities subjects to £6,500 and raise science and engineering fees to up to £13,500 for UK students, in a tiered system where students studying subjects perceived as yielding higher earnings would be charged higher rates.

Proponents of a tiered system argue that the lower tuition rates for arts and humanities degrees would correspond with subjects which require less expensive

sive teaching, which compared to science subjects, generally use less equipment and have fewer teaching hours.

Opponents to the system, however, foresee arts and humanities degrees struggling to retain funding, and argue that the plan could be socially exclusionary: that higher tuition for sciences could drive poorer students away from medicine and sciences. The review is also rumoured as having plans to prevent students who get fewer than three Ds at A-level from qualifying for student loans, which has raised similar concerns of limiting social mobility.

CUSU Education Officer Matt Kite has criticised a perspective with which the review was commissioned, describing a “relentless focus on student choice, as consumers in a market”, arguing that the ‘value for money’ priority is “often framed in very reductive economic ways”.

### How have universities responded so far?

The rumoured tuition fee cuts have already witnessed apprehensive responses from senior university figures, amid fears that the lowering of the current £9,250 tuition fee cap may not be made up for by the UK government. Speaking to *The Guardian*, several vice-chancellors warned that a lowering of institutions’ fee incomes could leave students with



▲ **Cambridge graduates in the procession to Senate House**  
(LOUIS ASHWORTH)

a worsened quality of education, cuts to funding of mental health support services, and a narrower range of subject choice at some universities.

One Russell Group vice-chancellor indicated that university administrators would need to “make some tough decisions” on teaching certain subjects, where enrolment numbers would need to increase on the courses “to make them viable”.

The future of certain humanities courses has already come under question at some universities in the UK, while some have warned of future job cuts as a result of worsening budget deficits, due in part to lowered tuition fees, uncertainty over the Brexit outcome, and lower forecasts for student recruitment.

Potential outcomes of the review was also listed as a future “risk area” in Cambridge’s most recent financial

statements, which noted that expected income gains in tuition fees from greater postgraduate numbers may be “somewhat offset by... the awaited outcome of the government’s post-18 review”.

### Where do EU students fit in?

The UK government already announced last July that EU students beginning their course in 2019 will pay equivalent fees as UK students for the duration of their degree. However, no long term decision on tuition fees for EU students after 2019 has been decided.

In Cambridge’s 2016-2017 Big Cambridge Survey, 39% of EU students agreed with the statement, “without financial support I could not afford to continue with my studies”.

And in 2017, Cambridge saw its first drop in applicants from the EU since the 2011 tuition fee hike.

“*A relentless focus on student choice, as consumers in a market*”

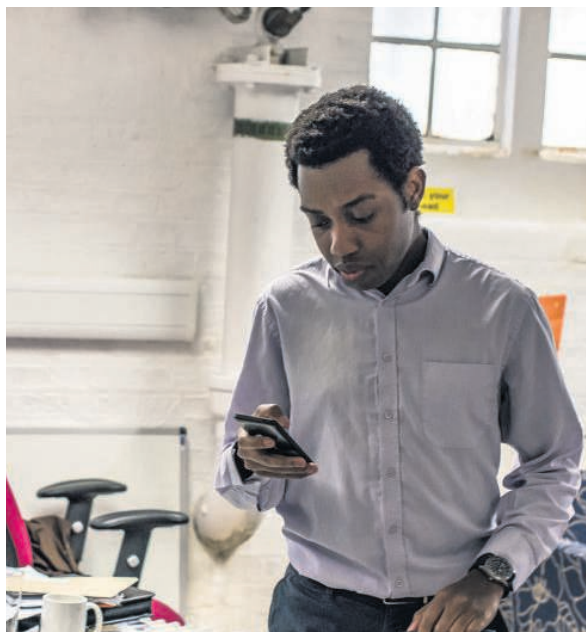
# Minimum access spending requirement removed by Office for Students

**Charlotte Lillywhite**  
Senior News Correspondent

The Office for Students (OfS), the independent regulator of higher education in England, announced in early January a decision to scrap its minimum spend rule for higher education access. The rule required higher education institutions with tuition fees above £6,000 to create an access agreement with the former Office for Fair Access (Ofa), to provide support for students from under-represented or disadvantaged groups. From 2019-20, colleges and universities will no longer have to dedicate a set amount of money from this tuition fee income to support such groups.

The report said: “We will not set a minimum expected level of expenditure. Our focus will be on the outcomes that providers achieve and the level of ambition they set, rather than inputs in the form of investment.”

Aislinn Keogh, Senior Press Officer of



▲ **Amatey Doku, the 2016/2017 CUSU president, is NUS vice-president for higher education** (LOUIS ASHWORTH)

OfS, told *Varsity* that OfS is still expecting universities to spend money on improving access, and to invest enough to show that their plans are credible.

Chris Millward, Director for Fair Access and Participation at the OfS, said in a press statement that their new approach “reduces red tape for universities that are doing well in improving access and participation”, but OfS “will not hesitate to intervene” where they see “low ambition, slow progress, or poor practice”.

In response to this decision, CUSU Access and Funding Officer Shadab Ahmed told *Varsity* that with the Augar review, it will “nearing impossible” to predict access efforts as funding structures may “change radically as a result of the investigation”. He added that the removal of minimum spend will be “incredibly harmful”, as money is vital in outreach work and supporting students whilst at university, and growth is already slow.

“The OfS has no real engagement with the student body, especially with those in most need of it, and its decisions are

“*The OfS has no real engagement with the student body, especially with those in most need of it*”

far out of line with those it should represent.”

Amatey Doku, former CUSU President and now Vice-President for Higher Education at the NUS supported the move, said “we do not believe that requiring a minimum level of spend would necessarily be the best way of achieving significant progress in closing access gaps”. He furthered that the best way to ensure programmes are impactful is through “an evidenced-based, collaborative approach with students”, though he agreed that it is “unlikely” that persistent gaps for disadvantaged students can be closed “without significant investment”.

On the point of student engagement, Keogh pointed out that the proposal went through their student panel and board, which included a student representative, and a public consultation exercise.

She assured that OfS’ priority will be to “ensure fair access to higher education for students from all backgrounds” in face of the Augar review.



# UCU members balloted for strike action over pay and conditions

**Kyoka Hadano**  
Senior News Correspondent

The national University and College Union (UCU) announced on Friday that 70,000 of its members across 143 UK universities are being balloted for strike action, which will see increased campaigning among Cambridge UCU members for a new wave of staff strikes.

The dispute rests on issues of staff pay, gender pay gap, increasing casualisation of employment in higher education and unsustainable workload demands. Annual pay negotiations between employers and employees last May resulted in a 2% pay rise offered by the Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA).

UCU argues that this offer fails to address the falling value of staff pay in higher education, which has declined in real terms by 21% since 2009. They demand a revised pay offer, as well as guarantees of tackling the gender pay gap, insecure contracts and excessive workloads.

The previous ballot last October concluded with insufficient turnout leading to no actual strikes taking place. In Cambridge specifically, turnout fell short of the threshold by 26 votes, although 79.6% of those who voted supported industrial action.

Nonetheless, last October saw the highest turnout in UCU history for a national pay ballot.

Dr Sam James, Cambridge UCU president, locates last October's turnout issue alongside unhelpful timing. He noted that ballots arrived outside of term, at a time when many staff were away, with the short window for effective organising at the start of the academic year coinciding with the time when they were at their busiest.

James is optimistic about this term's ballot: "We believe it will be possible in this ballot to replicate the result achieved in October while increasing turnout sufficiently to meet the 50% threshold".

"We are optimistic that a more extended campaign, in term, to get the vote out between now and the closure of the ballot on February 22nd will ensure that this time it is how UCU members vote, and not merely whether enough of them vote, that will determine the outcome."

James continued that Cambridge UCU seeks to improve turnout by running an active campaign over the next five weeks, with collaboration between members to ensure that all are duly informed of both the ballot itself and the issues at stake.

"It is always a difficult choice to withdraw one's labour and disrupt one's students' studies", said James, who is also a J.H. Plumb College Lecturer at Christ's, "but the driving down of working conditions for those who make university education possible presents a deeper threat to students' long-term welfare and educational prospects." He added that "it is a threat that staff have a duty as well as a right to resist."

UCU wrote to vice-chancellors and principals in July requesting their intervention in the annual negotiations, calling on the UCEA to return with an offer that better reflected UCU demands.

UCU head of policy Mark Wadup said that "universities have failed to engage with us in these negotiations". Emphasising how "staff want these important



▲ Last year's strikes saw several rallies (LOUIS ASHWORTH)

issues to be taken seriously", he argued that "we have no alternative but to ballot our members".

Last year's staff strikes saw 40,000 members of staff across 64 higher education institutions go on strike for 14 days, beginning in February to combat what was perceived as an assault on academic pensions.

Over the course of the strike dispute during Lent term, the membership of the Cambridge branch grew from 900 to almost 1,700, according to Cambridge UCU.

At the end of November, Cambridge declared its support for universities taking on higher levels of risk in the national staff pensions scheme, endorsing recommendations made by the Joint Expert Panel set up in the wake of the strikes.

“It is always a difficult choice to withdraw one's labour and disrupt one's studies”

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# Exploring freedom through clothing and culture

*Khadija Tahir discusses her changing views of freedom, moving from Pakistan to Cambridge*

**H**aving just turned eighteen, I spent an afternoon at one of the markets in Lahore called 'Liberty Market'. That day, I realised the irony of circumstances I was faced with.

The environment of 'Liberty Market' completely opposed what its name implied; it wasn't a space of freedom or liberty at all. Rather, it was a place where women's 'liberty' consisted only of their bargaining power and shopping bags. Covered with my *dupatta* and 'modestly dressed', I tried my best to avoid the stares of men working in the bangle stalls. It was, and always had been, my own responsibility to protect myself from the judgemental, intrusive looks I'd receive if I was in clothes that weren't socially acceptable.

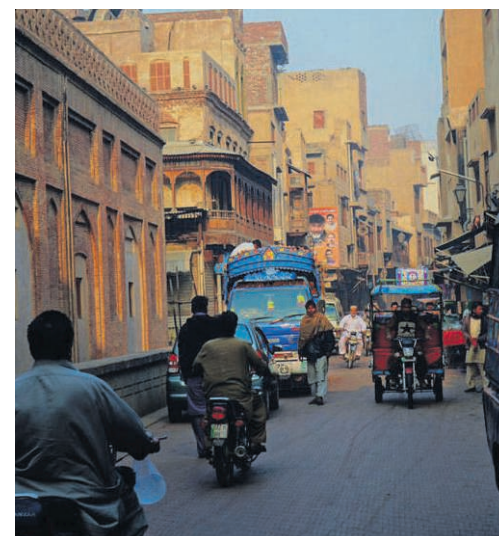
This led me to spiral into a state of self-pity, imprisoned in yards of cloth that made me feel as though my liberation was solely attached to what I wore. I felt as though once I could wear shorts, skirts and dresses, I'd be completely 'free' and 'empowered'.

My medium of self-expression – or at least that's what I labelled my clothes at the time – was being restricted not by the religious associations of the state, but by the distorted version of Islam propagated by various fundamentalist groups. They had made the poorly educated majority believe that the way to get closer to God was through extreme social segregation: men and women weren't meant to interact, and shouldn't unless they were family.

Confusingly, Pakistani society also idolised the West and Western culture. Hollywood, fair-skinned models, and even the English language dominated the country, constantly clashing with the 'religious' morals and views firmly held by those very citizens. Therefore, it was no surprise that my idea of freedom was muddled with Western ideas of freedom, communicated to me through the remnants of colonialism and their monopoly over media, art, literature and education.

It was only by coming to Cambridge, a place where I was able to wear whatever I pleased, that I finally dissociated my self-expression from the length of my skirt. My ability to finally 'express myself' upon leaving Pakistan, surprisingly, did not allow me to escape from social restrictions. Being Pakistani and trying to be secure in my nationality meant that my means of expression were never going to be the same as most of my peers. I cared about things that had directly affected me or my country, which were different from the problems discussed in Cambridge, and thus, my self-expression, fuelled by my unique experiences, was also going to be different. Although

► Markets in Lahore, similar to 'Liberty Market', photographed by the writer's friend (AEMAN KHAN)



I was finally able to wear my skirts and shorts without fear of judgement, my reservations came in other forms and from other places.

It became clear that my struggles took a different form when I had to restrict myself in many other ways. Being asked questions about terrorists caught in Pakistan encouraged me to dissociate myself from my country, and myself, even further. I feared scaring other people. With these many reservations and hesitations in mind, I began to filter what I said, trying not to voice my own isolation to make sure I didn't exhaust the company of my new friends.

Thus, the battle of self-expression continued, and it was only by constantly reminding myself of the rights and the freedom I deserved that I began to feel comfortable discussing my own personal experiences.

Pakistan definitely had a long way to go in terms of female empowerment, independence and liberty, and was not the only country struggling to give its residents all that they desired. But in England, I felt the same as I did in Pakistan: uncomfortable with who I am. Not being able to freely express my opinions, and forcing myself to ignore the micro-aggression and the isolation that comes with being a brown girl was an indication that the clothes on my body changed very little for me.

With time, courage and a reassurance that those who truly mattered would try to understand the difficulties of a Pakistani girl living in England, I began to confront the absence of freedom I felt abroad as well. It made me realise that societies were built upon commonalities and in turn, isolated those who weren't able to conform. It took some reflection to realise that the shorts and skirts I had been waging my own personal war for wasn't truly 'freedom', but merely an idea of what freedom should be propagated by the west, conveniently forgetting the social, religious and cultural differences of the many who had partitioned from their rule.

With my blurry vision of Western freedom cleared up, it became clear to me that within each and every society, social conventions may always clash with what we believe is 'our freedom'.

“  
I began to confront the absence of freedom I felt abroad as well  
”



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## Features

# Rejection from Oxbridge only makes you stronger

As prospective Oxbridge students open their decision letters this week, **Natasha Schmittzehe** suggests that rejection can be an opportunity to grow

All of us probably remember the exact time, location and surge of emotions as we opened that letter, that email, or UCAS Track and found out the news that for some of us proved life-changing: the offer and acceptance to the University of Cambridge. Yet for a significant number of us, this had not been a fairy-tale process, an easy success story. Rather, it had been the triumph of a second shot, a win after having felt defeated the first time around. Not only am I both an Oxford reject and a Cambridge student, I would go so far as to say that being rejected by Oxford was what made me a successful Cambridge applicant – and more importantly, a happier one.

Although some do apply to Oxbridge on a whim, for me, like many others, it was a romantic dream I had set my heart on years ago. When you're 5 years old, you hope to one day become a superhero, yet all I desperately wanted was to one day reach the dizzy heights of Oxford. I realise now how ludicrous this really was – yet growing up in a household where my father, grandfather and uncle all bore the title of 'Oxford undergraduates' and then going to a highly-academic, pushy all-girls school, it was the cultural norm to pursue the ideal of being a gowned scholar studying a subject you pretend to love far more than you actually do.

Coming from a bubble where Oxbridge is a 'normal goal' to aspire to is an exceedingly privileged position to be in, yet on my mother's side of the family I faced a different sort of pressure. With my grandfather having grown up in the slums in India and my grandmother having gone to work at 14 in a biscuit factory, Oxbridge was a big deal to them. I wanted to make them proud. Oxbridge was therefore synonymous with personal success right from the start. Of course, I was clueless at the time, but a photo of me taken at 7 years old, pulling a face on an Oxford college's steps, would turn out to be the same college I would apply to 10 years later.

The expectation of being 'Oxbridge material' and then being rejected is a common experience. Having always felt like a bit of an outsider, the 'swotty one' who only gained approbation from those around me for my exam results, Oxbridge felt like the way in which I would finally gain the respect and validation I craved from others. Not getting into Oxford was something that in the grand scheme of life and all its knocks should have been

“Although some do apply to Oxbridge on a whim, for me, like many others, it was a romantic dream

”

“You will feel less bitter and more grateful for the lessons you have learnt

”



inconsequential, but it made me feel like an absolute failure.

Was I now worthless? Were those who had been admitted better human beings than me?

Facing an Oxford rejection was a cold slap in the face but ultimately, a much-needed reality check. By forcing myself to come to terms with that deeply uncomfortable feeling of rejection, I was put in a position where I had to re-evaluate what my priorities were and how I defined being accomplished and fulfilled.

Would going to a place where professors dedicated their time to burrowing away reading dusty books really make me a happier, more fulfilled person? Was it worth striving for academic success at the expense of my own mental health and making meaningful human connections?

▲ Natasha poses on the steps of the Oxford College she will apply to 10 years later (NATASHA SCHMITTZEHE)

Having placed Oxford on a pedestal, my 17-year-old, angst-ridden self was expecting a godlike, formidable interviewer. And yet in trying to be liked, I completely broke down. With his refusal to shake my hand and his pointed statement, “I think people like you tend to overanalyse literature”, I felt completely powerless and confused. What had I done wrong to turn him against me? Except I had done nothing wrong – I just hadn't yet learnt that, like everyone else, prestigious professors are flawed, biased human beings too and that, despite one's best efforts, you just can't make everyone like you.

I can now see that rejection from Oxford for what it was: a painful but necessary opportunity for growth and self-confidence. With a newfound self-assurance, positivity and rationality, I approached the Cambridge application

process with a far healthier mindset. If I didn't get into Cambridge, I had the security and confidence in myself to believe that it would be no indication of my worth and I would still have something meaningful to offer. After all, the application process is a lottery and I knew I would be content going someplace else. In a similar vein, I now feel like whatever life throws at me or when I doubt myself, I am well acquainted with that feeling of rejection such that the worst possible outcome doesn't feel scary anymore.

For anyone reading this facing any form of rejection – you may think that you have lost something, but in fact you are in the process of gaining far more. And I promise you will look back on being rejected and you will feel less bitter and more grateful for the lessons you have learnt and the more empowered person you have become.



# A man with(out) a graduation plan

Recent Cambridge graduate **Mark Robinson** offers some reassuring advice for finalists, speaking from beyond the bubble

Maybe it's the rose-tinted specs that come with being half a year on the other side of graduation, but I think fondly of my time in Cambridge. I remember sun-drenched brunches in the college courtyard, thinking Formal Logic was God's gift to Undergrads, and a supercut of everyone who weathered it alongside me. The scales fall from my eyes as we pan to finalist Mark submitting his coursework at the end of Lent. 6am, eight cups of coffee (and one can of cider) down, imploding. That wasn't atypical for him. The ups and downs were roughly 50/50.

In most of those moments, graduation was just an ominous glow in the distance. If you're much like my friends, it's probably felt far away to you too. But this is the penultimate term for some of you. With each casual reminder that it's your last time doing x, y and z in Cambridge, things start to get real.

It's hard to plan for. If you've managed to get it sorted in a way that works for you, then my kudos. You might have gone to a school which prepared you for spring weeks, internships, and cushy grad jobs in the City. Even then, things might not have worked out - you've changed a lot in the interceding time. For most of us, a lifetime of academic excellence builds up to a very similar climax. Vacantly scanning CamCareers; living off Careers Fair merch; bending your degree subject to align with the values of your prospective employer of

choice. Cool.

Truth be told, I chose to walk down King's Parade on what my grandma termed "cap and gown day" with little in the way of a plan. The big takeaways from my stint as an internship applicant in financial services were that applying for jobs takes a long time. Preparing for interviews takes a long time. Sitting assessment centres takes a very. Long. Time. Plus, eight-week stretches of intense term-time fed my personal difficulties and encouraged their neglect. I had work to do, and an impression that my functional time was too precious to waste on applying to employers whose company websites don't even tell you what your day-to-day work involves. I needed space to reflect, plan and think. So I kicked the can down the road.

Add that I'd always wanted to travel. Not in the 'I want to wear baggy hand-woven elephant-print trousers and meditate in Bali' kind of way (although I'd take being insufferable over being home any day), so much as I wanted to chase some interests. I'd been very fortunate to spend 5 weeks travelling by bus and train around Europe, and I missed having the privilege to spend my days hiking through foreign mountain ranges on inadequate prior experience. I wanted to do these things alone while I was still at a stage in my life where I wanted to do those things alone.

You can probably see why I chose a Gap Year after I graduated. And it's not entirely true that I had no plan. Two years of studying Philosophy taught me that if you stick to a few guiding principles, they will entail certain things. My Gap Year Principles were these: I would figure out

"I needed space to reflect, plan and think. So I kicked the can down the road."

what I (roughly) wanted to do for the next three years. I would work in jobs which were personally and professionally valuable. And I would travel.

The Milk Round threatened to stymie my approach. This excellent piece of social engineering posits that most of the major employers a white collar Cantab might aim to impress conclude their application processes by February.

Finding the self-restraint to resist this temptation required an uneasy psychological adjustment. I'd once told myself 'you will be a City boy,' and ignoring these overtures from big business meant turning away from that clear-cut path. With hindsight, I'm still glad that I only panic-applied to one grad scheme and didn't qualify for the lack of a full UK Driver's License - I didn't have to extend a single essay deadline for the sake of an interview.

See, as a student intern at Gigan-tAccounting Ltd (real name withheld), I wasn't exactly a human photocopier but I did have to dig in hard to pick up any impactful work. A purely anecdotal rule of

thumb is that you're likely to feel a bit more

hamster wheel-y in a company which thinks scummily of those folks who don't have time to fill in an application until June. The smaller the firm, the more real responsibility you get assigned.

So if you're even vaguely thinking about taking a gap year for even vaguely the same reasons as me, here's my advice: neglect the Milk Round. Not because I want you to fail, but because I know your timetable. You have dissertation proposals to prepare, coursework to plan out, and all of that alongside your regular supervision work. If you're desperate to bag that three year training contract, miscellaneous GigantaCorps stand a good chance of being around next September.

The chance to milk the last out of this Bubble World we live in will not. In the purgatorial No Man's Land between watching your last May Week sunrise and walking down the aisle of the Senate House, a brief look on CamCareers may reveal to you, as it did to me, that the world doesn't begin and end with businesses under the monikers of Bulge Bracket or Magic Circle.

You don't need to do it all when you're still half a year away from getting started.

Make a plan. It's okay if that plan is vague and just three bullet points of things that you want scribbled in a notebook. They might not help you throw together a deposit and a month's rent in advance for SpareRoom.com, but they'll give you a direction to go in. Graduation is the great leveller, coming for BNOCS, scholars and Turf gremlins alike.

Most of us go through it, and most of us are okay.

▼ Graduation day or 'cap and gown day' (CANTAB12)





# Opinion



## Moments of peace are not moments wasted

While listening to *Peace Piece*, Oliver Moodie reflects on how invaluable respites are so often taken guiltily due to the pressures of Cambridge life

Oliver Moodie

Over the last year, I have found that Cambridge has an inimitable ability to make me feel guilty for not doing work. Why is that? Why won't my brain allow me to savour the moments of downtime with friends without worrying about my essays? Why can't I enjoy a simple brunch with college-mates for too long, for fear of the limited hours I have to finish my work? It becomes an issue when assignments that don't even exist yet start popping into my head like a premonition of the boulder of deadlines that are to be hurled on my shoulders at the start of the new week. I feel my current mindset is a product of my environment. Improving the situation could lie not just in improving this environment, but also improving how we perceive it and our expectations of it.

Cambridge is hawkishly competitive at times. With many students admirably pursuing lofty heights in our society, you can often feel pressured to make every millisecond in Cambridge worthy of Tolstoy's quill. A useful analogy is that of the Red Queen hypothesis, which describes a situation in which one feels they must constantly grow and adapt just to keep up with the pace of Cambridge life. A feeling of 'unproductivity' develops when a few hours are dedicated to cooking in the gyp. I treated breaks as a weakness: downtime was often forced on me by

friends who would notice my 'peppery disposition' and confiscate my laptop. I would begrudgingly 'sacrifice' work to catch up on *Made In Chelsea* or spend an evening enjoying the Footlights.

Despite institutional pressures borne, it may be more useful to be introspective about our relationship with productivity. Years of conditioning by the education system has driven us to always expect hard work to equate future happiness. This flawed equation, coupled with quantitative evaluations at university, may drive our obsequious nature towards work. Media peer pressure is sadly an occupational hazard of our digitised society. Social media is but a blurb to the novel of one's life and while it's easy to verbally acknowledge the oversimplification; truly accepting that all that glitters is not gold is much more difficult, and too often we find ourselves comparing our lives to the façades presented online.

It was only after hearing Bill Evan's *Peace Piece* for the first time one evening, and being moved to reflect on my attitude to time spent not working, that I truly learned to not just gratuitously take breaks but appreciate the simplicity of ephemeral respites that Cambridge afforded, in whatever form they take.

*Peace Piece* is a pastoral jazz improvisation based on a two chord ostinato (a repeated motif). The phrasing is sparse,

hints at a melody fragmented and the harmonic decisions somewhat 'colourful' (fortunately, jazz is very forgiving in this respect) and yet somehow - it works. The undulating Cmaj7 to G9sus4 two chord progression has the uncanny effect of incompleteness throughout; even the final resolution somehow feels unfinished - and this is why it works. The piece isn't trying to go anywhere - it's unfettered and nomadic. Imagine, if you will, a sea voyage, but not one with a ravenous hunger for the exploratory unknown, rather a wide-eyed yearning for the immensity of the vast field of azure itself. *Peace Piece* sees the journey not as a means to an end, rather, an end in and of itself.

As a classical musician, ordinarily, I would be searching for some deep artistic meaning in every note. But when listening to this piece, I found myself entranced by its candour - its scattered, almost unpredictable twinkling treble accompanied by a steadfast, gentle buoyant bass. Instead of considering the 6 minutes and 44 seconds I sacrificed to listen to *Peace Piece* as wasted, I truly appreciated the piece for just being.

This piece was a major catalyst in shifting my thinking away from assuming time not being productive is misspent. Instead, I now cherish every brief corridor run-in with my flatmates or walk to lectures with friends or evening spent

▲ University can feel intense, but you must allow yourself time off  
(LOUIS ASHWORTH)

catching up on TV (though I do still feel somewhat guilty about *Made In Chelsea*). These aren't hours wasted - these are the invaluable moments of calm, brimming with a peace of mind, that are so often overlooked in the context of prominent academic or social pressures.

So, there's my observation on Bill Evan's *Peace Piece*; a composition so unencumbered by affectation and expectation that it can feel somewhat anachronistic in our fast-paced lives. While I still maintain that time is the most precious commodity, our fleeting stock of it should not be rationed so stringently that we forget the intrinsic beauty of nature, and of friendships, and of simply being. In today's society, where social media flamboyance has been accustomed to represent success, success itself seems incompatible with relaxation. Perhaps it's time to consider that, for the contentment it begets, the time to relax is, incidentally, when you feel you don't have time for it most. The intense academic nature of Cambridge is unlikely to change any time soon, but if we can change our perspective of what it means to have a fulfilling life at university as a student body - Cambridge will be all the better for it.

(Accompanying piece: Bill Evans - *Peace Piece*)

“ You can often feel pressured to make every millisecond in Cambridge worthy of Tolstoy's quill ”



# Less meat in hall is just the start in shifting our dietary habits

Turning to a meat-free diet is a simple positive change against climate change

Owen Robinson

How do you know if someone is a vegan...? Don't worry, they'll let you know! Sometimes the old jokes aren't the best, but one thing I don't find amusing at all is climate change. Yes, another self-righteous plant-eater banging on about climate change and animal welfare, that's great. But, the fact is that though the vegetarian movement is rapidly growing, too few of us have truly considered the damage of meat consumption on the planet.

The evidence is pretty overwhelming, and nearly ineluctable. Since few meat and dairy companies publish or even bother to calculate their carbon emissions, figures vary, but those that we have conclusively demonstrate their role in global warming.

One recent study has predicted that by 2050, these two industries will be responsible for 81% of global emissions, while the global top five meat and dairy companies produce more annual greenhouse gas emissions than ExxonMobil, Shell, or BP already.

This doesn't even touch upon the issue of how these industries contribute to the destruction of worldwide natural habitats, for land to rear livestock. It is estimated that 80% of deforestation is

“Apathy towards vegetarianism can be shifted to an apathy towards meat”

as a consequence of the meat and dairy industries. And yet while 83% of all farmland is used for livestock, these foods produce just 18% of worldwide calorie intake and 37% of protein intake.

The arguments for a plant-based diet are steeped in scientific evidence and reason. They are undeniable, and freely available.

It is completely understandable to have concerns about cutting out such a large part of one's diet. But, going vegetarian should by no means be hard, given just a bit of personal research and a genuine commitment.

For all those unconvinced, I barely noticed the change given the right information and a little added expense, to the point that I started to wonder why I never did it earlier. Increasing numbers of my friends who have also made the change say the same thing.

But even if a vegetarian or vegan diet isn't for you, cutting down meat consumption is a great start.

And in the setting of Cambridge, there is plenty of opportunity, especially when it is as simple as choosing the vegetarian option at hall. Genuinely struck by the facts (or maybe just to shut me up), three of my closest friends have pledged to cut out all meat in hall for the foreseeable

future. A small step you may argue, but the impact produced will be far from small.

To make things easier, the university and college serveries are increasingly making efforts to ditch the worst offending foods, as a direct result of student demand. Leading the charge is Magdalene, where just one portion of beef or lamb will be served once a week from the start of Lent Term. Magdalene's catering manager, Vincent Howard, says that this change is a direct result of students demanding action.

Elsewhere, in a move that has seen noticeable success, some colleges and non-college serveries now place meat-free options first, giving priority to vegetarian dishes. These are small, almost imperceptible changes, which grant a vegetarian diet the normalisation already given to meat. In a sense, apathy towards vegetarianism can be shifted to an apathy towards meat, with only a few modifications.

Despite this, the pressure to eat meat is still more noticeable outside of more progressive areas such as Cambridge. The recent controversy surrounding Piers Morgan and Greggs' new 'vegan sausage roll' is testament to the scale of the uphill struggle in wider society. Besides the

irony that someone who complains so much about 'snowflakes' is himself so outraged about the sale of a simple meat-alternative (God forbid!), this ordeal is evidence of the continual pressure upon all individuals (vegan, vegetarian or otherwise) to continue to eat meat. While it is clear that businesses are starting to realise the profitability of plant-based diets as a direct result of consumer power, pressure on vegans remains.

Anyone who has visited the Sidney Street Sainsbury's over the past few months cannot fail to notice the burgeoning section of plant-based alternatives, an encouraging expansion of consumer choice.

Yet, back home, in my native Kent, it is a very different story. The supermarket chain store in which I worked during the Christmas holiday has a meagre selection of fewer than 15 products, hidden away at the end of the store's meat aisle.

Although we are moving in the right direction, we must ensure we continue on the right course – that is, removing the remaining pressure on vegans and vegetarians to eat meat, and shifting the media spotlight onto destructive habits concerning meat and dairy.

Never has it been easier to make such a positive change.

# How Cambridge's bragging culture feeds into imposter syndrome

The 'humble brag' and imposter syndrome are linked, especially in the postgraduate world

Karishma Patel

It is no surprise that Cambridge students are insecure, but in my time as a postgraduate here, I have too often witnessed a style of showing off, where people casually lob their accomplishments back and forth between swigs of wine in a tiring game of conversational badminton. This phenomenon is symptomatic of "imposter syndrome", particularly within the postgraduate community. Half of us grow quieter when insecure, while the other half grow louder, missing the line between acknowledging one's accomplishments and boasting about them.

Those who suffer most aren't swagging Etonians reclining on punts, but those most insecure about their calibre in comparison with their peers. It perpetuates a cycle wherein a subset of those suffering imposter syndrome latch onto bragging as a coping mechanism, sowing the seeds of imposter syndrome in others. In the end, you suffer from an inflated sense of someone else's achievements at the expense of the worth of your own. People exhaust themselves reciting hyperbolised feat after feat, like a bard narrating an epic poem, and listeners wonder how they could have done so little in comparison.

More frequently, I've seen students adopt the 'humble brag': a casual insertion, tangentially connected to the conversation, and prefaced with a minor complaint, about how hot it was Hong Kong last summer, which segues smoothly into a boast. Many don't even realise they do it. A portion of bragging students are simply privileged, but many are insecure.

This happens among undergraduates and postgraduates alike, but where the latter are concerned, the situation is different. By the time you're doing an MPhil or PhD, people have achieved a lot more. They've worked as research assistants, done a few impressive internships, travelled a little further and are possibly after one of a scarce number of academic positions you aim to secure. Essentially, there's more fodder, and confronted with the fear of imminently free-falling into an appalling job market, people are all the more insecure about their capabilities and whether or not they've done enough. Time, they feel, is running out. What's the point of doing a UN internship now when so-and-so did it at 19, and is fluent in French? Postgraduates are also less mollycoddled and more isolated, spending hours alone in the lab or

writing a lengthy dissertation, which can come to exacerbate any sense of fragility. The Graduate Union efforts to minimise stress and isolation, through free yoga and film nights, are evidence of this.

This is why those intimate moments in which people admit insecurity, over a coffee or in the college bar, are so endearing and important. If they happened more often, we would waste less time and energy fabricating a perfectly accomplished self. The person who you feel knows everything thinks that *you* do. The eye of the beholder is often faulty in this environment, where incredibly studious people are tightly clustered. It's easy to feel we're falling short of the mark when we constantly witness diligence.

So where do we go from here? I speak to both subsets, braggarts and quiet folk alike. Find evidence that no one is truly perfect and develop a quiet confidence in your own abilities. Reach out to that person you think is doing so well and get to know them. See past their idealised projection, if they let you. Break the cycle. Remember that the best you can do in an environment of intelligent and accomplished people is to learn from them, as they learn from you, in wholesome symbiosis.

“A portion of bragging students are simply privileged, but many are insecure”

The more we engage with others in social situations, where people tend to be more relaxed, the more likely this cycle will break. College MCRs need to make every effort to create those casual spaces in which it would be odd to set about proving your intelligence, where being accomplished is not important, and postgraduates aren't hampered by the pressure to "get ahead". It's more important, in a social environment, that someone baked cookies for welfare tea or voted for *Borat* on movie night. Other students aren't your competitors, but your allies, especially when you've spent the day alone with your laptop.

So if you come across someone attempting to bedazzle you with their summer internships and coursework averages, like a watch vendor flashing the wares in his coat, take care not to let it chip away at your self-confidence. Importantly, it's okay to walk away from a braggart if reaching out to them doesn't work. Your confidence is worth protecting and your own accomplishments worth acknowledging. Bear in mind Salvador Dali's sobering, yet liberating, quote: "Have no fear of perfection - you'll never reach it" - even if you are a postgraduate student at Cambridge.



## Opinion

# Family presence is not always representative of parental love

The assumption that family can visit at Cambridge is also symptomatic of access issues

Belle George

**T**he beginning of a new term always sees Cambridge full of returning students unloading eight weeks' worth of belongings from their parents' cars. Full parking spaces, inundated, porters and college hallways bustling with parents and siblings lugging suitcases mark the start of Lent Term.

It's easy to forget that not everyone has families who can afford the money or the time that a visit to Cambridge takes. Reaching the halfway point in my degree has made me acutely aware that parental love is often assumed to take very specific forms at university. This assumption can be toxic for students whose parents or guardians - for whatever reason - can't or don't support them by regularly coming to Cambridge. Oxbridge's college system, which for many students entails a termly room contract, exacerbates these emotions at the start and end of each term for those whose families aren't there to help them shuttle their belongings to and fro.

This attitude exposes one of the greatest "invisible" issues: post-admissions

“Neither bank balance nor postcode should be any sort of a measure of familial love”

access. It's no secret that, despite valuable efforts to make Cambridge a more diverse place, Cambridge students continue to hail disproportionately from wealthy constituencies, largely in the south of the UK.

Undergraduate admissions statistics from 2016 revealed that a quarter of the incoming year of students came from Greater London, and over a fifth from South East England - making them the two most successful of England's nine official regions for admissions to the University. The geographical proximity of these constituencies, in conjunction with their comparative wealth, means parents of students from these areas are more likely to be able to come to Cambridge with relative ease.

A day trip to Cambridge from these areas is more feasible than a visit from areas of the UK which can take a day-long drive and a night's accommodation. A 2018 Varsity investigation revealed that of the schools with the highest number of acceptances to Oxbridge in the last ten years, the top four are all within a two hours' drive from both Oxford and

Cambridge. In stark contrast, out of the official regions for admissions to the University, Scotland and Wales have consistently low acceptance rates.

Another dimension to this issue, unsurprisingly, is money. The lack of financial diversity amongst students can be seen to intersect with the apparent lack of regional diversity in Cambridge. The assumption that parents have the financial flexibility to drive to and from Cambridge highlights the lack of diversity in economic backgrounds at Cambridge.

Another Varsity investigation in 2018 stated that "according to the most recent data from the Student Loans Company, 93.4% of all English-domiciled university students received student loans, which is significantly greater than the 83.0% of home students on a loan at Cambridge."

The considerably high number of Cambridge students who don't take out student loans compared to their peers at other universities is demonstrative of the financial situations of their families and affects whether their parents or guardians have the disposable income

and work flexibility needed to take the day to come to Cambridge.

Although distance and finances are critical factors when it comes to students' relationships with their families, these are by no means all-encompassing. Students' home situations span from domestic students who are estranged or homeless to international students whose families cannot feasibly pop back and forth each term. These examples only scratch the surface of the variety of students' home situations. Failing to recognise the diversity of students' experiences in this way serves only to make university tougher for students who perhaps feel that they don't fit the 'Cambridge' archetype of having a wealthy and loving family a few hours' drive away.

Let's stop assuming parental love takes the form of regular presence in Cambridge. As the new year brings discussions regarding access, imposter syndrome, and inequalities amongst students, keep in mind that neither bank balance nor postcode should be any sort of a measure of familial love.

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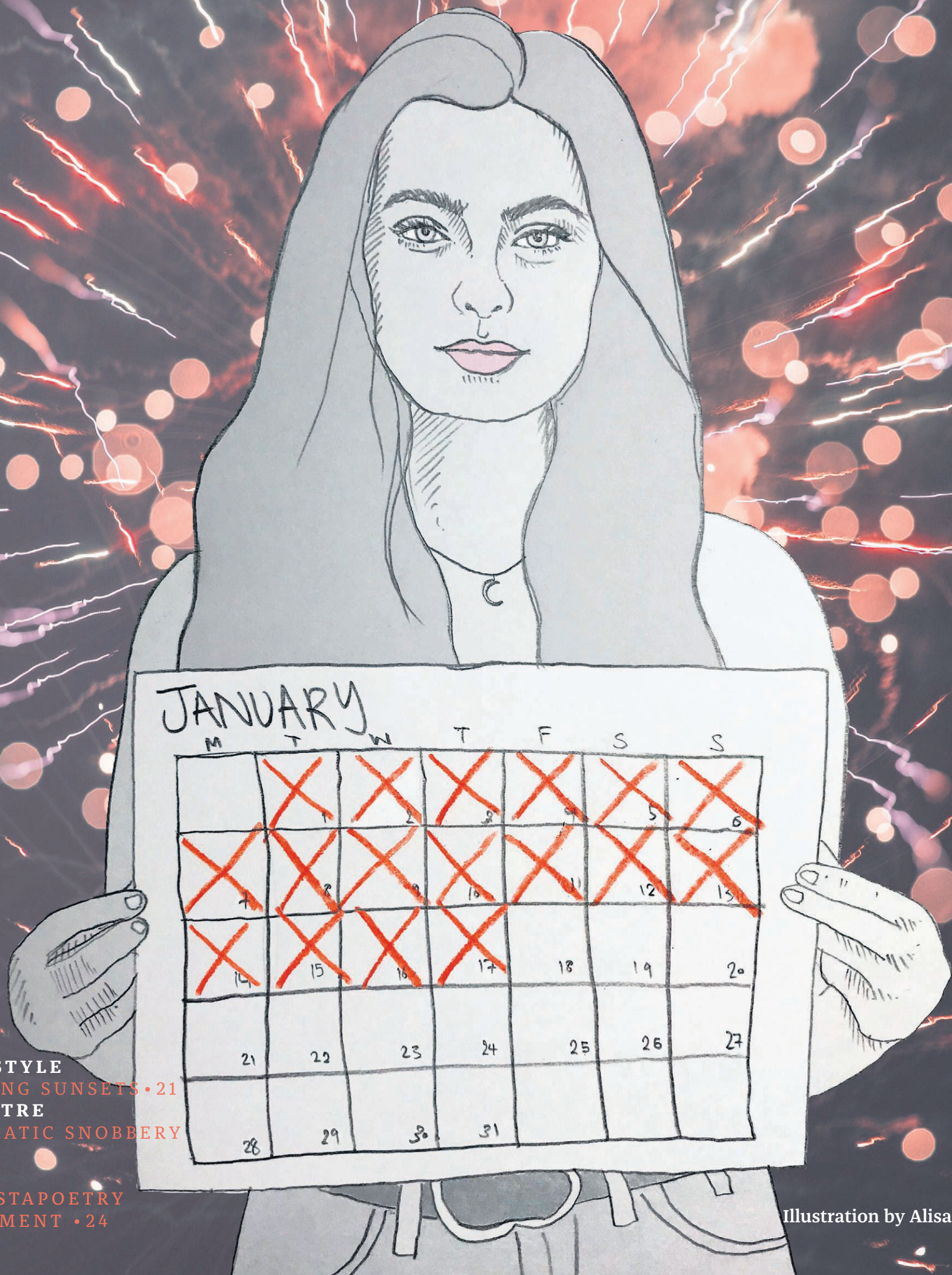
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Illustration by Alisa Santikarn



# All the self care tips I cannot give you

Herbal tea, bath bombs and face masks cannot cure everything says Emily Bailey-Page



When it came to self-care as an undergrad, I could never fully back myself. To be fair, I rarely did work after dinner, and I took every Saturday off. I watched Netflix with my best friend in the evenings and drank

▲ ILLUSTRATIONS BY BEN BROWN FOR VARSITY

herbal tea. This wasn't because I was some prodigy who breeze through. As you may have noticed, being an undergrad at Cambridge can be pretty tough on your physical and mental health, and I was certainly no exception and felt like I was struggling pretty much all of the time. By Lent of second year I realised I had to guard every ounce of my emotional and physical energy if I was going to get through it.

But 'getting through it' at that point meant literally surviving. I was not confident that prioritising my own time off or my sleep was going to result in any kind of academic success. There is an insistent logic in Cambridge, from Facebook groups conversations in hall over dinner, that dictates you must be working basically all the time in order to do it at all. People at dinner would be suspicious or incredulous if ever I confessed that no, I would not be in the library that evening—not because I was chairing some CV-boosting committee or doing sports training, but because I was going to be resting.

People are different, and everyone has different rhythms and ways of doing Cambridge that work for them. Some people need to stay busy. For some, it really might work best living from all-nighter to all-nighter, throwing in a night out every now and then. I just work better when I take time off in between. If I protect my 'down time' and adhere to a regular schedule of hard work and clear breaks, I'm way more productive over the long term than if I just were to sit in the library 24/7 to make it seem like I'm working just as much as everyone else. The moral of the story? Reader, it worked. I graduated, and I did it well enough I was to come back this year for the masters I could only dream of before. Not everyone's

story of struggling through Cambridge has to end that way to be successful and valid, and I didn't get there without a lot of support from family and friends. But getting that degree was a certain confirmation that yes, my way of doing things *was* valid, and I didn't have to defend it. So now I don't. Having a much more distant relationship with my college, changing departments, and the generally different culture surrounding postgraduate study has made the environment feel a hell of a lot less toxic (thank God). I treat my degree like a full time job. I don't always manage to keep the evenings free but I take the weekends off. Occasionally people still make jibes, but I've noticed it's only on days when they've missed their alarm, or are struggling with their problem sheets, or have a job interview coming up. I've realised it was never really about me at all. Working more isn't necessarily working better, especially when pushed to an extreme. Working more than 40 hours a week doesn't mean you're working harder. It just means you're working more than 40 hours a week. And for those handling poor physical or mental health, or the burden of being an outsider to a system that is not in your favour, that workload is even less accessible.

It's worth remembering that the origins of modern self-care lie not in marketing ploys but in black feminist thought, particularly that of Audre Lorde, who certainly wasn't talking about papaya face masks when she wrote "Caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare."

However, it has since been co-opted as a tool for marketing and Instagram influencing, self-care becomes a tool for self-centredness and empty consumerist notions of 'wellness'.

Is upholding all of Cambridge's toxic logic in your judgements of yourself and your peers, but then going to buy yourself a bath bomb, really self-care? The poet Adebe Derango-Adem writes that the current culture of self-care has become so distorted that "we should shift from discussing self-care to talking about self-love."

As Jordan Kisner for the New Yorker wrote about the rise of #selfcare after the great political and cultural garbage fire of 2016: "When you endorse yourself as both vulnerable and worthy, especially when that endorsement feels hard, you can grant that same complex subjectivity to others, even to people whose needs and desires are different from your own. At its best, the #selfcare movement offers opportunities to see and care about vulnerability that's unlike yours." Outside of insecurity is a way to connect with others more genuinely, a quality desperately lacking in the isolating and insular tendencies of Cambridge student life. Perhaps perversely for a "New Year, New You", self-care themed article, I'm not going to give you any tips. I can extol the benefits of sleep and of cooking your own meals until the cows come home, and contrary to some indications I may have given during the course of this piece, I am actually partial to a good face mask (hyaluronic acid is very hydrating, just so you know). But that's not what good self-care is actually about. Good self-care is about identifying what your needs are, and setting your boundaries firmly, and reminding yourself that the judgement or surprise of others says a lot more about them. I can't give you any tips. I don't know what you need. But if I can wish well on your journey to figuring that out, I think that's the best thing I can give you.

# How to be palm oil conscious in 2019

Let Maddie Paige educate you on how to save orangutans by shopping for palm oil free products

I'm sure with the uproar from Iceland's recent 'palm oil free' campaign, that questions have been raised over what palm oil actually is and why the hell it is in all consumer products imaginable? Do not fear for I am here to explain what it is, why it's so bad, and to show you just how easy it is to avoid!

Palm oil is a natural oil found within palm fruits; nothing harmful with that, right? Wrong! Because in recent years, demands for palm oil have sky rocketed due to our snacking culture, and so palm oil is being used as a replacement for trans fats in these products. Leading to immense deforestation, rendering people homeless and making that cute orangutan treeless.

But it's not all doom and gloom! Luckily, some supermarkets are looking to improve

*"In recent years, demands for palm oil have sky rocketed due to our snacking culture"*

their impact on the planet, with Waitrose, M & S and most importantly Sainsbury's being RSPO (Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil) certified. I have compiled a helpful list of palm-oil free or sustainable palm-oil products! Help the planet without even trying; lazies of the world unite.

**1) BREAD** Skip over the Kingsmill and own brand bread- get yourself buying Warburtons or Hovis; a change so simple you'll probably forget you're helping the planet.

**2) SPREADS** I've got a butter idea: replace your regular butter with Yeo Valley! All products using sustainably sourced palm oil.

Believe it or nut, Whole Earth, Meridian and Tesco own brand are all palm oil free. Nutella! Thank your stars you can still binge it with a spoon guilt free. Well, nearly.

**3) FASTFOOD** A big misconception is that eating when being environmentally aware means living of carrots and lettuce, so you'll be pleased to know that some of your favourite chains are doing their part!

Go to Kabuto noodles: for all your noodley needs! Although Pizza Hut and Starbucks are off the cards, Maccies, Subways and Krispy Kreme are certainly not! All claiming to use sustainable palm oil.

**4) BISCUITS** Your brew will not be sad, I promise you. Fox's biscuits, Jammie Dodgers,

*"Palm oil is in nearly every product we consume"*

Maryland cookies, Nairns, Lotus and Wagon Wheels are all using sustainably sauced palm oil.

**5) CRISPS** Replace your Kettle Chips, Doritos (I know, I'm sorry) and Pringles with French Fries, Walkers, Sainsbury's Own Brand, Tesco Own Brand, Waitrose own brand or Tyrell's.

**6) SWEETS AND CHOCOLATE** Skittles, Starburst and Mentos are COMPLETELY PALM OIL FREE. Sweet! Whilst Ferrero Roche, Lindt, Thorntons, Terry's Chocolate Orange, After Eight, Divine, Celebrations, Barratt's, Galaxy, Kinder and Haribo are following a no-deforestation policy.

**7) ICE CREAM** Unfortunately, our classic favourites of Haagen-Dazs, Magnum and Cornetto are not in the good books. But DO NOT FEAR! If you didn't already have enough excuses to buy a big ole tub of Ben and Jerrys to yourself, there is another. Ben and Jerry's being completely palm oil free. Nice one.

As you can see, Palm oil is in nearly every product we consume- but by boycotting and replacing with sustainable or oil-free products you can help lead the way to changing the ways of global companies. You can still eat a variety of foods. Just don't trash that cute orangutans' home from the infamous Iceland advert.





▲ Use the sunset to resolve negative feelings that pile up during the day. (TEGAN LOUIS-PUTTICK)

# Catching sunsets

They happen every day, but when was the last time you appreciated a sunset? Tegan Louis-Puttick asks

It's winter. Daylight hours are few, and most of them are spent inside because we're all somewhere on a scale of pretty busy to I'm-one-spilt-coffee-away-from-meltdown-busy.

Not to mention, most fingers and toes would rather be somewhere with central heating instead of out enduring the harsh winds that cut straight through your new Puffa. How many times have you made your way through an afternoon and suddenly, without you noticing, the skies have gone dark? You walk back from the library wondering where the day went, and unthinkingly slip straight into night.

After my first few weeks following this pattern, a cheeky streak of pink in a dusky sky caught my attention through a window and I suddenly realised I hadn't watched a sunset since arriving in Cambridge.

Living an outdoorsy life at home, I frequently catch sunset just by chance. A series of shockingly beautiful canvases set over moors and cliffs and sea had become something I'd almost taken for granted. Determined to catch a Cambridge sunset for the first time, I cycled

“  
*A series of shockingly beautiful canvases set over moors and cliffs and sea had become something I'd almost taken for granted*  
”

back to college twenty minutes earlier than usual. I arrived in time to see the sun sink below the trees, leaving trails of tangerine and grapefruit pink to frame the day with a gentle caress. Instead of feeling worried that I could be - should be - working, or exercising, or having a pint with mates, I felt content. Taking the time to watch the transition between light and dark requires only a simple choice, and gives the simplest and purest of pleasure.

Since then, I've tried to catch sunset whenever I can. Sometimes dragging friends along the way, sometimes alone; sometimes the skies are stunning, fiery tributes to the day gone by, and others are aesthetically average grey-scales.

You come to realise that there's a myriad of reasons why catching sunset is a good idea, and not just because it's pretty and might look good on your Instagram story.

**Sunsets are never the same.** Even if you see them from the one spot every single day, you will never see two alike. In a world where mundanity risks becoming a dominating force, this reminds you that change is always happening, and there's so much beauty in that.

Maybe you'll start noticing the little differences and unique moments in daily life, too.

**It's a way to take time out, and just breathe.** When you have 1001 things to do, the idea of stopping for twenty minutes to do something that has no measurable value seems absurd.

But how much work would you really have done in twenty minutes? Give yourself time to enjoy a moment purely for the sake of it, without thinking about what it might bring for your future.

“  
*a cheeky streak of pink in a dusky sky caught my attention*  
”

Think about it as a way to feed that immeasurable, intangible part of you that needs more than a 2:1 to thrive.

**Time out, but also a sense of time.** Without seeing the natural ways that the world shows the passing of hours, days, and seasons, time runs away with you. There never seems to be enough of it.

By physically watching the day wind down, time becomes more palpable, and less of a hostile foe to be fought with revision schedules and alarm clocks.

Also, every sunset you watch brings you one step closer to summer, and you truly experience the excitement of days getting longer and air getting warmer.

**Use the sunset to resolve negative feelings that pile up during the day.** If that means sending a message to the person who left you feeling less than peachy earlier, then do it.

Gather up the stresses of the day - those lecture notes you spilt coffee on, or the fact that you left your laundry in the washing machine and will inevitably lose three socks - and imagine them sinking over the horizon alongside the sun.

I love letting myself feel tiny as I am reminded how big and beautiful the natural world is; it gives you a sense of perspective and suddenly your worries don't seem quite so pressing.

**Finally - go with a friend.** Share that moment with them (instead of a pint or lecture notes) and pass on the advice - catch as many sunsets as you can. You always have time, even if you think you don't.

**Top tip:** If you have a pal in Churchill, ask them to take you up the Moler at sunset. Best spot in town without a doubt!



# A spotlight on systematic snobbery in Cambridge theatre

Alice Murray reflects on the audition and pitching process in Cambridge, and the way in which it disadvantages those unexposed to theatre

'Thesp' is a loaded word. It connotes elitism. Whether we want it to be or not, Cambridge Theatre is often still viewed as a discriminatory and exclusive institution. Why do most of our practices continue to favour the privileged? What can we do to change this?

Students from less affluent social backgrounds are generally those more susceptible to Cambridge imposter syndrome. For these students it's already a tall order to gather the determination to seek admittance into the university theatre scene. This preinstated struggle for the socially disadvantaged to achieve integration is only reinforced by our immoderate focus on selectivity.

Auditions have always been a necessary way of judging acting talent. To act in a high calibre show, you should have had to successfully audition for it. The problem is that at Cambridge it seems that you have to successfully audition in order to act all. Auditions don't tend to pose the most welcoming mode of initiation into the world of student theatre. They don't exactly scream 'We're kind and lovely. Come join us!'. There's a reason why the Christian Union distributes toasties instead of insisting on 10-minute practical demonstrations of people's suitability as believers in the Almighty. Being propelled straight into an audition room can feel like being thrown in at the deep end, especially if you're trying it for the first time.

Granted, the only way actors survive in the professional sphere is by consistently auditioning, but this isn't the professional sphere. This is a training ground. This is where the Ian McKellens and Olivia Colmans of the university practised before they made anything of themselves. This is still amateur dramatics, even if it is drama at a world-renowned place of learning. Let's not forget the 'AD' in 'ADC'. Most of us don't know what it's like to operate in the big wide world yet. We're not actors. We're students without degrees. Some of us still haven't worked out how to use a tumble dryer.

At Cambridge, you can only improve your acting ability through practising in rehearsals or on stage. This is dependent on being given a role in the first place. If you have a lot of training and have performed in numerous plays already, you immediately have an upper hand; you're more capable of whacking out a smashing audition, and, hey presto, landing yourself opportunities to mature as an actor.

Would-be thespians who don't have these advantages and never acquire audition technique get turned down. The cycle repeats itself until these students lose confidence and give up auditioning altogether. We see the same faces starring in plays not just because the

same people are being cast, but also because fresh faces lose confidence in their ability to be cast. The talent pool shrinks.

Is directing culture at Cambridge even more of a closed shop? You're more likely to be offered a slot for your pitch if you have seen that play in live production. This presents a stumbling block for budding directors who can't afford to see professional performances and don't live near theatres. Do you really stand a chance of being able to direct that wonderful Tennessee Williams play you've only read when there could be another person pitching it who lives opposite the Barbican and is on a first-name-basis with the Cat and the Hot Tin Roof?

Certain students' lack of exposure to theatre precludes them from a viable passage into Cambridge direction, thereby reducing the number of people involved and the imaginative scope of direction. And so, the talent pool shrinks once more. As our talent pool shrinks, we are barred from progression. It becomes harder for theatre to resemble anything even vaguely experimental or innovative. The same tropes are recycled. We never gain new social perspectives beyond our limited creative palate.

The natural corollary to all this is 'Well, how do we fix it?'. I'm certainly not the first to identify that Cambridge Theatre doesn't invest enough energy in access. In the past, students have made some fantastic attempts to improve outreach, such as running open-invitation workshops and the formation of the Relaxed Theatre Company in 2016. However, exclusivity persists; our work here isn't done until we've re-opened the discussion. I'm not going to pretend I can provide a perfect fix to all this, but as far as I can tell, past access ventures often failed in the longer term because they posed as unique, one-off opportunities. To normalise widespread social participation, it needs to happen habitually. We'd all benefit from knowing that all-inclusive events were going to occur at the same time and place, where people could meet like-minded theatre enthusiasts in the light of day, instead of after hours during the skirmish of questionably-named-cocktails that is the



▲ This is where the Ian McKellens and Olivia Colmans of the university practised. (JAKOB WERBRUECK)

ADC bar.

They could take the form of weekend skill-share workshops where students can develop technique and participate in university drama without bagging themselves show roles.

It would be possible to engage students in sociable screenings of recordings of the live productions that some wouldn't have been able to view in the flesh, followed by discussion. The scene might benefit by prioritising the recruitment of assistant directors who have never been involved in direction before and can learn from established university directors. Some considerations?

Cultural capital isn't visible. We don't wear

badges that inform everyone which schools we went to, where we live and how much money our families possess. But just because you might not be smacked in the face by something doesn't mean it doesn't exist, or that there aren't other people who do feel an impact. If we truly see ourselves as theatrical practitioners of the future then we must also see ourselves as agents of that change. We need to dismantle our elitism and the superiority complex on which we construct our identity.

It's time to become hospitable to students from disadvantaged backgrounds. It's time to stop turning the blind eye.



# Solitudes and Seasons: Exhibition review

Nathaniel Tye gives us an overview of the paintings and films that make up this intriguing exhibition

From John Constable's ghostly *Netley Abbey by Moonlight* to the country homes of M. R. James' ghost stories, rural England and its landscape have long provided a source of fear and wonder in art. With more recent art forms, film especially, visibly maintaining a fascination with the darker side of the countryside. The film world's slightly ghoulish fascination with landscape related terrors is particularly evident in the "folk horror" genre, typified by 1973's *The Wicker Man* or the more recent *Kill List* (2011). *Solitudes and Seasons*, curated by Ben Walker, promises to offer a snapshot of the art world's current attitudes towards this green and perhaps not-so-pleasant land.

Opening up the exhibition is *Chambered Cairn* by Sam Douglas. Very much in the tradition of landscape painting and with influences from Thomas Gainsborough to Samuel Palmer to Graham Sutherland, Douglas' works are among my favourites exhibited in *Solitudes and Seasons*. One of the most striking things about Douglas' works are their size. Not much larger than a postcard his paintings form a stark comparison to the large dominating canvases frequently associated with landscape painting and present a little thought

about point: the landscape is a curiosity, a commodity able to be relegated to a box in the loft. This portrayal of uninhabited hills introduces what seems to be the exhibition's main, almost apocalyptic, theme; the abandonment of the countryside.

In my mind Rhys Trussler's work tied with Douglas' for the best on show; very different in style, Trussler's works seemed the "eerie-est", with the provocatively titled *Pastoral Menace* and *Every Inch of England is a Grave* being standout pieces. By depicting seemingly abandoned houses and landscaped gardens Trussler takes the idea of rural abandonment even further, suggesting that even the emulation of it is lost to a void of urban modernity. Landscape gardens are the bonsai countryside, a tamed, de-fanged miniature of rolling hills and gushing rivers. That even this domestication of nature has been abandoned indicates the rural is no longer an object of fear, but of revulsion.

A certain science was brought to the abandoned landscape by Mandy Hudson and Robin Dixon; Hudson takes on the role of the botanist in her works, most of which, like *Single Clover* are close-up studies of plants. Flora in landscape art often appears as an amorphous mass of green, so Hudson's investigations into the smallest components of this mass present an exploration of the often-neglected constitution of "the landscape". Dixon brings a different kind of science to the countryside, with several pieces showing empty labs in shades of red and purple with a view to a vibrant green forest.

The theme of folk horror running through-

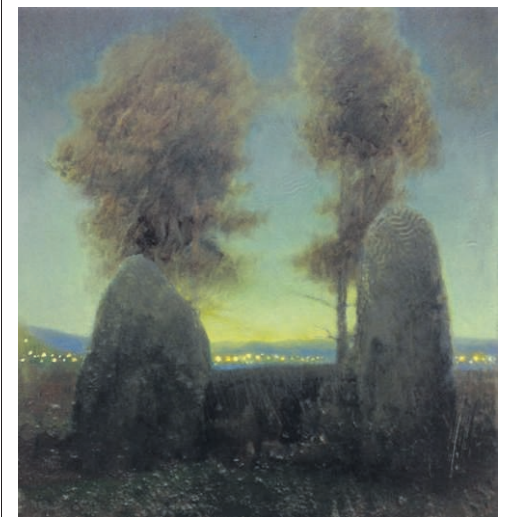
out the exhibition was brought to the forefront in exhibition curator Ben Walker's paintings and Adam Scovell's short films. The earthy tones of Walker's works give them the appearance of having been found in an old country house, only recently rediscovered after years of neglect. *The Beginning is Also the End*, possibly, my favourite painting of Walker's, is reminiscent of *The Wicker Man*; a policeman surveys a rolling rural landscape, whilst his dog stares intently to the side. The tension in the dog's leash seems to capture this style of horror perfectly, the threat is never shown and is instead hinted at, lingering just out of shot until the crucial moment.

The films of Scovell explore several themes within the context of the genre. *No Diggin Here* acts a response to James' *A Warning To The Curious*, exploring the landscapes of Aldeburgh that inspired the original story. Whereas, *The Attempt* focuses on the suicide attempt of writer and poet Edward Thomas during a countryside walk. The final of the three, *Holloway*, is an adaptation of a book by Robert Macfarlane, Stanley Donwood and Dan Richards, narrated by Macfarlane, it investigates the sunken forest paths of the titular Holloways, of Dorset. Frustratingly, the films were shown on a television by the building's main staircase, with a pair of uncomfortable headphones provided for sound. With a total runtime of around 17 minutes for the three films, this did not make for ideal viewing. Fortunately, all three are available on Scovell's YouTube channel and watching them at home made for a much better experience.

My only real gripe with the exhibition is

the unconventional space in which it is held. The Alison Richard Building, home of the Department of Politics and International Studies is a working building and there are, understandably, academics and students wandering around the area.

Overall, *Solitudes and Seasons* presents a thought-provoking perspective on an often forgotten aspect of the English landscape. Certainly succeeding in its mission to explore the eerie in the rural, the exhibition does so with a multi-faceted approach and wide-ranging focus, exploring both the macro and micro elements that make up the flowing fields and endless hills of the famed English countryside.



▲ "Chambered Cairn" (SAM DOUGLAS/ THE ALISON RICHARD BUILDING)

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# The Instapoet experiment



▲ "As I went about the experiment I wrote 'poems' that were dashed out in moments" (LOIS WRIGHT)

## Cecily Fasham guides us through the social-media section of the poetry scene

Lately, I've been thinking a lot about Instagram as an artistic platform, especially with regards to poetry. I started thinking about it when it came up in conversation with a friend. We moved on from the topic quickly, but it got stuck in my mind; I began reading articles about the writings of these so-called "instapoets" – poets like Rupi Kaur, Nayyirah Waheed, and Atticus, who post short-form poems on Instagram.

The articles I read tended to veer between two polar opinions; either Instagram poetry was lazy, formulaic and a little trashy; or, it was the voice of a generation. In other words: it was ruining poetry or it was saving it. One article described a poem by Rupi Kaur as having "the air of the slurred advice you might overhear at the back of a Wetherspoons", yet another hailed the instapoets for "defining the genre for the millennial generation with a radical democratisation and push for diversity in the poetry world".

As a person who takes against things quite easily – lecturers, critics, literary movements

– I was ready to hate vacuous instapoetry without a second thought. However, my New Year's resolution for 2019 is to try to suppress that judgemental instinct, and so, resolving to give it a fair trial, I decided to start with Instagram poetry.

My short-lived instapoet alter-ego, "Olympias" was born.

As I went about the experiment I wrote "poems" that were dashed out in moments. They were highly formulaic, cliché-filled, and conforming to the stylistic and semantic tropes of "instapoetry". My feed became a careful curation of simple sentences split up with a line-break or two, presented neatly centred in a square with carefully curated backgrounds and fonts, covering the familiar topics of instapoetry (romance, heartbreak, didactic messages of self-love), and using the common imagery – moon, stars, ocean, wildflowers, honey etc.

Olympias only lasted ten days and a hundred followers.

It wasn't that I planned to give up so quickly, it was that I couldn't go on any longer. I wasn't exactly disillusioned since I hadn't gone in as an idealist. Instead, the word that springs to mind to describe my experience is "disheartening". Poetry is an art form that I came to hate when at school; however, during my first term here at Cambridge I have begun learning to love it. Instapoetry started to reverse that process.

There are several reasons that instapoetry started to revive my disconnect with the world of poetry.

The first is the narcissism of the platform, it really did feel like it was all about gaining likes, and the messages of self-love often seemed like empty cries made out of a desire for "relatability". Over and over, I kept finding poems that untruthfully told me that no-one could ever love me unless I loved myself – a message that I worried may reinforce ideas of worthlessness in people suffering low self-esteem. Alongside that came the realisation that a lot of the most successful poets were young women who interspersed their poetry with glamour shots of themselves; I saw all the usual issues with self-image and the problems of relentless positivity (or negativity) that are brought out by social media recreated in Instagram poetry, which I had somehow expected to avoid.

The need for constant affirmation and likes has also led to blatant commercialism. I had several accounts comment on my poetry complimenting it, telling me to check them out for potential promotion – when I did, I discovered the exposure was offered in exchange for buying their products. It was money for likes, success due not to talent but to wealth.

Yet, despite my moral issues with the world of instapoetry, I was most upset by the constraints that Instagram as a platform places on poetry. On a practical note, when I tried

to post some poetry I'd written to process my experience, I discovered that the square-photo format makes it impossible to post multi-stanza long-form poetry.

Contrary to the idea of "radical democratisation" I found that Instagram leads to a certain type of poetry being the only kind that flourishes. An Instagram audience is gained by cultivating likes, and so poets on the platform are encouraged to play to the tastes of their audience which usually involves conforming to the aphoristic minimalist pastel-background style of poetry.

Instagram's infinite scrolling plays into a culture of instant gratification, in which poems are read, digested, liked, and moved on from in a matter of moments. Ultimately, this favours poetry that is easily understood rather than challenging and often values the aesthetic of the text and background over content.

Some of the best poetry comes from constraint. The constraints of the sonnet form, for example, have been an outlet for ingenuity, which is required to keep the poetry novel and interesting. The limits of Instagram could have this same effect, of concentrating creativity, and hopefully, Instagram's poets will realise their potential given time – it's a new form after all. It's all to play for, but so far, from what I've seen, Instagram poetry has created a poetic movement focused on bite-size clichés rather than originality.



# The Instagram influencer: Fashion's most powerful player?

As Instagram continues to conquer the world, Helena Baron looks at how its presence has forced the fashion industry to reconfigure the trend-setting power dynamic

Back in 2007, a certain Kim Kardashian may have been known only as Paris Hilton's BFF. Fast forward to 2019 and her traumatic rise to fame is but a distant memory associated with probably the first influencer, often seen rubbing shoulders with the likes of Balmain's Olivier Rousteing, Virgil Abloh of Off-White fame, Karl Lagerfeld from Chanel and of course her husband Kanye West, the founder of Yeezy.

Her very particular style, at times somewhat derided by fashion die-hards, is one of the most emulated across the globe, with countless online outlets producing cheaper knock-offs of beige peddle-pushers overnight for an avidly-awaiting millennial customer base. The phenomenal transformation from reality television casualty to fashion darling was aided in no small part to an almost simultaneous rise of fashion's beloved social media platform: Instagram.

As Instagram and the Kardashian fame grew, a template was set for what we now call 'influencers'. With the Kardashian clan finally embraced by the fashion community, the door was opened to anyone who garnered a large enough audience to grab the attention (and of course lucrative endorsements) of the heretofore secretive and exclusive fashion industry. Whilst in the past brands counted on supermodels and celebrities to promote their goods, today, the fashion world is inundated with influencers ranging from fashionable Tokyo kids and those simply famous-for-being-famous. The coveted title of 'Influencer' does not come without reason: with millions of followers (Kim herself has 124 million, model Gigi Hadid has 45 million and blogger Chiara Ferragni has 15.8 million), this modern, internet-driven celebrity has a previously unimaginable reach, touching and reflecting a largely young generation.

And it's not just confined to the super rich, famous-for-being-famous clan; street-style stars previously confined to the streets and articles curated by glossy bibles now have an unprecedented, immediate and open platform to share their #OOTD, their #fashionweek and of course #streetstyle or perhaps more aptly #instastyle. With these hashtags and the platform's capacity for 'going viral', street-style stars are able to directly and immediately inspire their followers, if not come to dictate day-to-day changes in mass trends, something previously reserved for editors of glossy mags, and a select few brands.

This new-found domination has exacer-

bated one of the biggest questions hanging on the industry's lips over the past few years, namely the power struggle between street-style and runway fashion: Which of the two really dictates trends? Do designers still influence street-style stars? Or have the tables turned? Could street-style stars really hold trend-setting power over the brands themselves?

Something of a chicken-and-egg conundrum, a different journalist will present you with a different opinion, a street-style star will rave about the latest brand to pay them, and a designer will wax lyrical on the importance of fashion's artistic purpose not being lost in its commercial value. Now, however, we must once again take stock of the power behind trendsetting, with the Instagram influencer entering the game as a third and much more mysterious, not to mention powerful, player.

In recent years we have seen figures such as Virgil Abloh at Balenciaga and Off-White and Demna Gvasalia at Vetements bring a certain anti-fashion, street-inspired sensibility to their collections. Even brands such as Céline have brought out items such as the now-infamous £425 plastic bag, a thinly-veiled appropriation, it seems, of the normcore-come-expensively-normal turn that fashion trends have recently been taking. So why has this genre of street-style become such a game-changer? Why does it hold such power?

The idealist in me likes to think that the millennial consumers of platforms such as Instagram represent a more politically-engaged, socially-curious and culturally-aware audience than ever before. Some of the biggest style Influencers such as Adwoa Aboah, Ashley Graham, Halima Aden and even Sinéad Burke are emulated not only for their unique styles but also, if not more so, for their voice, which they use to promote equality and diversity within the industry. In turn, it would appear that slowly but surely, brands are responding in kind. Designers such as Maria Grazia Chiuri at Dior have taken on quite explicitly political tones in their runway shows (sure enough followed by vast social media coverage and engagement); designers across the board supported Oscar-attendees in their all-black dress code as a show of solidarity with the #MeToo movement; more and more brands have renounced the use of real fur in their collections.

The cynic in me, however, is all too aware that with the newly young customer base also brings with it a hunger for celebrity status,



▲ Influencers carefully construct every facade of their online presence (ALISA SANTIKARN)

as well as the often hushed-up lucrative potential for these style influencers. Ultimately, an influencer is at the whim of, or at least susceptible to, the highest bidder, invariably one of the already well-established and recognisable brands. So where does that leave the lesser-known, new faces of fashion?

One of the most attractive things about street-style was always the unknown, unexpected labels and designers you might come across, as well as the novel and organic way in which people put their outfits together. But with the rise of endorsements, and the very lucrative price tag they entail (Hopper HQ's Instagram rich list 2018 reports that Camila Coelho earns up to \$10,750 per post, Kylie Jenner up to \$1,000,000), is creativity slowly slipping through the commercial cracks? Is the obsession with celebrity constraining creative freedom? Are the dismissals of the likes of Raf Simons at Calvin Klein and appointments such as Hedi Slimane at Céline indicative of a pressure for brands to streamline their image into a more digestible, accessible package that a maximum of influencers will wear, and thus a maximum of potential clients will see?

Finding the balance between commercial

success and creative credibility has long been a struggle for labels, classically setting the creative intentions of their creative direction against the financial goals of their owners. But for those who regard the industry as a much-needed cradle of creative innovation, the newly-found financial investment potential of the street-style influencer may well pose a threat of flattening creative diversity into celebrity blandness. That said, the viral potential of social media is perhaps just as enticing as it is threatening; never before have labels had the chance to grow their fan base so quickly. Jaquemus, for instance, almost completely grew his brand and image via Instagram, dressing his friends and now celebrities in his sun-kissed designs. He is now a much-anticipated slot in the Paris Fashion Week calendar.

It appears the industry has not yet decided whether the social media star really could pose a threat, instead choosing to reap its many rewards. We can but hope, then, that the platform's potential to promote individuality and creativity and to create a space for marginalised voices to be heard is not trumped by its commercial promise.



# Almost *The Favourite*

**Madeleine Pulman-Jones** is largely impressed by Lanthimos' saga of love and power in the court of Queen Anne

*Directed by Yorgos Lanthimos Starring Olivia Colman, Emma Stone, Rachel Weisz Released 1 January*

Controversial auteur Yorgos Lanthimos always wants to make an impression, and his latest, absurdist comedy drama might be his most impressive yet. *The Favourite's* impressions range from the abstract to the viscerally physical. Its soundtrack pulsates with violently flamboyant string crescendos, and neither Emma Stone nor Rachel Weisz's face makes it through the film without battle scars. Whether Lanthimos has made the impression he intended is doubtful. But even if the film fails to pack the desired punch, it doesn't stop you leaving the cinema flushed and aching – perhaps not bruised, but feeling as though someone on the street had bumped into you hard, and run off without saying sorry.

A subversive queer period piece with echoes of Sally Potter's *Orlando* and Rouben Mamoulian's *Queen Christina*, *The Favourite* centres on the love triangle and power struggle between Queen Anne (Olivia Colman), her

confidante and secret lover Sarah Churchill (Rachel Weisz), and Sarah's ruthlessly ambitious cousin, Abigail Hill (Emma Stone). Set in 1708 when Britain was at war with the French, Sarah is apparently ruling the kingdom through Anne, making decisions for the sickly and weak-willed monarch, who would rather sit around eating cake and playing with her rabbits than concerning herself with affairs of state. This already tumultuous relationship is threatened when Sarah's cousin Abigail, penniless and fallen from grace, arrives at court in search of employment. After discovering the Queen's secret affair with Sarah, Abigail works her way up from scullery maid to Sarah's lady-in-waiting, and turns her attentions to wooing the queen away from her cousin, and winning back the coveted title of 'Lady'.

Shot in Lanthimos's trademark deadpan style, *The Favourite* is rightly gaining traction for its groundbreaking portrayal of female sexuality, both in an historical and contemporary context. Yet what is more striking than the film's queer love scenes, which are numerous and steamy, is its subtle yet total subversion of gender dominance in narrative. *The Favourite* does away almost entirely with male characters, pushing them to the side-lines, with doormen and subservient politicians frequently waiting in porticos or at the side of women, robbed of their social and cinematic agency. In Lanthimos's early

modern England, costumed by the wonderful Sandy Powell, who also worked on *Orlando*, men wear wigs and makeup to "be pretty," and women go bare-faced without a hint of self-consciousness. In one scene, Anne presents her makeup to Sarah before meeting the Russian ambassador – "Do you like it?" she asks, to which Sarah replies with equal measures of pity and irritation, "you look like a badger," before adding affectionately, "I will manage this".

Though the look of Lanthimos's film has, as his films often do, a tendency to seem demonstratively auteur, his motion-sickness inducing use of cross-fades and sweeping wide-angle shots are entirely affecting, giving the viewer the feeling that they too are Rachel Weisz being flung around at a ball, or Colman and Stone rolling around on the floor in hysterics. Pacing, always a challenge for directors who are insistent on unnatural line delivery, is patchy, with some scenes, particularly those of Stone and Colman, falling flat after several minutes. However, the relentless drive of both Lanthimos's vision and a stunning supporting performance from Rachel Weisz ultimately prevent the film from running out of steam.

*The Favourite* is Weisz's second Lanthimos feature, returning to the avant-garde roots she cultivated at Cambridge, where she founded the experimental theatre company Talking Tongues. While Colman is unusually tender as Queen Anne, she lacks the complexity de-

manded of her by Tony McNamara and Deborah Davis's intricate script, and Emma Stone, a welcome source of energy throughout, is unable to make a complete departure from her self-consciously comedic performance style.

Ultimately, neither Colman nor Stone, a misjudged casting choice despite a flawless English accent, manage to plausibly and affectingly exist in Lanthimos's bizarre universe. That said, the romances, particularly between Anne and Sarah, never lose credibility. But where Colman and Stone stumble at the last hurdle, Weisz jumps triumphantly up and over into a rarely explored mode of performance, combining tonal nuance with dry delivery, playing against her naturally soft demeanour just enough to frighten you when she suggests, "let's shoot something".

I was surprised to find that the audience found such dry humour far less funny than the sillier lewd jokes that pepper the film – apparently, the fact that people in the past were just as bawdy as we think we are is still a novelty. *The Favourite* is disquietingly funny, unsettlingly out of control, and impressively nuanced.

Even if Lanthimos's ambition is what causes the film to finally fall short, better that he made the leap in the first place than add yet another cookie-cutter period film to the already bursting shelves of British period cinema. While perhaps not a firm 'favourite', Lanthimos's drama is a deserving heir to films such as *All About Eve* and *The Bitter Tears of Petra Von Kant*, and hopefully constitutes a move toward films about flawed women as flawed people, and away from lazily drawn caricatures of womanhood.

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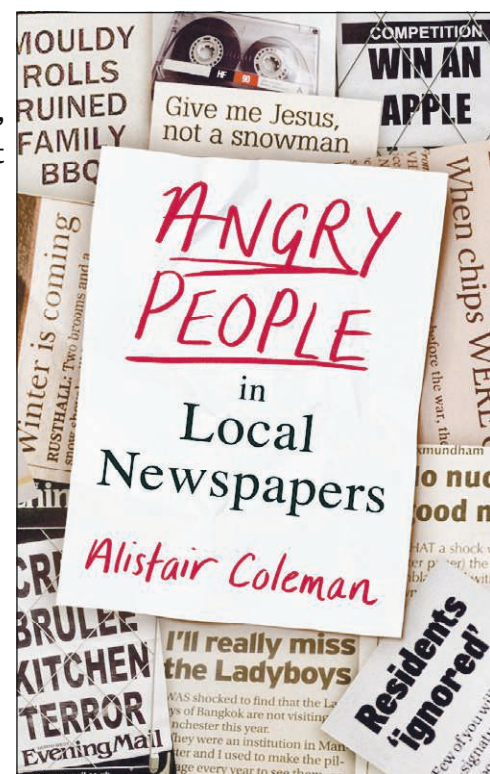


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# Screens are alive with the sound of music

As part of her column on music in the visual arts, Lottie Reeder brings soundtracks to the forefront of award-winning films

One of the most important things for me in film is a good soundtrack. Whether it is to convey emotion or demonstrate the passing of time, the choice of music is vital to my enjoyment and appreciation of the film as a whole.

In terms of music, the Academy Awards, Golden Globes and BAFTAs only reward scores and original songs in film, leaving only the Grammys to acknowledge 'compilation soundtracks', where the music is not entirely original.

While original music compliments the purpose of the film directly, often a choice of a pre-existing song gives the film an authenticity, particularly if a recognisable song is chosen – as if the characters are living like us through the music we listen to.

## Between the Bars - Elliott Smith

*Good Will Hunting*

This is particularly the case of my first choice, 'Between the Bars', from the Academy Award Winning *Good Will Hunting*. The song plays in its entirety, with the characters interacting naturally, as if it had been put on in the bedroom. It is the perfect song to compliment an intimate scene; we see a snapshot of life and humanity from the characters- the simplicity of the acoustic guitar and single vocal are haunting and melancholic. While the music is atmospheric, the lyrics embody the intimacy of the interaction and the purpose of the relationship for Damon's character: to escape reality, "forget all about/ The pressure of days/ I'll make you okay and drive them away/ The images stuck in your head". 'Between the Bars' is one of six songs by Elliott Smith in the soundtrack, but stands out the most, as it is most reflective of the film. What makes the film a favourite of mine is its presentation of human life and human issues. 'Between the Bars' mirrors the futile human attempt to find salvation in someone else.

## Everybody's Free - Rozalla

*Romeo and Juliet*

In this multi-BAFTA winning film, the fiction of the universe that Baz Luhrmann creates is heightened, when 'Everybody's Free', "one of the biggest dance anthems of the 1990s", becomes a gospel wedding song. Quindon Tarver leads the choir in a beautiful cover of the song, as Romeo and Juliet are married. The use of this song is very effective in the film. Firstly, as the wedding scene begins with the choir singing, the source of the music shown, and as they sing in an opulent church, the beauty of the wedding scene is heightened by the echoing vibrato of the choir and smooth runs of Tarver. Secondly, it em-



▲Emma Watson in the 'We Are Infinite' scene from *Perks of Being a Wallflower* (YOUTUBE/MOVIECLIPS)

bodies the Shakespearean tragic irony, central to Romeo and Juliet, as 'Everybody's Free/to feel good' is far from the reality of the story. This irony is heightened as the choir lower their voices, layering Friar Lawrence's 'These violent delights/have violent ends' over the top, the two contrasting messages creating the absurd tension that the film is revered for.

## Ain't No Sunshine - Bill Withers

*Notting Hill*

Also a BAFTA winning film, *Notting Hill* was recognised for its soundtrack with a Brit award. The use of 'Ain't No Sunshine' compliments the hollow heartache experienced as time passes by Grant's character. As he walks through the market, the scene is dynamic: the seasons change and the people move forward. While this takes place, the stagnation of his feelings is emphasised by the continuation of the song. It is the perfect showcase of how the world moves on even when we are grieving. The deep bass notes create a heaving lulling sensation, as he moves rhythmically through the changing scene.

## Young and Beautiful - Lana Del Rey

*The Great Gatsby*

Lana Del Rey's track is an example of a particularly effective original song. Working with the director, Baz Luhrmann, the desperation in the lyrics and the value of the superficial is the perfect accompaniment to the adaptation of F. Scott Fitzgerald's novel. The lyrics assert the characters' material fulfilment, yet the emphasis is on the fear of rejection in the '20s culture. The song fits into Lana Del Rey's discography perfectly and her persona projects through the song, as well as her haunting voice. The song accompanies a happy reunion, but the foreboding foreshadowing is evident, much like the use of 'Everybody's Free' in *Romeo and Juliet*.

## Heroes - David Bowie

*The Perks of Being a Wallflower*

Finally, while not Academy level, *Perks of Being a Wallflower* has a wide range of accolades. It is a favourite of mine, significantly for the soundtrack, which uses songs contemporary to its '90s setting. 'Heroes', by David Bowie, appears twice in the film, both to signify social breakthroughs for introverted Charlie (Logan Lerman). The scene is meant to embody feeling 'infinite', and coupled with 'Heroes', it achieves the euphoric sensation described in the book. The song makes the ambiguous ending appear a happy one, as the freedom and hopefulness of the song are a warming accompaniment to the scene.

▼Carey Mulligan in *The Great Gatsby* (YOUTUBE/LAUREN NICOLE)



“The song is the perfect showcase of how the world moves on whilst we grieve loss”



# Science

## Looking back on a year of groundbreaking research in Cambridge

Cambridge's scientific community saw many landmark events in 2018. **Thea Elvin, Marco Oechsner and Zak Lakota-Baldwin** share some of the most notable moments and developments of the past year.

Professor Klenerman is probably best known for developing next-generation sequencing (NGS) together with Prof. Shankar Balasubramanian, for which they were awarded a Royal Medal this year. They follow in the footsteps of the great legacy Cambridge has in genetics research. By using fluorescent labeling of nucleotides, Klenerman and Balasubramanian were able to develop a method allowing rapid sequencing of the whole genome, and has been extended into such applications as RNA-Seq, Ribo-Seq, and single-cell sequencing, now laboratory staples. They both founded Solexa in 1998, a company which was then acquired by Illumina in 2007, the major provider of NGS equipment.

For this work he has been honoured as a Knight Bachelor in the 2019 New Year Honours for "services to Science and the Development of High Speed DNA Sequencing Technology." Previously, he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 2012, and a Fellow of the Academy of Medical Sciences in 2015. Professor Klenerman was an undergraduate at Christ's, and earned his PhD in chemistry at Churchill.

Professor Zernicka-Goetz made headlines in 2016 when her group was able to grow human embryos *in vitro* for up to 13 days (nearly double what was possible before). In 2018, they built on this major breakthrough, by creating murine embryo-like structures from embryonic and extra-embryonic stem cells. For the first time, the necessary environment for the embryo to develop is formed by the extra-embryonic stem cells in culture, not requiring any other scaffolding to

achieve the assembly of these cells into an artificial embryo capable of gastrulation.

This will allow her group, and other scientists, to investigate the crucial early events in the development of the embryo, what has long been thought of as a 'black box'. Professor Zernicka-Goetz came to Cambridge in 1995 as a postdoc in Prof. Martin Evan's group, and has been leading her own research group since 1997.

A significant breakthrough came from a group of Cambridge scientists in the form of the world's first artificial placenta. This 3D "organoid", derived from the placental cells of aborted fetuses, gives researchers a tool with which to study developmental abnormalities and complications during pregnancy. Miscarriages or pre-eclampsia have remained medical mysteries, as scientists were limited by the lack of an adequate experimental model.

Though only a millimetre in diameter, this mini-placenta acts as a suitable stand-in, producing proteins that give a positive result on a pregnancy test. It can therefore be used to further investigate the interactions between the various maternal and foetal cells. It is hoped that this study will lay the foundations for further understanding and progress towards preventing complications in pregnancy.

In March 2018, Cambridge made international headlines following the death of arguably its most famous alumnus. Professor Stephen Hawking, famed for his work on black holes and the discovery of Hawking radiation, passed away at the age of 76. The month after his death his final paper, "A Smooth Exit from Eternal Inflation?", was published in the Journal of High Energy Physics, and deals with the idea of the multiverse.

Eternal inflation, in which inflation caused by the Big Bang is hypothesized to carry on forever, leads to the idea of an infinite number of universes. These universes form in patches where this inflating space slows down and should



▲ **Hawking's final paper deals with the idea of the multiverse**  
(NASA)

be able to form in infinite numbers, however these infinite quantities cause mathematical problems. Hawking's highly theoretical final paper proposes ways in which boundaries on these infinite universes could be defined, paving the way for future work in the area - a fitting legacy for the acclaimed theoretical physicist.

Recognition for another Cambridge alumnus came in the form of the Nobel Prize in Chemistry, which was awarded to Sir Greg Winter in October. The current master of Trinity College was awarded the prize for his pioneering work in directed evolution of antibodies.

Winter's research is centred around using protein engineering techniques similar to the process of natural selection. "Phage display" uses viruses like fish hooks to select antibodies attached to target proteins, in an iterative process that eventually evolves antibodies adept at tackling a certain disease. This led to the production of the first pharmaceutical product based on antibodies, adalimumab (trade name Humira), which was initially used to treat arthritis. Using a directed evolution approach, a new generation of pharmaceuticals is being produced with hopes that one day they might be able to help cure diseases such as Alzheimer's.

August 2018 saw some ups and downs in quick succession for Cambridge Professor of Mathematics Caucher Birkar, who received a Fields Medal at the International Congress of Mathematicians for his contributions to algebraic geometry, only to have it stolen less than an hour later. Fortunately, a replacement was arranged shortly afterwards, bringing the

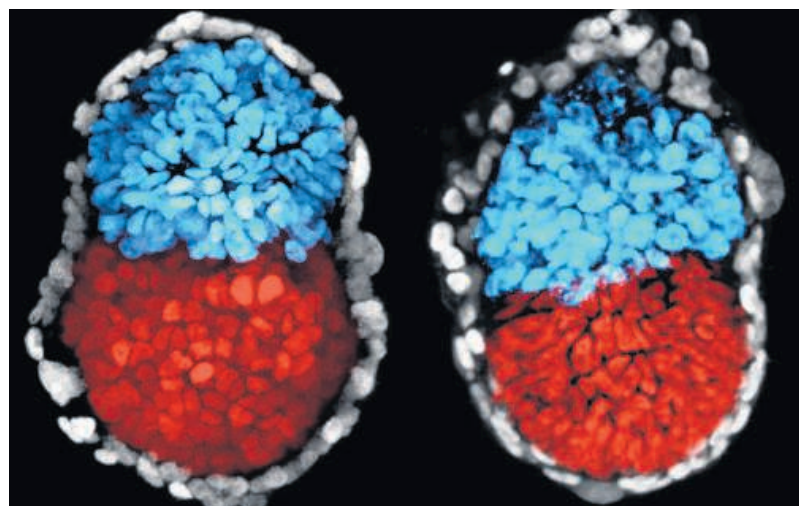
▼ **Iranian mathematician Caucher Birkar receiving his Fields medal**  
(TÂNIA RÊGO/AGÊNCIA BRASIL)

story to a happy conclusion.

The Fields Medal is the most prestigious honour in mathematics, equivalent to a Nobel Prize in terms of standing. Birkar, who came to the UK as a refugee from the Kurdistan Province of Iran two decades ago, noted in his acceptance speech how unlikely a place his war-torn homeland was for a young person to develop an interest in mathematics. Of his Kurdish compatriots, he said "I'm hoping this news will put a smile on the faces of those 40 million people".



◀ **The artificial embryo's stem cells (left) look almost identical to those of a real, four-day old mouse embryo**  
(ZERNICKA-GOETZ LAB)





# Only universal healthcare can avert the dystopian future of uncontrolled gene editing

**Gianmarco Raddi** argues that without universal health care and international regulation, genetic treatments risk deepening social inequalities

What was Dr. He Jiankui thinking as he walked onto the stage of the Second International Summit on Human Genome Editing in Hong Kong? He is the Chinese scientist responsible for Lulu and Nana, the CRISPR-edited twin baby girls. The purported goal of this controversial clinical trial? To decrease the likelihood of HIV infection by mutating CCR5, a gene encoding a receptor used by the virus as a gateway into our cells. A baffling choice: CCR5 mutations provide only incomplete protection, and the babies were not in any great danger of contracting the disease anyhow, as the mothers were healthy. Besides, cheaper and more effective ways of preventing HIV infection already exist.

Did he expect our sages to adorn him with laurel wreaths? Instead, his work was called disturbing, horrifying, monstrous. It appears that he never fully explored the morality of the project. When confronted with the ethical implications of “designer babies” his reply was: “I don’t know how to answer this question.”

The promise of human genetic engineering is not in dispute. And the experiments of a rogue scientist should not blind us to the life-saving opportunities of CRISPR: think of devastating genetic illnesses such as Huntington’s disease. Former Dartmouth College bioethicist Ronald Green says: “If we could use gene editing to remove the sequences in an embryo that cause sickle cell disease or cystic fibrosis, I would say not only that we may do so, but . . . we have a moral obligation to do so.” Indeed, while most genetic diseases are rare, when combined the burden is shocking. Over 5% of newborns will suffer from a genetic disorder. With 131 million estimated births last year, that is an excess of 6.5 million individuals. Clearly, the potential for genetic engineering to do good is boundless. Decent medicine however demands accounting for risks.

In the 21st century, inequality is unavoidably one of the main concerns. Leaving the availability of genetic treatment to geographic or economic chance — making it a privilege accessible only to some — would be exceedingly unethical.

► **CCR5 receptor in cell membrane, modelled**  
(THOMAS SPLETTS-TOESSER)

“Will humanity splinter along artificial genetic lines?”

▼ **Addenbrooke’s, part of the NHS, is Cambridge’s main hospital** (JOHN SUTTON)

We sport an abysmal track record when it comes to equitable access to biotechnological products and drugs. For example, the TRIPS agreement from 1995 onwards forced all WTO countries to accept lengthy patents on pharmaceutical products, reducing access to medicines in the developing world. Can we expect the situation to be any different for highly complex biotechnologies for years mired in patent disputes? Companies will want to cash in with wealthy patients, leaving the rest behind. Either we offer to modify all individuals affected by a genetic disease, and are capable of doing it safely, or the technology should not be employed. Feasibility alone is not sufficient: we must support the CRISPR founders’ call for a moratorium on human experiments.

A sensible approach? The public seems to disagree. A recent online opinion poll by Sun Yat-Sen University in China found that over 60% of the 4,700 adult Chinese sampled favoured legalizing edited children to treat or prevent diseases. In the US too, polls by the Pew Research Centre uncovered similar opinions. As more understanding about the experiment percolates to the public, polls might shift. Still, one cannot help but wonder: does a “Gattaca” future await? Are we destined to jobs, social standing, economic status, lives purely based on our genetic makeup, in turn determined by our wealth? Will humanity splinter along artificial genetic lines?

That is the future that could await us without some form of universal health care and careful regulation. Not only within the UK, but indeed worldwide, we need an NHS able to offer ethical genetic treatments to all, combined with adequate legislation to prevent abuses. Is it fair for some people to avoid debilitating conditions when others cannot? Do we want a world whose societies are split by genetic advantages? How much divide will it create?

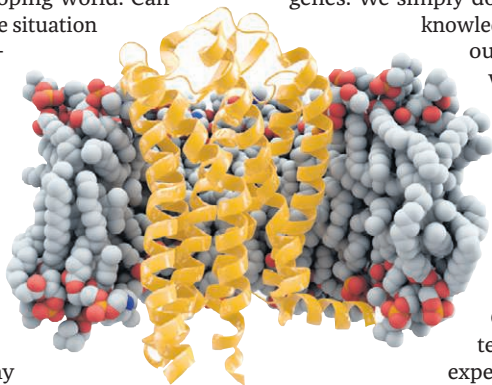
Regardless, we are technically far from ready to alter our genetic line. We know

too little both about our targets, and the unintended side-effects of gene modifications. Once hailed as the perfect editing tool, new research suggests CRISPR modifications can have unintended, negative consequences called “off-target effects” disrupting vital, physiological genes. We simply do not yet have the knowledge to tamper with our germline, that

which is passed on to future generations. “Premature” — that is how Dr. Eric Topol, Head of the Scripps Research Translational Institute in California, characterised He Jiankui’s experiment.

Human germline editing is a point of no return. We will be taking evolution into our hands.

That is not necessarily evil, but it must be performed in a careful and regulated manner. Genetic modification is merely a tool — it is morally agnostic. Theoretical physics offers a parallel: hydrogen bombs and fusion energy. The former,



“We must not allow economic inequalities to become enshrined in biology”

our most devastating weapon; the latter, the promise of unlimited energy. The ability to unleash the power of stars to destroy, or to create. We were not ready for nuclear power during the Cold War, and we are not ready for genetic editing now. Dr. He Jiankui should be stripped of his ability to perform research on human gene editing. International laws must be enacted and future transgressors banned from scientific research — public or private. The United Nations, governments and the WHO need to come together, write a treaty, ban human germline modifications (scientists have been clamouring for years for a moratorium), and coordinate the world’s efforts towards the eradication of deadly genetic disorders.

Until universal healthcare and international legislation on gene editing become a reality for all people worldwide, we cannot accept the wealthy to further entrench their supremacy through genetics. A 21st century defined by artificial “genetic inequities” is a dystopian nightmare: we must not allow economic inequalities to become enshrined in biology. Just this once, let us leave the Pandora’s box closed; at least, for a little while longer.



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*Outside the Old Building*



# New to a Blue: Hitting it off with the Cambridge University Polo Club



**William Ross** discusses all things polo with Robyn Macrae, secretary of the Cambridge University Polo Club

Polo is a unique and exciting sport, providing a rare opportunity to play as part of a team while riding a horse. Nothing beats the thrill of galloping down a pitch (which is the size of 5 football pitches) chasing a ball, racing the opposition!

Polo, an ancient form of which was first played as long ago as 200BC in parts of ancient Iran and Iraq, is one of the oldest known team sports, though the current form of the game originated in India and was introduced to the UK in 1834.

Indeed, the Cambridge University Polo Club itself is steeped in tradition and is certainly one of Cambridge's more illustrious sports clubs. Founded in 1873, it is the oldest polo club in Europe and the La Martina Varsity match (played against Oxford University Polo Club) is the second oldest continuing polo match in the world, having been played almost every year since 1878. The match is currently played at the prestigious Guards Polo Club in Windsor, whose members include Prince Phillip as President and Queen Elizabeth II as patron.

More recently, the establishment of the bi-annual Atlantic Cup in 2002 has been an exciting development. The tournament involves Cambridge University Polo Club, Oxford University Polo Club, Yale Polo Club and Harvard Polo Club in

a hard-fought tournament involving four of the world's top academic institutions. The 2017 tournament, held in the UK, involved 32 polo players from around the world and was watched by over 500 spectators.

The sport, requiring the ability to ride a horse, has long been beset by accusations of elitism, even being described by the Telegraph as the "sport of princes". The Cambridge University Polo club, counting Prince Charles (current President of the club), Prince Henry (Duke of Gloucester), and the 3rd Earl of Kimberley among its alumni, has not been immune to such comments. Macrae, however, assures readers that "our members come from a wide range of backgrounds".

"Some have played lots of polo before but most only start when they come to Cambridge, with many of them having never been on a horse before. We have a mix of undergraduates, Masters and PhD students." Indeed, the club has an extensive development program that takes on those who have never tried polo, a program which has been highly successful in recent years: in both 2017 and 2018, over half of the club's members had never played polo before coming to Cambridge.

Players benefit from the tuition of professional coaches Mark Holmes and Francis Molyneux and new players learn the ropes through lessons and during training sessions and relaxed Cuppers tournaments held in both Summer and Winter. Macrae is keen to stress the fun and variety in polo training: "Training for polo has a number of different elements. 'Stick and ball' is one of the main elements, which is exactly what it sounds like – practicing on your own, hit-

“The Club counts Prince Charles and Prince Henry, and the 3rd Earl of Kimberley among its alumni”

ting the ball while riding your horse.”

"We also practice team drills and play constructional chukkas (the name for a period of match play). We practice hitting technique using a wooden horse and have classroom rules and tactic sessions."

The club also holds a vibrant and busy social calendar, contributing to a friendly environment off the pitch. In Michaelmas 2018, for example, the social term card included formal dinners at Clare College, Wolfson College, and St. John's College, as well as wine and cheese tasting at the Hawk's Club, Christmas Dinner and the Hawks' and Ospreys' Charity Ball. The showpiece social event, however, is undoubtedly the annual white tie polo ball in summer term which last year was held at Madingley Hall, the former residence of King Edward VII. So, if you fancy joining one of the world's most historic sports clubs, galloping across a field on a horse at breakneck speed and being part of a thriving social scene, look no further than the Cambridge University Polo Club.



◀ Polo is one of the oldest known team sports (CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY POLO CLUB)

▶ Light Blue polo players take on their dark blue rivals (CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY POLO CLUB)

## Boat Races, BUCS and Bumps: The Varsity Lent sport preview

**Will Robinson**  
Deputy Sport Editor

Lent Term is set to be an exciting term in sport for Blues and college players alike.

The Boat Races will headline a packed Lent sporting calendar. On 7th April, Oxford University Boat Club and Cambridge University Boat Club will battle it out in front of almost 250,000 spectators lining the River Thames in an event broadcast worldwide.

Cambridge heads into the contest on the back of last year's clean sweep, winning both the men's and women's races, as well as the reserve contests, and will look to retain its historical advantage over a recently resurgent Oxford.

The football Varsity match not only sees two familiar rivals meet, but also remains an historically significant fixture. Cambridge University Association Football Club has recently laid claim to being the world's oldest football club, with records dating back to 1856.

However, it is more recent history that Oxford will look to, with Oxford University Association Football Club having won both the men's and women's fixtures last year. CUAFC men's captain Oscar Melbourne was unlucky to see his side fall to a 1-0 defeat earlier this season, and with the Blues separated by just a point in BUCS, another close match is on the cards. Having suffered penalty shoot-out heartbreak in last season's Varsity game, the women's side will hope that their 5-1 thrashing of Oxford earlier this season will be a sign of things to come for this year's contest.

On 3rd March, Cambridge University Netball Club will host Oxford in their Varsity fixture. Sitting a division above Oxford in BUCS, Cambridge goes in as the favourite, and will hope to match the heroics of the national team last year in sealing victory.

Southgate Hockey Club will host the Hockey Varsity on 4th March, in a match which has historically been a breeding ground for future international players. First held in 1890, Cambridge holds the edge over Oxford in terms of all-time victories, but Oxford comes in as the current champions, having won both the men's and women's games last year.

Dating back to 1878, the Golf Varsity remains the oldest amateur event in the sport, and will once again take place at Rye Golf Club in mid-March.

There's no shortage of college action, with football cuppers coming to a head this term. Reigning men's champions Fitzwilliam face Christ's in the pick of the quarter-final ties, before the semi-finals on 16th February. Meanwhile, rugby cuppers will get underway in February, and Division 4 Queens' heroic journey to last year's final shows that, again, anything can happen.

The term will of course culminate in Lent Bumps, as Lady Margaret Boat Club, of St. John's, looks to retain head of the river status for a third year running in the men's division, whilst Jesus looks to do the same in the women's. Bumps take place from Tuesday 5th to Saturday 9th March.



## More than a one-trick pony? William Ross speaks to the Cambridge University Polo Club 31



# Penguins prevail despite late CURUFC surge

**Oliver Little**  
Sports Reporter

On a bitter Wednesday evening, Cambridge started their year with a 38-26 loss to a strong Penguins side, falling short despite a late comeback in the second half. A minute's applause marked the start of CURUFC's 2019, in memory of long-serving colleague Nigel Pett, who sadly lost his battle with cancer this

▼ **The game was fast-paced from the beginning**  
(NICHOLAS FOONG)



weekend.

In conditions that favoured the boot, the crowd was treated to an incredibly fast start to the game. The Penguins combined firepower and flair, using both direct running and audacious offloading. Cambridge saw very little possession and territory in the early stages, as they found runners isolated and turned over whenever they gained attacking momentum. A well-worked driving maul put the visitors up, and as Cambridge started to fall off tackles, a scintillating break off a centre-field scrum set up the Penguins centre to barge over from close-range. The Penguins' 10's unorthodox but effective kicking routine took the score up to 14-0.

The Penguins continued this momentum, sending their carriers up the 10 channel to drive Cambridge back, and with the Cambridge defence stretched, a neat grubber kick allowed their winger to slide over in the corner. Soon after, an unfortunate interception sent the impressive Penguins 14 under the posts, and Cambridge were left staring at a 26-0 deficit.

Towards the end of the half they did begin to enjoy more possession, as scrum half Chris Bell tried to inject pace into the Cambridge attack with a series of quick-taps. However, it was their execution that proved the difference, as Henry King and Sean McMahon both came close to crossing, but the last pass failed to find its target.

The second half started like the first finished – a handling error off the re-

start immediately handed the momentum to the Penguins, and they took full advantage: Cambridge managed to hold a Penguins winger up in one corner, but were caught napping as a quick-tap led to a try in the other corner. Extras were duly added, and at 33-0 it seemed that the game was lost.

However, as the pitch dried from the day's rain, Cambridge finally clicked into gear. A fantastically worked try gave Cambridge hope: a great line up the middle from Stephen Leonard followed by an offload exchange between Bell and Jake Hennessey left King to touch down out wide.

Cambridge were all of a sudden in the ascendancy, and after a short period of time in Penguins territory with no luck, the Penguins were penalized for slowing the ball down and were reduced to 14. Cambridge very quickly profited from the numbers advantage, as Charlie MacCallum crossed under the posts, and Hennessey's conversion closed the gap to 33-14.

Another handling error off the restart handed the Penguins possession deep into Cambridge territory, and, as had been the case all evening, they were ruthless in punishing Cambridge for their mistakes; slick hands left the Cambridge defence outnumbered as they crossed in the corner to go 38-14 up, with the conversion falling just short.

However, the ticking clock and 24-point gap seemed to breathe new life into Cambridge, and their resurgence typified their spirit and superior condi-

▲ **CURUFC saw a late comeback in the second half**  
(NICHOLAS FOONG)

tioning. As their opposition tired, their fitness shone through as they finished the much stronger side. They re-gathered off a cleverly worked restart, and drove towards the opposition line. After forcing the penalty, the work was left to the forwards as Sam Schusman rumbled over from a driving maul. Shortly afterwards, Elliot Baines broke loose off a lineout play, and as had worked so well for Cambridge all evening, they kept it tight in the opposition 22, before Rowan Beckett eventually bundled his way over to further reduce the arrears.

At 38-26, all of a sudden a tall order seemed much more doable. Alas, on this occasion, the full-time whistle came too soon for Cambridge. Nevertheless, the what-could-have-beens of the first half and the second-half fightback suggest that with some fine-tuning, the team will only go onwards and upwards.

**Cambridge:** Gatus; Baines, King, Hennessey, Story; Cameron, Bell; MacCallum, Hupputz, Dean, Beckett, Eriksen, Leonard, McMahon, Koster **Replacements:** Schusman, Campbell, Kasem, Montesino-Jones, Saunders, Gnodde, Triniman

**Penguins:** Banfield, Drew, Saulo, Russell, Signorini, Selwood, Kenningham, Marley, Flinn, Lewis, Stileman, Herbert, Barlow, Nalaga, Lawton **Replacements:** Harris, Waldren, Bagwell, Everton, Poznaniak, McGagh, Calvert, Jones, Wiltshire, Brighthouse



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