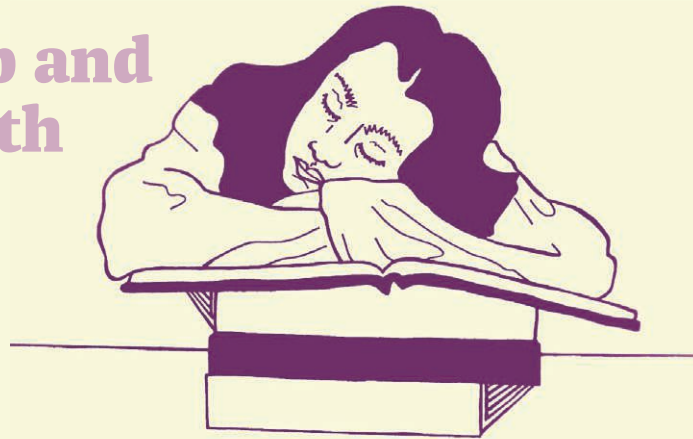


Drifting off...

Where sleep and mental health meet

Science 36



Finding what I thought I'd lost

Fashion 26



FREE
Take a copy



Clothes fit for a Queen

Vulture 28-29

The case for the Rebellion

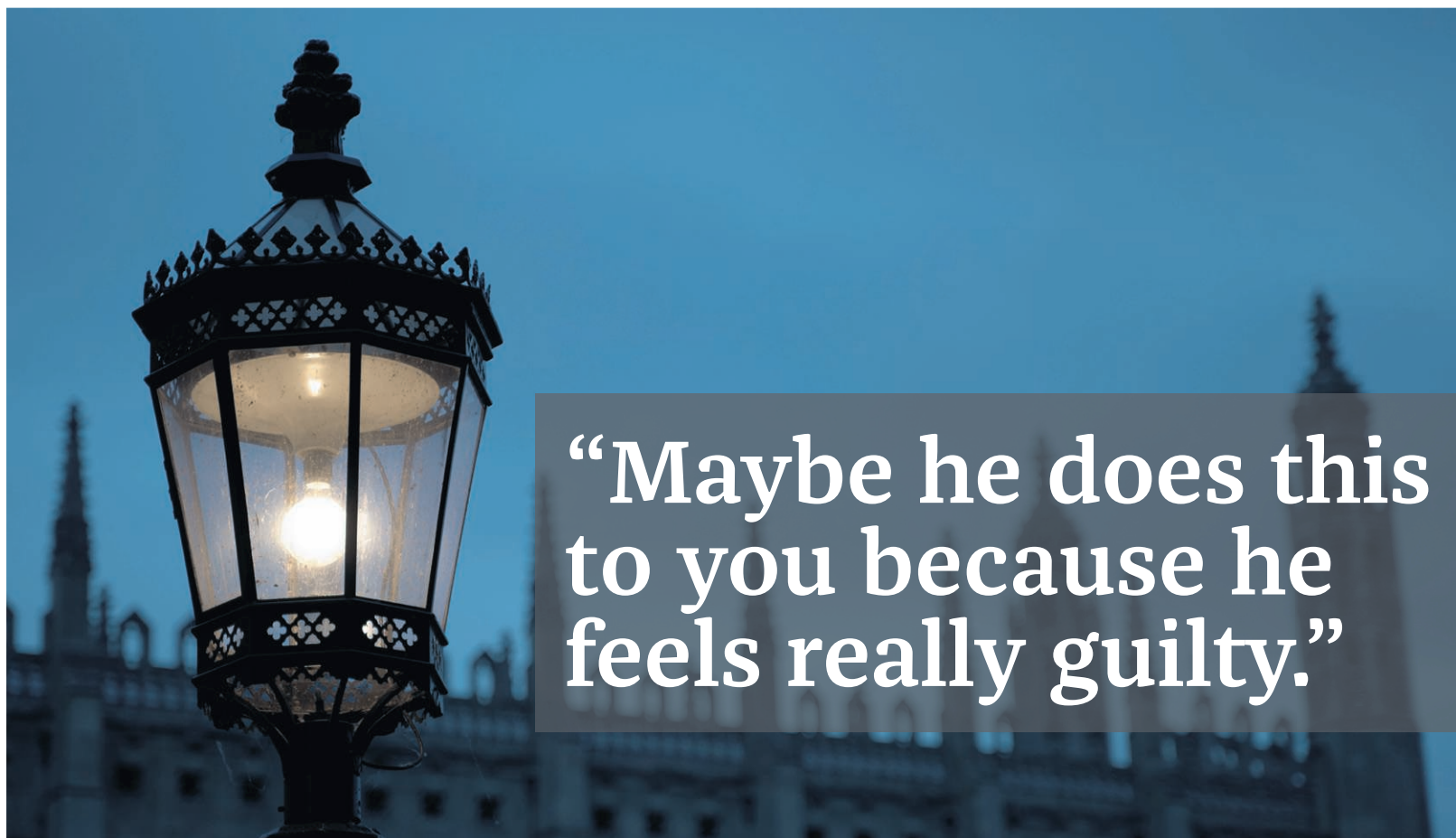
Opinion 20

No. 866

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Cambridge's Independent
Student Newspaper since 1947

VARSITY



“Maybe he does this to you because he feels really guilty.”

(JOE COOK)

King's tutor discouraged student from pursuing sexual harassment report

Merlyn Thomas and Joe Cook

Content Note: Contains mention of sexual harassment

Emma* fiddled with the sleeve of her shirt as she wondered how to respond to her tutor.

She was sexually harassed and threatened by a fellow student at King's College Cambridge.

With the support of her friends, she spoke to the college nurse who she says was extremely supportive and suggested she talk to her tutor to make the next step: a formal complaint.

But it almost did not matter that the nurse had been understanding. When she went to talk to her tutor, she was met with doubt, condescension and disregard.

After explaining everything that had happened: that the other student had sexually harassed her, threatened her

on multiple nights out and that he made her feel unsafe in her own college, her tutor said, “Well maybe he does this to you on nights out because he feels really guilty about it.”

Emma was shocked by this response,

Full story Page 13 ►

Investigation: Cambridge severely lacking in non-Christian prayer spaces

Amy Batley and Alexandra Giannidi

A *Varsity* investigation has found inconsistent provision of prayer spaces between Cambridge colleges, in addition to concerns about the location of prayer spaces within University departments.

Several Muslim students have independently expressed concern to *Varsity* about their ability to access a prayer space. A Muslim student, who wished to remain anonymous, said that the lack of prayer space in the Engineering Department meant that she has often “ended up praying in a corner in a stairwell or empty corridor, for lack of a more appropriate space”. She suggested that all departments assign “just a little room that’s quiet and empty for an hour or two each day” in order to avoid this problem.

College chapels are heavily oriented towards Christianity, with 27 of 28 college chapels following Church of England teaching. St. Edmund's is the only exception amongst College chapels, following Catholic scripture due to the College's origins as a non-University institution for Catholic students matriculated in other colleges.

One student contextualised the lack of prayer space in their college within wider facilities, saying “it's a shame as prayer and spirituality are considered in many ways essential for emotional and mental wellbeing, the college provides

Continued on page 6 ►

News

FEATURES

Rough sleeping in Cambridge: individuals' stories



Page 15 ►

OPINION

We must tackle anti-semitism in feminist spaces to commit to intersectionality

Page 20 ►

SCIENCE

Delving into diving

Page 14 ►

vulture Magazine

Food nostalgia over three generations in Hong Kong



Page 24 ►

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Jordan Belfort 'On Wall Street, lessons are learnt and then lessons are forgotten'

Raphael Korber Hoffman speaks to 'the Wolf of Wall Street' about the next financial crash, his debauched lifestyle in the 90s, and his new life as a motivational speaker

Everything about the so-called Wolf in *The Wolf of Wall Street* seems larger than life – from the scale of the \$220 million he defrauded from investors, to the disarming speed at which he speaks, to the large timepiece on his wrist.

Jordan Belfort, as the Wolf is otherwise known, is certainly a man of extremes. Growing up in poverty in the New York borough of Queens with an early job as a meat salesman, Jordan Belfort did not always seem destined for fame and fortune. Some decades

later, however, he was living quite a different life raking in enormous sums of money – once reportedly making \$12 million in three minutes – cavorting with sex workers and developing a range of drug addictions.

He's left that lifestyle behind – "just carnal pleasures" he tells me at a Cambridge Guild event last term. Today, Belfort is working the motivational speakers' circuit and publishing more books after the bestselling success of his first, *The Wolf of Wall Street*, and its film adaptation starring Leonardo DiCaprio and directed by Martin Scorsese.

► Belfort spent twenty two months in prison following the DOJ investigation into his business practices
(THE CAMBRIDGE GUILD/BEN PHILLIPS PHOTOGRAPHY)



“Jordan Belfort did not always seem destined for fame and fortune”



Belfort may have replaced cocaine with Red Bull, but he's still speaking frantically at 100mph, even explaining to me the intricacies of the US financial system. I imagine what it must have been like to hear him over the phone when he sold penny stocks to unsuspecting buyers as part of his pump-and-dump scheme, through which he committed fraud and landed in jail. They must have felt completely overwhelmed before handing over their cash.

Belfort's persuasiveness doesn't just come from his rapid-fire delivery of words. He also developed what he calls the "straight line method" of persuasion which he now teaches across the world. Recalling another businessman who made his money through possibly nefarious means, wrote a book about persuasion, and has now ended up as President of the United States, I ask Belfort how he feels about persuasive techniques being used for the wrong reasons.

For Belfort, it's now all about "ethical persuasion," which is "the ability to get your point across in a way that connects with other people and allows them to overcome the barriers and obstacles the people just have towards taking action they should be taking."

Belfort adds that "persuasion transcends business, it's just life for me, it happens in all aspects of life." He recalls Warren Buffet saying on video that the one thing that someone can do to make themselves "more valuable" is to take a lesson in persuasion, despite how some people "look down on [persuasion] as being some manipulative stance." Based on how Belfort himself used to use persuasion, one could perhaps understand some of the scepticism. With Belfort being the master salesman, I find out after our interview that lessons in persuasion are exactly what Belfort is selling – for \$14.95 a month, available on

“*We tend to think that 90% of those bankers are scumbags. I think it's very, very rare. I think that only 5% of them are***”**

his website.

Nevertheless, regardless of whether you view persuasion lessons as levelling the playing field of marketing or a scam designed for suckers, Belfort's current line of business is far more legitimate than his last. For many, including the US Department of Justice, that's what matters. Having spent 22 months in jail after a long-running investigation into his business practices by the DOJ, the US Securities and Exchange Commission and the FBI, I ask Belfort whether he feels more bankers such as himself should've gone to jail.

The aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis was notable not just for the scale of the crash, but for how few of the bankers who brought it about ever appeared in court. Belfort says more should have gone to prison but "not in the sense that I shouldn't have gone [...] I just think we should've gone because they broke the law. And [...] people got hurt." He goes on to say that he finds it "baffling" that "there were a lot of people that just got away with it [...] and I think that's also a part of why Brexit and stuff like that [...] is a reaction to that sort of stuff. People just rejecting the establishment. People are pissed off still."

People may get a whole lot more pissed off if Belfort's prediction of another financial crash being imminent proves accurate. I ask whether Wall Street has learned any lessons with regards to responsible practices in finance and he responds simply: "Lessons are learned and then lessons are forgotten." Elaborating, he notes that "there is always going to be irrational exuberance and that's a function of how markets work [...] my sense is that the next crisis is probably going to come not because of something that started as a financial crisis but [...] something else will happen that will stress the system and

reveal problems that never really went away." More bluntly, and using Bernie Madoff's famed exposed Ponzi scheme as an analogy, he adds "all of a sudden you'll see only shit was there."

In his books, Belfort has recalled how he justified his criminality on the grounds that everyone else on Wall Street was doing something similar. Wall Street may not have learned its lessons with regards to financial responsibility, but I ask: are they still all so gung-ho about it? Belfort takes a rare pause, then answers "Yes and no," before adding how "things are different with the internet right now. Everything is different. You know the #MeToo culture goes beyond #MeToo. There's a whole political correctness thing that also is not just about political correctness, [but] a whole thing about morality in general."

Noting that some "people behind the scenes" are "really fucking corrupt, really bad people", he nevertheless makes sure to point out that: "most of Wall Street's really legitimate. I think what happens is we tend to think that like 90% of those bankers are scumbags. I think it's very, very rare. I think like 5% of them are." For Belfort therefore, it's important to discriminate between the majority of Wall Street bankers, and those in certain areas of finance, such as hedge funds, which he describes as "completely bogus, all based on insider information, you know."

It's difficult to see where Belfort sees himself in all this, not just whether he's the 95% or the 5%, but also how he reconciles the criminal lifestyle he led with consequences which continue to this day – most of the \$200 million he defrauded has never been repaid – with his current manifestation as a motivational speaker urging people to learn from his books and online courses. Ultimately, I felt unsure how much Belfort regretted

his past actions.

He assures me, however, that he does regret the criminal nature of his financial dealings, but not so much the sex, drugs and rock n' roll lifestyle – the depiction of which made the *Wolf of Wall Street* film such a controversial success. I ask him whether he feels that the way that people on Wall Street behaved in the 1990s was connected to what is also perceived as being the decline of American capitalism over the same period. Belfort strongly disagrees. For him, the decline of American capitalism was caused by "a lot of self-serving treasury secretaries that were going back and forth from Goldman Sachs to the treasury [...] and, you know, making rules that their friends on Wall Street could jump through [...] allowing the existence of financial instruments that can be leveraged 50 to 1 or 100 to 1."

Everything else, from the prostitutes, to the Quaaludes, to the wrecking of both his yacht and his helicopter, Belfort doesn't see as connected to Wall Street's business practices. Seeing this as a strange assertion to make, especially considering how closely the two were connected in Belfort's personal life, I press him on this. He concedes that "I think that any business that makes a lot of money and adds pressure brings out drug use for sure [...]" but I don't think that the bad part of Wall Street is connected to drugs or sex. That's just people."

Glancing around the lavish room of St John's Divinity School in which we're sitting and leaning back in his chair, he makes a typically straight-shooting remark. "Long after Wall Street lives or dies, there'll still be Pornhub, right?"

And soon after that sordid note, our interview ends and I am ushered out the room where a small crowd awaits their moment with the Wolf.

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Make your mark on Cambridge's oldest, largest and only independent student newspaper

Applications to be Varsity's Editor for Michaelmas Term are set to open next week. Keep your eyes peeled for application instructions to be found on our website.

You will lead a team producing online and print content throughout the term, as well as our bumper Fresher's week print edition.

No previous experience at Varsity is required for the role. All students passionate about journalism are encouraged to apply.

Direct questions to the VarSoc President at president@varsity.co.uk, or the Editors at editor@varsity.co.uk

The deadline for applications is 5pm, Friday 14th of June
Interviews will be held on the following week.

VARSITY



News

‘Running for elections does break friendships.’ One student’s experience of the Cambridge Union

Maia Wyn Davies & Stephanie Stacey
Deputy Editors

“It was just so alien to my background it seemed like another world,” explains a former member of the Cambridge Union’s standing committee, speaking of their initial impressions of the society.

A little over a year after first setting foot in the Union’s debating chamber, they stood to take the helm of one of the University’s most prestigious societies as President.

Asked what drew them to the Union initially, the candidate explains: “It felt like a place that I could do something big and tangible in”.

Today, they tell *Varsity*: “If you run in a Union election, you’ve got to be willing to put yourself through absolute hell.”

Over the course of their campaign for Union President, this candidate faced falsified screenshots of slanderous messages and the dissemination of false claims regarding their policies. Events resulting from the candidate’s ill-health were used by their opponent’s campaign team as proof of incompetence to take on the role, although the opponent themselves denied knowledge of the candidate’s personal health.

During Union elections, candidates are able to present official complaints regarding electoral malpractice on their opponent’s part, which are called ‘challenges’, after the voting period has closed. If a challenge is upheld, a certain percentage of the defendant’s votes are docked.

The first challenge faced by this candidate concerned a health crisis experienced during their time on the Union’s standing committee, a group which consists of 12 individuals elected by Union members. They told *Varsity* that multiple members of their opposition’s campaign team were “intimately aware” of their health issues at that time.

Their opponent argued that the candidate’s claim to have organised a certain Union debating event on their manifesto was “objectively untrue and intentionally misleading”, because the candidate had been unable to act as its direct organiser during the days on which the event took place.

A testimony provided to support this challenge, which ultimately did not pass, claimed that the candidate had demonstrated “incompetence and [a] lack of work” while organising the event.

As per the Union’s constitution, the candidate submitted a response defending their claim to the Union’s Returning Officers, the people responsible for making the final decisions on challenges. In this response, they explained that they had been replaced as the event’s organiser just three days before it took place. Prior to this, they acted as the event’s sole primary organiser for almost two months, since their co-organiser had dropped out, and their replacement came about because they “suffer[ed] from incredibly serious health problems” that term, which “culminated in a health crisis” at the time of the event.

The candidate needed to submit their response within 12 hours of the sub-



▲ **The Cambridge Union was founded in 1815**
(ROSIE BRADBURY)

mission of the original challenge. They highlight the intensity of having to defend themselves, particularly concerning personal experiences of ill-health, saying that they were shocked by the “weaponising of someone’s hurt” in an election.

“I thought we would keep some kind of moral boundaries around the issue”, the candidate remarks.

“Running for elections does break friendships.”

Following this challenge, the candidate was then met with allegations of having sent slanderous messages about their opponent via Facebook, based on screenshots of a conversation in which they supposedly disputed their opponent’s commitment to access and diversity. The screenshots were sent to their opponent’s University email account at 6am from an anonymously generated email address. At this time, the candidate’s opponent was unable to ascertain that these screenshots were not genuine. The candidate, again, had just 12 hours in which to prove that the images were fake and to submit a response to the Returning Officers. They explained, “I had to contact my friend who’s a Comp-Sci [computer scientist] and have them help me prove it”, pointing out certain inconsistencies, for example, in the Facebook Messenger layout within the screenshots.

The challenge was ultimately dropped when their opponent realised that the screenshots had indeed been falsified.

The final outcome of the election would not have been altered had either of these challenges passed, due to the relative number of votes cast for each candidate. However, the candidate notes that, in this case, the stakes were far higher than simply the outcome of this particular Union election, and such a serious allegation may have affected their future reputation and prospects: “I

keep thinking: what if they were better screenshots, and I couldn’t prove they were fake? That could’ve stayed with me forever.”

The candidate told *Varsity*: “On some level, you expect bitching, you expect rumours [...] but fake screenshots and the weaponising of health I think is unprecedented.”

In a statement to *Varsity*, the opponent noted: “I was unaware of the health issues faced by [the candidate] as well as the fact that the screenshots were falsified. Elections of any sort are always challenging and I respected all candidates, immediately reporting any breach that I was made aware of to the Returning Officers.”

Meanwhile, the candidate was also approached by a fellow Union debater asking whether it was true that they planned to cut funding for international debating competitions. This was not, in fact, one of the candidate’s policies. The candidate had never expressed such plans during campaigning, and such a policy was not mentioned on any of their campaign materials. It transpired that such a claim had been made by an individual authorised to send messages on behalf of the candidate’s opponent, and although the candidate brought this issue as a challenge to the Returning Officers, this challenge did not pass.

The Cambridge Union claims to be the University’s largest student society, with over half the student population having purchased a life membership. However, the Union’s standing committee comprises just 12 individuals. Therefore advancing within the society, explains the candidate, relies in large part on navigating this very small circle.

Once you reach standing committee, says the candidate, your decisions are to a certain extent governed by how they will be perceived by other members of the committee – the support of whom

is often essential in future elections. The candidate speaks of a “very weird” dynamic within the committee, because, even while simply socialising with their fellow committee members, the candidate believes that many students are thinking tactically about their future within the society.

The candidate believes that this is why talk of foul play within the society, such as the incidences discussed, is, in their experience, rare beyond those very few highly involved members. Even in severe cases, they argue, there remains an “incentive for things to be hushed up”. They say, “You go to the press, you turn [the accused] and all [their] friends against you, and you ruin your chances of ever standing for election again.”

Beyond social complications, there are also certain financial pressures which come with advancing within the society. At the point of first joining the Cambridge Union, standard lifetime membership currently costs £185. The cheapest membership fee available to students, at £99, is only available to those on a full Cambridge bursary.

“In some ways the Union is getting more diverse, but in other ways most people are from the same background.”

Had this candidate won the presidential election, they would have been the first Cambridge Union president who had not been educated at either a Private School or a Grammar School since at least 2014. Cambridge Union Presidents are elected on a termly basis.

The Cambridge Union committee told *Varsity*: “The Union takes its commitment to diversity and inclusion seriously, as reflected in our first majority female and majority BME committee this term. We are constantly working to further our efforts to include those marginalised on the basis of class and other distinctions. Having launched major access initiatives

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issue
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could’ve
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both within the University and amongst local Cambridge schools, we are always seeking to further our social impact.

"This includes excellent support to our debaters, with all registration fees covered and substantial financial aid for domestic and international travel. Electoral procedure is detailed in the constitution and conducted with multiple layers of checks and measures."

The candidate's experience of the Union, having joined as a fresher, "was similar to the culture shock of coming to Cambridge". They speak of a "very subtle sense of exclusion" when socialising with students from far more privileged backgrounds, many of whom have a "shared culture and understanding" due to their previous educational experiences.

The prestige of the Cambridge Union is undeniable, and taking on the role of President - while certainly tough - offers "a lot of clout", both socially and professionally. Speaking of the reasons behind their decision to run for a position on the Union's standing committee, and then, ultimately, for the role of President, the candidate says: "I would be lying if I said it wasn't partly ego", but also notes their desire to "force through good policies that would really start to break down the harmful things about the Union".

Asked, now, what advice they would offer to their fresher self, one and a half years on, and having run for Union President, the candidate says: "Be less invested coming in." They explain, "I was so naive about what it takes to change big structures and how much one person can do."



▲ The Cambridge Union is located on Bridge Street (ROSIE BRADBURY)

ONE GIANT LEAP Cambridge academic joins lunar project

Cambridge engineer and Canadian astronaut Dr Jenni Sidey-Gibbons will be working on a lunar exploration programme, as the Canadian Space Agency has formed a new partnership in the NASA-led Lunar Gateway, an international collaboration in human space exploration. Dr Sidey-Gibbons is a Lecturer in Internal Combustion Engines at the University and has said that "Going to the Moon in the Apollo era changed what we thought was possible. Returning to the Moon in a sustainable capacity will do the same."

BIRDS OF A FEATHER Heron graffiti art adorn Cambridge

Spray-painted heron designs have appeared around Cambridge, with plaster birds perched upon street and shop signs on the back streets of Mill Road, including Sedgwick Street and Cockburn Street. The mysterious artist has been "dubbed Cambridge's answer to Banksy" and has been "spray painting heron designs across the city for years", according to *CambridgeshireLive*, and is "well known for their mysterious pieces which often appear overnight around Cambridge."

ECO FRIENDLY Crisp packet recycling scheme

Cambridge has become more eco-friendly, as Cambridgeshire County Council have installed an official crisp packet recycling drop-off location at its Shire Hall office on Castle Hill. According to the County Council, "crisp packets are not accepted in household kerbside collections in Cambridgeshire so this is a great opportunity for anyone to bring in their crisp packets which will be sent off to be recycled." do the same." Any and all brands of crisp packets can be recycled through the scheme.

ARCHITECTURE GALORE Cambridge named top ten city break

Condé Nast Traveler have recently listed Cambridge as one of their top ten recommended city breaks for 2019, describing it as 'the architectural city'. It cites two reasons why 2019 in particular is a good year to visit: the recent reopening of the University Arms hotel and the reopening of Kettle's Yard gallery. Whilst the former is probably beyond a student budget, Kettle's Yard has been a student favourite for many years.



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News

'I've ended up praying in a corner in a stairwell' The limited provisions of non-Christian prayer spaces at Cambridge

► Continued from front page

facilities for almost every activity including refurbished bar, but does not seem to consider the possibility that there may be students who need space for quiet reflection/prayer."

Data obtained by *Varsity* through Freedom of Information requests shows that only five colleges — Fitzwilliam, Peterhouse, Queens, St. John's and Trinity — have a prayer room which is independent of their college chapel.

19 of 31 Cambridge colleges have no provision for a permanent prayer space independent of a college chapel. The remaining colleges provide spaces by offering temporary use of rooms for prayer and meditation.

Several colleges — Churchill, Emmanuel, Lucy Cavendish, Pembroke and Girton — provide an alternative space, such as a 'meditation room' or 'quiet room' which is not designed for prayer but is available for that purpose if needed.

Meanwhile, Downing, Hughes Hall, Murray Edwards and Robinson claim to create a prayer space if one is requested. Clare, Downing, Jesus and Girton emphasised that their college chapel is available for students of all faiths.

A University spokesperson told *Varsity* that the University "provides a number of prayer and reflection spaces across the city, which are available for non-Christian worship."

Three colleges — Christ's, Clare and Downing — are currently discussing the possibility of creating a prayer room. Churchill and Sidney Sussex have both previously discussed the possibility of introducing a prayer room, this did not come to pass for either college.

In the last academic year, Sidney Sussex made "enquiries... among neighbouring chaplains to see if there was any interest in a jointly supported prayer room that several Colleges could run together", but 'no interest' was returned, according to a spokesperson from the college.

Religious societies have offered differing perspectives on prayer space provision within University buildings. The Bahá'í Society are positive about the north-west Cambridge development but criticise the lack of prayer spaces in University buildings in central Cambridge, whilst the Buddhist society request "an accessible location [which] can make... praying/meditation easy and continuous, so we suggest a quiet place at a central location, possibly at the University Centre building."

University guidelines on the use of facilities for worship and prayer emphasises that "a number of rooms are made available by the University for its stu-



dents, staff and authorised visitors with the primary purpose of providing a safe, clean and inclusive place for worship, celebration or meditation. No particular group has an exclusive right to use such a room or facility at any time and all users have an equal right to access the facilities."

The University provides a detailed list of Cambridge's places of worship outside of university buildings. However, several religious societies claimed that their nearest faith building is difficult to access. Sikh Society explained that "the nearest Gurdwara is very small and in the next town, so it can be difficult to get there sometimes" whilst the Buddhist Society claim that members 'normally pray/meditate in the University building as the nearest Buddhist Temple is on Mill road and quite difficult to get to'.

Muslim students also spoke of logistical difficulties of accessing prayer spaces throughout the day. Yusuf Uddin, a second year HSPS student said: "If you don't study or have lectures near/in Sidgwick or the Chemistry department [which have prayer rooms] then tough luck. [It]

can be hard to access these prayer rooms especially when some people only have half an hour breaks in between lectures, practicals and supervisions".

Zuheir, a PhD engineering student, said that "travelling three times a day from the engineering department to Sidgwick site is impractical and disrupts the flow of my work. I believe people with back-to-back classes don't even have the privilege to do that, especially during winter".

A University spokesperson told *Varsity* that the University aims to ensure that prayer spaces are "located at — or within a reasonable walking distance of — its main centres of study."

Thilal Halimah, a Muslim PhD student at Wolfson called on the University to be more proactive in providing prayer spaces. She asked that Colleges do "not wait for students to turn up and ask for quiet spaces for prayer, [but] rather to designate appropriate rooms for this purpose."

The former President of Cambridge University Islamic Society, Dawud Afzal, emphasised that "members of the society do prefer to pray in prayer spaces

◀ Cambridge's newly-opened 'eco-mosque' on Mill Road is a 30-minute walk from Downing Site (JULIA JOHNSON)

▼ Christ's college (chapel bottom left) is considering the possibility of creating a prayer room. Corpus Christ's chapel (bottom right), is the only prayer space in the college (MATHIAS GJESDAL HAMMER)



was "advised by the receptionist two years ago that I should find a free room on my own by checking the screens. This hasn't worked out so well as there were days when all rooms were booked and so much of my time spent walking around Mary Allen Building and Homerton looking through the screens to find a free room. Some people also book rooms but do not disclose this on the display screens so when they interrupt me, I have no choice but to stop my prayer (something I only usually do in an emergency) and leave the room."

She continued that "some security staff appeared to not know anything about prayer and walked in talking to me about locking up, which I found uncomfortable as I couldn't respond... but at the same time, I was conscious of coming across as rude or strange for not being able to respond while praying."

A spokesperson for the Faculty of Education was apologetic to the complaints. They insist that interruptions were "accidental and there was no intention to disturb the student's prayers or make the student feel uncomfortable."

In response to interruptions during prayer, several Muslim students approached the Faculty of Education to request a designated prayer room. The students were then pointed toward an available classroom and given a "laminated paper reading 'Prayer space — do not disturb', which they are required to borrow from reception every time they wish to pray."

The Faculty of Education insist that they provide prayer space when it is requested, but signs are provided instead of a designated room because rooms within the Faculty "are in regular and changing use according to teaching needs". The signs are intended to "inform fellow faculty members when a room is in use for prayer."

The Faculty explains that it is not possible to provide a permanent, designated prayer room due to lack of space. A spokesperson told *Varsity* that "the Faculty — a community of around 1,000 people — does not have enough space to accommodate all of its 200 academic staff, some of whom have to hot-desk around the building".

Whilst the Multi-Faith and Reflection Centre was widely praised by students, some students questioned how the mandatory induction makes the space unsuitable for immediate use.

Last year, a *Varsity* investigation found failings in how Cambridge dealt with requests for special exam arrangements by some religious students, causing them additional stress or incentivising students to diverge from their usual religious practices.

within university buildings simply due to the fact that the faith buildings are too far from where lectures are held. As you may know, Muslims pray five times a day and thus to have to travel well out from lecture sites to a faith building would not be possible."

Islamic Society emphasised that "the university is doing everything they can to accommodate for Muslim Students this year" and spoke positively about their main prayer space on the Sidgwick Site and the Multi-Faith and Reflection Centre on the West Cambridge development.

Halimah argued that the provision of prayer spaces is not just about recognising the desire to pray but also to enable secluded reflection "away from studies and people" as well as group discussions on spiritual topics.

Halimah complained that rooms in Wolfson College which she could book to pray in are not designated for non-Christian prayer, so "may be inappropriate considering they have portraits and posters which are distractions to the person performing prayer."

She has also encountered problems in the Education faculty. The student

Marching on despite rising challenges, efforts to decolonise the Cambridge curriculum expand

Jess Ma
Senior News Editor

This year, Cambridge has seen the union of decolonisation and divestment causes, more talks exploring different facets of decolonisation, as well as the establishment of new working groups in various faculties, such as Law and History of Art.

Decolonise Cambridge Law have had some preliminary discussions to plan their course, telling *Varsity* that “a big part of our project as it stands is to investigate in what ways and how far to decolonise our understanding of law”.

“What we want to achieve is not some ideal Decolonised law syllabus, but maybe it is the mindset of students that we want to change – to learn the law with a more critical, questioning attitude,” they said. Next Michaelmas, the Group hopes to “launch a series of regular talks, as well as a regular reading group spearheaded by graduate students.”

Decolonise History of Art and Architecture aims to “look out for neo-colonial practices in subject curriculums and also attitudes within the faculties” and raise awareness on the “heritage of colonialism” in the subject. The group has begun talks with the Department, with suggestions to include a wider range of voices on the curriculum and feedback on the hiring of a new staff member. Rodney Kelly, an advocate for the repatriation of the Gweagal Spears, which are indigenous artefacts seized by Captain James Cook on his landing on Australia in 1770, is also invited to give a talk.

Meanwhile, challenges emerge as established working groups strive to push for progress. Both Decolonise POLIS and Decolonise Anthropology, which were established last year, face challenges in harnessing their forces for more impact. Yi Ning Chang, a second year HSPS student, told *Varsity* that in the past two terms, Decolonise POLIS has organised a series of “Brown Bag Talks”, informal lectures where academics share their research on decolonial and postcolonial topics. Chang highlighted that the talks are meant to “transgress disciplinary boundaries” to redefine what constitutes politics, as part of the effort to bring in marginalised or silenced perspectives. The group has also been engaging in meetings with the Faculty, focusing mainly on changes to the undergraduate curriculum. In running the group, Chang said that one challenge was to “speak across different levels” to achieve a broad reach across the faculty. She believes that finding common ground helps to tackle the challenge. For instance, discussing decolonisation in supervisions involves the faculty, postgraduates, and undergraduates. The Brown Bag Talks “has managed to bring different levels together, and the undergraduates can learn from the postgraduates, and hopefully the other way round as well”, she added.

“It’s not hard to do things outside [the institution], the Brown Bag Talks are a representation of our efforts to do that. But if we want institutional change, like the reading lists and syllabus, a lot more needs to be done both ways,” Chang concluded.

Meanwhile, Thandeka Cochrane, a fourth year PhD student in Social Anthropology, talks of unforeseen organisational challenges. She revealed that it is a huge challenge in organising and maintaining the working group as the turnover rate is high within members. She cited one main factor as the fieldwork requirement in postgraduate Anthropology degrees: PhD students usually undertake 12 to 18 months of ethnographic fieldwork while Masters students may undertake fieldwork for the duration they see fit. Preparation for the fieldwork and work after render postgraduates unavailable to contribute, which also “makes it hard to build any kind of group”. In the meantime, late specialisation in the undergraduate level makes it hard for the group to recruit undergraduate members. “Undergraduates only specialise at the very end, even in third year. Very few undergraduates see themselves as Anthropology [students],” Cochrane explained. Looking ahead, Cochrane said that the group will focus on the history of the Department of Social Anthropology, hoping to organise critical walking tours of the Department next year. Pedagogy will be another focus where the group explores the canonical approach in curricula. Forging “a way for more consistent communication” with the Department will be another goal.

The Decolonise POLIS (Department of Politics and International Studies) working group was set up by several third year students last year. This year, as the founders have graduated, the working group set out to engage more academics and organise more talks “to create more content for discussion for the benefit of both those who are not entirely sure of what decolonise means and those who are interested in knowing more”.

This year, the group had an open meeting in Michaelmas, attended a joint meeting with decolonise Anthropology groups in SOAS and Oxford, and organised a few talks on the history of anthropology and its colonial relation to Africa. The Group also has “strong conversation” with the Museum of Archeology and Anthropology in organising upcoming discussions and tours. This term, the campaign has also invited Rodney Kelly to give a talk at the Department of Social Anthropology on the Gweagal Spears, which were taken from the indigenous Gweagal people from Botany Bay in New South Wales in 1770. Cochrane is worried about the continuity of the group as she will be completing her doctoral thesis this year, while some other members will be leaving for fieldwork soon. “We have no time and capacity to push it at the moment.”



▲ The Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology on Downing Street, where students are working towards decolonisation (LIKEUNLIKE)

“It’s not hard to do things outside [the institution]. But if we want institutional change, a lot more needs to be done both ways”

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News

Allegations of inappropriate conduct at summer camp partly staffed by Cambridge students raise concerns

Ellesheva Kissin, Oliver Rhodes & Elizabeth Haigh

Content note: This article contains references to sexual misconduct toward minors and sexual assault

Several Cambridge students have raised concerns about the provision of child safety measures on volunteer teaching projects after an incident of alleged inappropriate behaviour involving a fellow Cambridge student at a summer teaching project in Japan last year.

The incident, which is alleged to have taken place on an English-teaching programme organised in Tokyo by the American company *Come On Out: Japan*, is said to have involved two members of the volunteer teaching staff, one of whom was a Cambridge student, according to multiple sources, and two Japanese minors.

The project, based in Tokyo, involved around 100 Japanese students between the ages of 13 and 21. Teaching was split into small groups, each coordinated and taught by two student volunteers, whom the company call ‘interns’, predominantly from universities in the UK and USA.

A letter of complaint, signed by 32 volunteer teachers from 19 universities, including 3 from Cambridge, was sent to the executive team of *Come On Out: Japan* in response to the incident and the way it was dealt with by the company. The letter alleges that “[not] enough has been done to ensure the safety and well-being of Japanese students”, including the lack of formal criminal background checks, such as DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks, for prospective interns. In the UK, DBS checks are a legal requirement for all prospective employees intending to work with children.

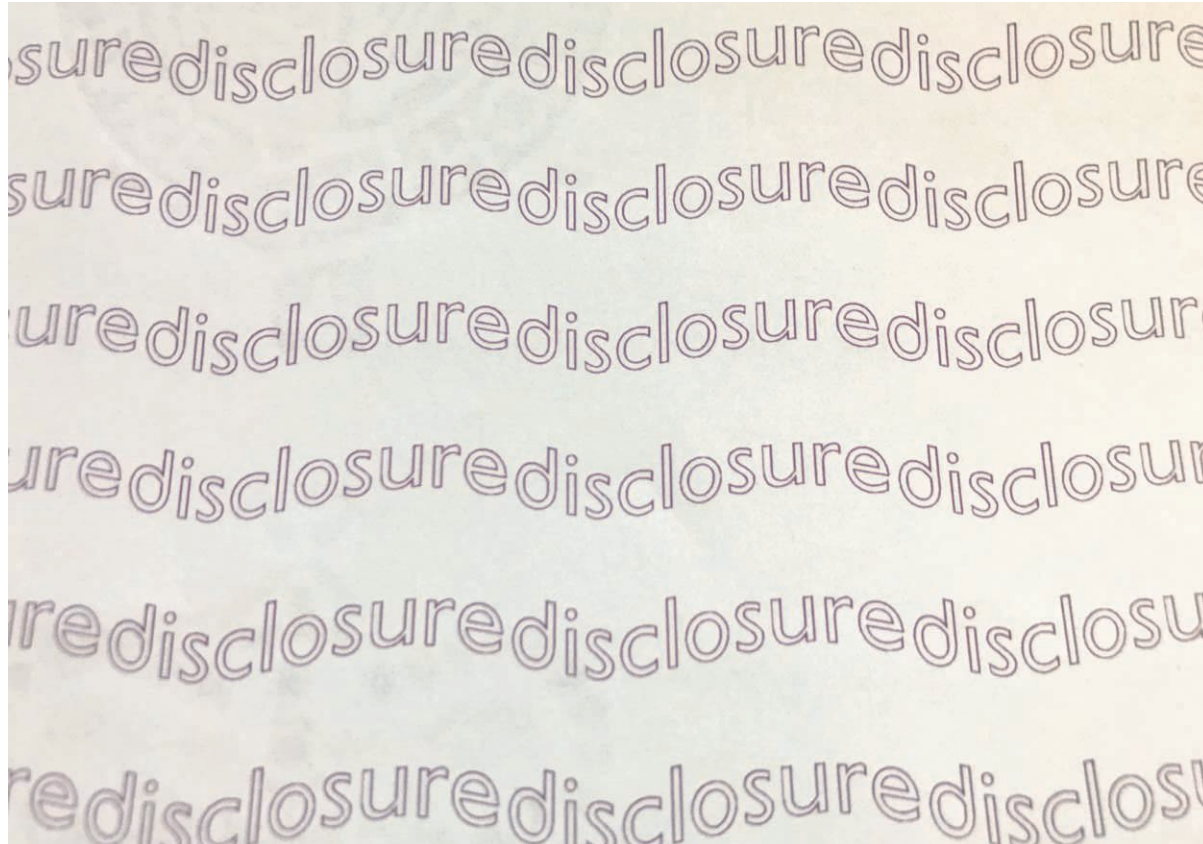
Come on Out: Japan has since adopted a new code of conduct including a “new incident reporting system” which “will be more transparent on how these incidents are handled throughout the summer while also securing confidentiality [for] all parties involved.”

Volunteer teachers will now also undergo a criminal background check in addition to the full character reference which was required under the company’s previous regulations. An enhanced training programme has been instituted including the requirement for a “teaching demonstration during interview” and “required training” on child safeguarding.

The letter of complaint claimed that “with the exception of the rules surrounding the sharing of contact details and material on social media, no developed safeguarding system was formally introduced” at the time concerning the relationship between the students and interns.

The letter further states that the signatories are “unhappy with the course of action taken by the leadership of the programme following multiple individual complaints of inappropriate behaviour” by volunteer teachers.

The signatories were prompted to make their complaint after two volunteer teachers, one of whom was allegedly a student from the University of Cambridge, were witnessed acting in a sexually inappropriate manner with two



“[Not] enough has been done to ensure the safety and well-being of Japanese students”

of their young students.

According to one volunteer teacher, who wished to remain anonymous, “the two [volunteer] teachers (one male and one female) referred to the female students in the group as the male teacher’s ‘harem’. The female students were referred to as Wife #2 and Wife #3, with the female teacher being Wife #1. They wrote their “titles” on the back of their name tags, and when they were in their group or left the room to work in a place that was more private, they flipped their name tags over away from their names and to their title.”

The female volunteer teacher was accused of further behaviour that was deemed “physically inappropriate” by some of the other volunteer teachers, including “show[ing] off her body” to students and positioning herself “a little too close[ly]” to students when playing group games. Describing this behaviour as “flirting”, they claimed that “she was aware of the effect that she had on her students, and actively tried to encourage those feelings.”

However they also added that they “don’t think that she really understood the consequences of her actions”.

Varsity has reached out to the two volunteer teachers implicated in these allegations for comment.

The allegations arose in the penultimate week of ‘Global English Camp’, a project coordinated by *Come on Out: Japan*.

In response to volunteer teachers raising concerns multiple times, organisers held an open meeting during the final week of the project. CEO of *Come on Out: Japan*, Brian Neufuss, attended and spoke to the volunteer teachers about the alleged inappropriate conduct and possible solutions.

Prior to this meeting, a message was circulated by one volunteer teacher on a Japanese messaging app, in which they criticised the company for reacting to

▲ **DBS checks are compulsory for all workers seeking to work with children in the UK** (KIRAN KHANOM)

their complaint in what they perceived as a “patronising” manner, claiming that senior staff seemed to “only care about the money, and not the safety of us or the kids.”

The company representatives at the open meeting highlighted the lack of any legal requirement in Japan for interns to undertake DBS or other similar background checks. They argued that as a company they “do not hire teachers”.

A second volunteer teacher, who also wished to remain anonymous, told *Varsity* that during the meeting they felt that the leaders of the organisation “didn’t seem to grasp that sexual harassment extended beyond the realm of non-consensual intercourse; they didn’t see their failure to sufficiently vet interns as problematic.”

In a statement to *Varsity*, *Come on Out: Japan* agreed that their provisions for the safeguarding of students “required amendment” and that they “believe improvement was necessary for [their] additional safeguarding processes”.

One volunteer teacher said that they felt “uneasy” during the training week, as to their knowledge “no mention was made of a classroom code of conduct or safeguarding policy”.

Speaking to *Varsity*, a spokesperson for *Come On Out: Japan* confirmed that after the incident, “two involved interns were immediately removed from the classroom, and their students were placed with another group under new volunteer teachers. The two interns acted in a way that was perceived by other interns as inappropriate and causing discomfort to the group”.

However, they stated that “[after having] contacted the [Japanese] students and parents regarding the details of the incidents, neither party felt that inappropriate conduct had occurred.”

Despite being removed from teaching responsibilities, the letter and several sources that spoke to *Varsity* claim that

the two interns involved were permitted to rejoin the group at the end of the camp. *Come on Out: Japan* did not respond to multiple requests for comment to confirm this claim.

One volunteer teacher claimed that they felt such action “seemed extremely dismissive and abrasive towards the [volunteer] teachers who brought up the issues in the first place” and that they felt “that they [*Come on Out: Japan*] placed the reputation of the program over the feelings and well-being of teachers and students.”

Come on Out: Japan told *Varsity* that volunteer teachers were required to supply “official documents, including transcripts and references” but “did not require a criminal background check” at any point during the application process.

The company has since adopted a new code of conduct including a “new incident reporting system” which “will be more transparent on how these incidents are handled throughout the summer while also securing confidentiality [for] all parties involved.” They state that they have refined their “procedure for intern incidents to ensure comprehensive coverage and confidentiality”.

On future projects, interns will be required to undergo a criminal background check in addition to the character reference which was required under the company’s previous regulations.

One of the volunteer teachers who spoke to *Varsity* explained that they felt in their experience that there was “an extremely unclear chain of command in the company” and that teachers were often unaware who they should report their concerns to.

Provisions for child welfare vary between countries and, while the inspection of a criminal record is a typical requirement for applications to enter a foreign country, comprehensive background checks are not always required for short-term projects.

Oxbridge Summer Camps Abroad, which recruits Cambridge students to teach in Japan, China and Hong Kong, told *Varsity* that “OSCA has a child protection policy and OSCA Cambridge volunteers are DBS-checked as part of this policy. OSCA works with local partners on child protection.”

Camvision, a UK-based education consultancy company founded by Cambridge graduates in 2017, also told *Varsity* that it pays on behalf of its employees for the provision of enhanced DBS checks. They added that “we are legally obliged to provide a written contract between ourselves and our employees” which “ensures the accountability of both employees and the employer”.

According to the Cambridge University Careers Service, 103 vacancies for summer camp projects were advertised over the past three years. Of these, over half operate outside the UK, “operating under that country’s own national legal frameworks and systems.”

The Careers Service added that “with such a large number of vacancies, it is not possible to independently verify each one, but we do undertake basic checks before accepting an employer onto our database and publishing their vacancies.”

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News

Hidden costs and inadequate pay: Photographing a Cambridge May Ball

Jess Ma
Senior News Editor

High-quality event photography is now a well-established aspect of the May Week experience but, speaking to *Varsity*, student photographers highlighted the difficulties of their work, arguing that the full scope of their efforts can often go unrecognised by both committees and ball-goers.

The photographers spoke on the condition of anonymity, so as not to affect their chances of getting further jobs.

May Ball photographers are usually hired either through pitching their portfolio and rates to the organising committee, or through being directly approached.

Photographers' rates, as well as how the rates are calculated, differ between balls. *Varsity* reached out to all 2019 May Ball committees. Of those that replied, Peterhouse May Ball committee noted that they will directly accept prices quoted by photographers, while other committees said that they negotiate an hourly rate or a lump sum for the evening. Downing May Ball committee noted that they allocate 0.3% of their budget for photography and that rates are set on a case-by-case basis at approximately £25 per hour, with extra payment for editing time. Darwin May Ball committee replied that they estimate they will be paying between £125-£210 for the nights. Meanwhile, Homerton May Ball committee emphasised that they will list photographers as "contract workers" to ensure that they are "paid a fair wage".

However, multiple student photographers said that, in their experience, May Ball committees often choose the photographer who offers or accepts the lowest rate in what they perceive as an effect to save costs. One photographer felt that this tendency, and the willingness of some photographers to accept lower pay, "drives down prices for everyone else and devalues the service". Another told *Varsity* that they have found themselves lowering their rates in order to compete for jobs, even though they believe that their professional skill level a larger salary.

While some student photographers agreed that generally photographers start out with lower rates or even free assignments, they argued that their skill level and experience, as well as the expectation of professional-level photography which differentiates them from amateur photographers, leaves them underpaid in student events.

Another photographer argued that even though they are not professionals, the fact that they are students and "know how balls work" means that they can take better pictures because they are able to blend into the crowd, thus rendering them more valuable than just amateur photographers. Various photographers argued that, because high-quality photography is now a common expectation among ball goers, committees must hire photographers based on



skill rather than cost in order to ensure that ball goers truly "get their money's worth".

Some photographers also highlighted the hefty hidden costs of providing their services. One has spent over £150 per year to insure video equipment which costs over £4,000. Another had to spend £2,000 to replace a stolen camera. Some others talk of spending as much as £25 to replace a small piece of protection equipment.

The student photographers felt that May Ball committees and ball goers demonstrate a "huge lack of recognition" for all these costs which are fundamental to the quality of a photographer's service.

Furthermore, editing is often necessary before the pictures can be posted online, but it is not common practice to include editing time in photographers' payment.

Editing can take days and involves more than simply retouching the photos: the photographer needs to exercise judgement in deleting bad or repetitive shots, as well as checking that all photos are up to standard before sharing them. The sheer amount of photos that need to be processed, which may go up to thousands for a May Ball, and pressure arising from the common expectation that the

▲ Fireworks at St John's May Ball (SIMON LOCK)

photos be published within "a few days" can mean that photographers are forced to edit extremely quickly.

The situation for video is even more time-consuming: it can take multiple days to edit a two to three minute video. Besides time commitment, editing software is rarely free, and further contributes to the cost of the videographers' work. The time and monetary cost of editing thins out the payment for May Ball photographers and videographers. One videographer explained that, in a job which they rejected, £300 payment for a video can be thinned out into £12.50 per hour, similar to May Ball supervisors, if eight hours of filming and around sixteen hours of editing are counted.

The calculation of payment also generates various concerns. One photographer told *Varsity* that in a contract where they were allowed one thirty-minute break across a nine-hour shooting period, they were told that the break time would be subtracted from the overall pay. Some photographers have experienced instances in which organising committees tried to "change the number of hours" or "recalculate" the number of hours to reduce overall pay after the ball. Another photographer argued that hourly payment encourages them to

work longer hours for reasonable pay when, for a lump sum payment, they could have taken enough photos in a few hours.

Looking beyond the frustration on payment and treatment, the perceived lack of understanding of reasonable pricing and expectations can contribute to the undervaluing of photographers and videographers. One photographer suggested that the current situation stems from students not knowing what to charge, and thus charging at rates they see on Facebook photography groups, and committees not fully comprehending the process of event photography, as well as an underestimation of their budget. Another pointed out that both sides are "learning how to handle these situations [negotiating payment]", but "inconsistency across both photographers' rates and student society budgets", where some more established societies have larger budgets, and "a lack of proper guidelines" complicates the landscape.

"People forget that you are a sole operator, you have nothing to fall back on; it's your business that runs alongside your studies. [...] A lot of it is communication – you respect me and I respect you," one photographer concluded.

“One student has spent over £150 per year to insure video equipment which costs over £4,000”

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News

University missed key environmental sustainability targets in 2018

Molly Killeen
Senior News Correspondent

The release of the Cambridge's annual environmental sustainability report last week highlighted that the University missed several key sustainability targets last year.

In 2017-18, out of a total thirteen targets set, five were goals that were achieved or the University considers itself to be "making good progress on."

In the report, Vice-Chancellor Stephen Toope said: "we are making good progress in some areas, while in others we clearly need to do more," stating that the "challenge [of achieving environmental sustainability...] is compounded by the University's multifaceted nature and its continuing growth."

One area in which progress was not made in 2017-18 was water consumption. The University aims to reduce this by 20% by 2020/21 against its 2005/06 baseline. However, in 2017-18 there was a 24% increase against the previous year, a figure 12% higher than the baseline goal.

The University had aimed to recycle at least 95% of the total waste it produced by 2016-17, and had been making progress in

achieving this goal, reaching 83% in that year. In 2017-18, however, it only managed to recycle at a rate of 67%. The report attributed this to a reduction in the rate of construction waste recycling, although it also points to "challenging national issues with waste management issues".

In 2017-18, levels of sustainable travel being regularly used by staff in their commutes were at 70%. This was a reduction from 74% in 2016-17, a figure just shy of the 75% goal set by the University for that year. A likely cause of this, the report stated, was the relocation of parts of the University estate to outside of the city centre, in addition to "high house prices in Cambridge pushing more staff to live outside of Cambridge in areas with limited sustainable travel options."

Additionally, per capita carbon emissions from business flights increased by an estimated 9% in 2017-18. The University aims to reduce such emissions by 25% by 2020/21. A new Transport Working Group was established in 2017-18 and the adoption of its strategies for sustainable commuting is expected this year.

Targets the University have met include the reduction of carbon emissions. In May 2018 a revised Carbon Reduc-

tion Strategy was adopted, which set the overall goal of carbon neutrality by 2050, although activists have criticised this date as too far away. In 2017-18 the first interim target outlined by this plan was achieved, as emissions were reduced by 6% against 2005/06 levels.

Toope stated in the report that the University takes its "deep and long-term commitment to achieve outstanding environmental performance...very seriously."

A University spokesperson told *Varsity* that "One of the issues our experts have been working on is how we can bring the University's target date for carbon neutrality forward by a decade in recognition of the urgency of these issues."

"The University is also establishing a Centre for a Carbon Neutral Future, to bring together strands of research."

They added: "Making absolute reductions is challenging for most organisations, and the University is no exception, particularly in view of its continued growth. However, we are moving in the right direction."

"The Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges (EAUC) nationally recognised our commitment to sustainability and the work we have been

doing with two Green Gown awards in 2017/18 for sustainability reporting and out work on sustainable food."

The CUSU Ethical Affairs Campaign criticised the report's finding, telling *Varsity* the report showed "a failure of institutional leadership to understand the climate crisis we are currently facing"

and slated the changes made by Cambridge as "lacklustre and piecemeal".

"It is clear that radical change is needed," it said. "Cambridge is the wealthiest University in Europe. It is the global poor that will suffer the most from their inaction, in particular communities in the global south which are already experiencing the deathly reality of climate breakdown. The University has a duty to marginalised communities worldwide to rapidly decarbonise and make progress on their sustainability targets."

Cambridge Zero Carbon Society was also critical, stating in a comment to *Varsity*: "Cambridge have once again failed to act on the climate crisis. It is failing to meet its own targets and failing to listen to the views of its members. The University must commit to carbon neutrality by 2030 and full divestment from fossil fuels."

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GCHQ

“As soon as someone says this isn’t important, you’re never going to pursue it,” says King’s student

► Continued from front page

and replied, “Well, I don’t care if he feels guilty about it.”

The tutor continued to defend her harasser. “Sometimes boys can act out because they feel guilty but don’t know how to apologise.”

Following this, Emma had nothing left to say, at least not to her tutor: “I don’t care if he feels guilty, but he’s making me feel unsafe. If he needs to work through those emotions, he can do that on his own.”

The tutor then suggested informal ways to “resolve the problem”, such as Emma messaging him to talk about the incidents. They also suggested getting Emma and her harasser in a room together with their respective tutors to “talk it out.”

Although Emma went to the tutor with clear intentions, knowing she wanted her harasser to face consequences for his actions, she left that office feeling small and unsure. “I think when something bad happens to you like this, you’re really on the fence about speaking anyone about it anyway because I felt quite ashamed for a while.”

Her tutor offered to meet with her again, but according to Emma, they made it clear they weren’t “going to take it to the senior tutor.”

“As soon as someone says, ‘This isn’t important’, you’re never going to pursue it.”

In October 2017, Cambridge launched ‘Breaking the Silence’, a centralised campaign to tackle sexual harassment and assault.

The campaign’s launch sparked a spike in reports of sexual misconduct to the University’s anonymous reporting system, which received over 170 submissions between May 2017 and January 2018.

King’s College told *Varsity* that since the launch of Breaking the Silence they have introduced “training for all tutors on handling disclosures” and “specialist training for the nurse on supporting those who’ve experienced sexual violence”. They also said that in June they will be holding “additional training by the University’s sexual assault and harassment advisor for tutors, porters and the chaplain.”

The University said they encourage students to reach out to the full-time Sexual Assault and Harassment Advisor and “report sexual misconduct, where they feel able to do so, to the Office for Student Conduct, Complaints and Appeals.”

Yet, this has not been enough. Emma’s experiences with her tutor left her feeling frustrated and unsupported: “To make a formal complaint, you have to know that you’ve got the college completely backing you, and as soon as there’s some doubt then you’re never gonna have the confidence to take it further.”

“Even in college, if you have one person that’s really, really good you cannot have this unequal approach to sexual harassment, I think you have to have a policy.”

“I mean, I was on the fence about making a formal complaint and I would have liked the information and it didn’t even seem like an option...I said I’d been to the nurse and we’d discussed taking it to the senior tutor and making a formal complaint, but my tutor was quite against making one, I would say.”

A spokesperson for King’s College twice declined to comment on if the College has a policy regarding encouraging or discouraging the making of formal complaints.

Since then, Emma has had to take it into her own hands to feel safe. She no longer goes into certain spaces, talks to certain groups of people or gets involved with certain events, because she knows her harasser will be there.

For Emma, what is most scary is the college’s “let’s not stir anything up approach”.

Other than consent workshops which take place during Freshers’ Week, Emma feels that little else is done to raise awareness about this pervasive behaviour, “I would feel safer if college had spoken more openly about the fact that sexual harassment isn’t tolerated but it is a thing that happens.”

“They have good intentions but I think if someone goes to college about sexual harassment and they keep it hush hush, then that’s why nothing ever gets said about it.”

“It’s quite a dangerous environment because it teaches these boys who have a bit of a confidence boost...they can do whatever they want with no consequences.”

Talking about the problems with the collegiate system, CUSU Women’s Officer, Claire Sosienski Smith, said there is “often [an] attempt to hush up instances of sexual harassment for fear of reputational damage, institutional misogyny and prioritising the perpetrator of violence over the survivor”.

“Colleges are dangerously small communities when it comes to finding justice for survivors.”

To this day, Emma’s harasser has not faced any consequences.

King’s College refused to comment on whether they would be implementing any changes in light of Emma’s testimony.

However a spokesperson told *Varsity*, “King’s College takes the issue of sexual harassment very seriously, and we are deeply saddened to learn that one of our students feels that she did not receive proper support. If she feels able, we would welcome a discussion with her on how we can best learn from her experience, and how we can handle this complaint in a way that is fair to all parties.”

**The student’s name has been changed.*

“It’s quite a dangerous environment because it teaches these boys...they can do whatever they want with no consequences”

If you have been affected by any of the issues raised in this article, the following organisations provide support and resources:

Breaking the Silence: the University’s campaign against harassment and sexual misconduct (includes reporting mechanisms).

Cambridge for Consent: a student-run campaign to promote consent.

Cambridge Rape Crisis Centre: a charity for female victims of sexual violence.

Cambridge Nightline: a confidential night-time listening service.

Students’ Unions’ Advice Service: the University’s confidential, independent and impartial advice service.

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“If someone goes to college about sexual harassment they keep it hush hush, then that’s why nothing ever gets said about it”

Features

Inside Extinction Rebellion



*Having just spent a week with the Extinction Rebellion blockades in London, **Edie Turner** reflects on newfound hope*

The Extinction Rebellion protests have brought central London to a halt and caused a stir in the national media since they began on Monday the 15th of April. I spent a week camping on concrete and joining roadblocks as part of their fight to get the British government to take climate change as seriously as the science tells us we must.

I'm not sure what I expected from an indefinite, festival-style civil disobedience action, organised by a non-hierarchical patchwork of semi-autonomous 'affinity groups', but what I experienced has changed my views on community, progress and what each of us is capable of. Before this rebellion, I campaigned for climate justice, became vegan and tried to do 'my bit' for the planet. But looking at the society around me I wasn't hopeful. When faced with constant updates on the terrifying collapse of our planet, the easiest (and possibly the most rational) response is fatalism. It has reared its head in conversations with nearly everyone I know. Each of us believes that almost nobody else is trying to do some-

thing about it, and so each of us decides that any action on our own part would be futile. Even the most committed climate activists I know periodically sink into the slump that comes from realising the scale of this problem and the limits of your own energy. When we live at a university which has rejected large-scale calls for divestment from students and academics for years, it's easy to feel the difference experienced around the world between decision makers, and those who must live in the reality they are creating.

But out of powerlessness resistance grows. The government has known about the scale of the climate crisis for longer than I have been alive, and yet still fails to act in accordance with this knowledge. The population has petitioned, marched, and borne the brunt of change so far through their own lifestyle choices and guilt. And now, all of us must live through the final 12 years before a detrimental 1.5 degrees' warming is locked in. Our counterparts in the Global South are already suffering crop failure, hurricanes and floods, the responsibility for which should rightly be borne by our governments in the Global North in recognition of our historic and current emissions. In emergencies like this, many have felt forced to resort to more direct means to get those who supposedly represent us to the table with their own citizens.

Concerns have been raised, however, regarding Extinction Rebellion's overwhelmingly middle class identity and UK focus. Whilst the camps do contain

people from all walks of life, it would be hard to deny this claim. But for me, this simply reflects the structural issues that the climate justice movement fights against. Those of us who are students, or who have a secure career, access to childcare or a comfortable pension have the privilege to attend the rebellion. Those in the camps don't deny or gloss over this, but rather recognise that taking part is a way to use that privilege for a purpose. Every day, each site hosted talks where members of the rebellion jumped on stage to remind us who we are here for – it is not we who are suffering climate collapse, as we sit in the unseasonable sun discussing our arrests, it is the global poor and our own working class communities. If we are not here to further their voices, then this movement is not a rebellion, and it cannot constitute liberation.

My time blockading with the Cambridge group served as a reminder that beyond the walls of elitism and hyper-competitiveness that this university is famous for lie all the ingredients for a thriving, resilient community. If we can see political engagement in people from all over Cambridge taking to the streets to demand environmental action, and autonomous community in strangers pooling food and resources and supporting each other, then surely we can hope to build our community at home into a caring and politically-engaged democratic network working to bring change on our own doorsteps. Above all this, a key question has permeated the

▲ Extinction rebellion have organised multiple protests and blockades
(JULIA HAWKINS)

“Before this rebellion... I was never hopeful”

protests and media: Do we really think that anything will change?

The rebellion and its negotiations remain ongoing, but every day I spent there, the movement grew. We saw the tone of news coverage change daily, until by Friday, even the Daily Mirror (usually notoriously anti-environmentalism) ran with the headline: “climate change is the biggest threat facing the planet”. The proportion of the public I met during ‘outreach’ at the protest who opposed the actions was unexpectedly small. Many expressed their support for what we were doing, even as I stood at the entrance to a tube station that had been hugely disrupted since the protests began. I saw hundreds of passersby join the camp, donate food and tents, attend direct action training and even open their own homes to us for warm showers and beds. These may not yet constitute the massive structural changes we need to undertake to avoid climate collapse, but to me, they unequivocally suggest that the public tide is turning.

When priests and parents sacrifice their time and money to risk arrest alongside punks and pensioners; when hundreds of thousands of citizens create a renewable-powered, leaderless society in the middle of London; this is when we should all know that change is coming. The only question then, is where each of us will stand. As I begrudgingly left that beautiful community of hope, a young man on the barricade defiantly waved a banner reminding us all: “Be on the right side of history, or be at the end of it.”

‘Downhill, downhill, downhill’ Rough sleeping in Cambridge



Louis van-Boxel-Woolf speaks to local homeless people and volunteers about rough sleeping in Cambridge

Some names have been changed and some details obscured.

Cn: mention of abusive relationships

Nothing bursts the Cambridge bubble like being asked for change on a chilly evening. And that goes for residents as well as students. Looking back on starting work at Jimmy’s – a support service for Cambridge rough sleepers – Ros, now the Volunteer Coordinator, says “Boy, did I grow up”.

“What are you doing down there? Get up and do something”, was what she used to think upon seeing individuals on the street.

Now, she understands all the different reasons why people find themselves there. After all, as she notes, nobody grows up with the “ambition of rough-sleeping”. Engaging with the guests at Jimmy’s has been “a real eye-opener”. Barry, the Communications and Communities Officer at Jimmy’s, agrees.

There are many reasons why people become homeless, and why some of them can end up sleeping rough on the streets. “Austerity did cause a problem”, says Barry. “Rough sleeping has almost doubled since 2010” and the number of illegal evictions has risen dramatically, he notes. But “the top two reasons haven’t really changed: it’s always going to be relationship breakdown or family breakdown that generates the homelessness issue”.

That goes for Sam and Jenny, two people who sleep rough in central Cambridge. Sam, now 37, left home when he

was 13 or 14 to get away from his abusive step father. At first he stayed over with friends, but the older he got the less help there was, from both his friends and from the authorities. Jenny had to leave an abusive partner two and a half years ago, and she has been on the streets since. Her three children have been adopted in the meantime.

But anybody can find themselves on the street, as Barry reminds me, and the process can be “very quick [...] One day I was a senior project manager at the Ministry of Defence, the next I’m on the streets, and you think, blimey, how does this work then?”. Chefs, authors, nurses and entrepreneurs have all stayed at Jimmy’s.

Ricardo, sleeping rough in central Cambridge, concurs. He personally used to work as a carer before falling out with his employers. They wanted him to spend no more than 45 minutes per house call, but he thought that “it shouldn’t be that way” for people who were “lonely”, and so he stuck around for a coffee and a cigarette. “I am the only person they see all day”, he says. After being made redundant, his employers refused to provide references, and he began sleeping in his car after being evicted from his home. After his car was seized he had to sleep on the streets. Things went “downhill, downhill, downhill”.

Getting off the streets is hard. It’s much harder to get a job without a fixed address, as Barry emphasises, and even then, work is no guarantee of a roof over your head. He cites the example of a postman who had to sleep in his van, and Sam says that he worked as a butcher but ended up back on the streets since it did not pay enough.

It seems that patience is a real necessary virtue here. Sam and Jenny are both on the council waiting list for housing, and on the waiting list for accommo-

▲ Between 2013 and 2017, an estimated 18 homeless people died in Cambridge (LUCAS CHEBIB)

dation at Jimmy’s. But they have been waiting for a long time, and do not expect much to come of it. Back when she was sleeping in Bracknell, Jenny signed on for help there before travelling to Cambridge after months of waiting for a bed.

They have been out all day when I speak to them, hoping to collect £17.50 worth of change, the price of a night at a youth hostel they know. But they expect to sleep out, Sundays normally being very ‘slow’ as Sam says. Ricardo agrees, but he, unlike the others, cannot join the council’s housing list because his ID has been stolen. Sam had to cobble the money together to buy one before he could join the waiting list.

Family is not always an easy option. Jenny grew up in care, Ricardo’s parents have recently died, and Sam’s mother is still with his abusive step-father. Sam speaks to his mother every few days on the phone, and I ask if his step-father might not have changed in twenty-odd years. “I don’t want to see if he’s changed or not” is the understandable reply. And it takes a lot to admit you need help in any case.

Coming through Jimmy’s door makes you a “hero” in Barry’s eyes. And he explains that the council only has a legal duty to house minors or those older than 55. Even those who have left abusive homes are legally classed as “intentionally homeless”. In this case the council “will be very sympathetic, don’t get me wrong” but it “has no duty to you whatsoever”. If you are not from Cambridge, the council also “has no duty to you whatsoever”.

Coping in the streets is hard. “It depresses me” to be homeless says Sam. I ask if he feels vulnerable. He has already told me that he collects medication from a surgery for his bipolar, but he is resolute: “You’re only vulnerable if you let yourself be”. During our conversation a policeman walks up to us. Sam

suggests that he might be about to be moved on. He has already been fined and cautioned for begging – “I didn’t pay the fine”. Instead, the policeman shows him a picture of a man and asks if Sam has seen him. Sam recognises him as Andy, and lets the policeman know where he last saw him. The policeman wants to bring Andy to “a place of safety”. Andy has mental health issues, explains Sam, and he is “picked on” by others who take his things.

Forming relationships helps. Sam and Jenny have been together for eight months. Speaking to Ricardo, he gestures across the street towards “Ezra, a Russian kid. I am 49, he is 26. He is like my son. We stick together”. But no one sits with their significant other, since they say that passersby tend not to give change if they see that people on the street are not alone. “I don’t know why”, says Sam frustrated. And for this reason I am hurried on after finishing our chat.

The social aspect of Jimmy’s is crucial say Ros and Barry. “Coming into Jimmy’s and chatting” with staff and volunteers, says Ros, gives guests “the opportunity to open up more” and “build their self-esteem”. Both say that the guests enjoy talking to volunteers especially. They are delighted with the support Jimmy’s receives from the community, Ros praising the students who want to leave “the bubble” and “truly experience Cambridge”.

This social aspect can be brought onto the street. If you buy someone a sandwich, says Ros, do not forget that it “might be the fifteenth sandwich they’ve had that day”. “Very rarely”, says Barry, “do people go up and say: ‘Are you a vegetarian? A vegan? Is there anything you’re allergic to?’ That’s a person, not a receptacle”. And “the act of stopping and saying hello, just engaging with another human being” can make all the difference to someone’s day.

“One day I was a senior project manager at the Ministry of Defence, the next I’m on the streets, and you think, blimey, how does this work then”

Features

Rebâtissons: reflections on the Notre Dame fire



Following last week's fire, Ellie Hunt discusses what the cathedral represents

We burst out of the metro station and we're off again. "Let's go, hurry!" I'm running, panting, lungs heaving, feet eating up the pavement, thinking to myself 'Mon Dieu, I'm unfit'. The *Hôtel de Ville* slips by in a blur of windows and chimney-tops, and I can just make out *liberté, égalité, fraternité* underneath the clock. Cars beep as we stumble onto the zebra crossing, just as the lights change. It's alright, no one obeys traffic laws here anyway. I'm laughing to myself in this moment of madness and shout back to the others, "come on, we're going to miss it!"

We've booked a tour, but we're already five minutes late. I can see the Seine up ahead, we're nearly there. We dodge tourists and vaguely annoyed Parisians along the final stretch of pavement and, finally, we skitter to a stop at her feet. Her bells start to ring proudly for Paris, welcoming us, glad we made it on time. As I'm smiling up at those tow-

ers in wonder, more out of breath than I'd care to admit, a familiar tune from my childhood comes to me: *Some say the soul of the city is the toll of the bells...*

A few months later I stand frozen in horror in front of the TV in the kitchen, watching flames engulf the roof, creeping ever-closer to the bell towers, and I'm glad we made it on time too. Being the most cliché MML student in Cambridge, I really love Paris and I tend to visit whenever I have the time and the money – which, let's face it, isn't very often at all. Three guesses as to where I'm spending my year abroad, though.

But this January the stars aligned and I dragged four friends along with me. No matter how many times I go to Paris there's still something I haven't done before that finds its way onto the itinerary, and this time it was climbing the Notre Dame and seeing the bells and the gargoyles. We were lucky enough to do both of those things, and to take in the views over the Seine, to walk along its marble floors and under the beautiful gothic archways, to admire the art, to ponder the history of the stone sculptures, to stand in the candlelit hush and appreciate the intricacy iconic rose windows.

If you have scrolled through just about any social media platform for even just five minutes over the last few days, you will have noticed the great flood of condolences, anecdotes, stories and pictures that accompany tragedies like this. However you will also have seen the posts in retaliation to this culture, telling

▲ The view from one of the Notre Dame's towers

(ELLIE HUNT)

the world to catch a grip and stop crying over a building. But I ask them to soften their cynicism, because these platforms are designed with the purpose of sharing with other people, so let them share this sadness. Because people are grieving, and this is a great loss.

We are so connected today that the sense of togetherness in grieving an event like this is humbling. This cathedral saw Napoleon crowned, endured the French revolution, and survived two world wars. It is a place of worship, one of a kind, an example of beautiful gothic architecture that was one of the first cathedrals ever to use flying buttresses. It houses important relics for the Catholic faith, such as the Crown of Thorns and the tunic of Saint Louis. Its bells have celebrated and mourned world history for over eight hundred and fifty years. While in Christianity there is an emphasis on casting off material possessions, there is also a need for unity in a place of worship. This togetherness is a crucial part of so many religions and could be seen on the banks of the Seine as Parisians solemnly sang 'Ave Maria' together, watching their sacred place, their sanctuary, burn. I am one of many enchanted by the Notre Dame and, as the ancient MML cliché goes, it remains one of my favourite places in the world. Like so many others, I want to see it restored to its former glory and I firmly believe it will be, thanks to the indomitable French spirit – even if Macron's five-year deadline for that restoration does seem a lit-

“The sense of togetherness in grieving an event like this is humbling”

tle optimistic. Bookshops are uniting to give their shares of sales of Victor Hugo's 'The Hunchback of Notre Dame', which has soared back to the top of Amazon France's best-sellers list, to the rebuild efforts. Poignant, given that in 1831 Hugo wrote it for the very same reason – to save the then dilapidated cathedral.

But even I, the biggest Parisian fan-girl I know, find it hard to stomach that €800 million can be raised in mere days for a cathedral when 8.8 million people in France live below the poverty line, when we are facing the crisis of global warming, when there are tragedies like this happening daily around the world (look at the Louisiana Church Fires) which don't receive this kind of aid or recognition. The White House sends its condolences and offers assistance, but there is still so much left to be done in Puerto Rico. Lauren Bastide (journalist, host of the feminist podcast *La Poudre* and iconic Parisienne) noted her disgust in a since-removed instagram story, saying that these billionaires will pay anything to secure themselves a spot in the Panthéon. One twitter user received a lot of backlash for saying the images of the Notre Dame alight were 'aesthetically pleasing'. Meanwhile, hoaxes, conspiracy theories and islamophobic comments were making their round within an hour of the blaze beginning. Philippe Karsenty, a media analyst and conspiracy theorist, called this "a French 9/11" live on Fox News and continued by saying "of course you will hear the politically correct story that it was an accident..."

And so we left the Notre Dame, walking back out into the hazy glare of a late-winter afternoon. The daylight blinding compared to the dim of the cathedral. The busy rush of people outside, taking their pictures, queueing to get in, dodging crowds with places to be, seemed like another world to that we had just left. Religious or not, the Notre Dame has a presence, the unmistakable hand of history holds it dearly. We walked towards the Left Bank, intending to call into Shakespeare and Co. But as we walked away, I stopped for a moment on the plaque marking *Point Zéro*. Yes, I'm that person in the group, the one who you'll probably lose.

Here, on this island in the middle of the Seine, is the beating heart of Paris and the point from which all roads in France are measured. The Notre Dame sees travellers on their way, she should stand tall and proud in all her glory as a beacon of hope. She will. But with the centuries that have passed, watching over every journey, I think she would be echoing Esmerelda's sentiments. Justice. I continue on my way to the direction I think I saw my friends wander off in, the Notre Dame sending me on my way with the ghost of another melody: *I ask for nothing, I can get by. But I know so many less lucky than I. Please help my people, the poor and down-trod. I thought we all were the children of God.*

Running through Cambridge

Hannah Webb discusses the importance of taking time to breathe in the rush of the Cambridge exam term

Disclaimer: this isn't about running. Not really. I'm not about to launch into a lengthy set of aphorisms as to why you should buy an expensive pair of Asics ASAP and pound these hallowed streets. While the relationship between a healthy mind and a healthy body is most definitely (probably) a thing, the moralistic manner with which it is so often delivered into this world tends to stymie its effect. Doing exercise doesn't make you a better person, or a worse one at that.

First of all, I want to take feet out of the equation. Running, at least as I know it, isn't about fancy footwork. It's not about your pace, your style, whether you did a half or a whole marathon last year or how high you crank up the treadmill when you're feeling particularly lion-hearted.

The type of running I want to talk

▼ **Running can be a way to escape the rush of work and of stress**

(ANALOGICUS)

about – that I think is important to talk about – is much quieter, much simpler than that. It's about breathing.

At Cambridge, we breathe weirdly. We hold our breath when we are asked a question we cannot answer; we inhale sharply when we flip the first page of an exam; we exhale deeply when we get in from a long shift in the library. Our oxygen levels are all over the shop. The reality is that there is something exaggerated about the Cambridge term – its shortness, its intensity, the fact that the week starts on a Thursday (side note: why on earth?).

This place caricatures itself and sometimes it can be difficult to catch a breath.

Arriving back this week (not on a Thursday, mind), all the good breathing I had done over the break seemed to evaporate out of me and into the Cambridge atmosphere. I can't speak for everyone, but when I sign my name in the Reddit book at the beginning of the Easter term I get the vague feeling that I am making a deal with the Tripos devil. I solemnly swear to keep term. My lungs, forever a punctual barometer of my anxiety levels, began to go into overtime. Maybe that's hyperbolic, but so is exam term.

Everybody needs a way to manage their stress. However stoic, however nonplussed, however wholly indifferent you might be to what happens to you (academically speaking) at the end of your 3+ years here, the pressure gets to everyone at some point. No one, when it comes down to it, is too cool for this school.

As for me (emphatically uncool about it all and regularly in need of both literal and academic inhalers), I knew I needed to create a little corner of Cambridge in which I could breathe properly, regularly, deeply.

Whilst 'hermit-ing' for 6 weeks straight might appeal to many, it is not really a viable option (you do, at the very least, need to make it to the exam hall). This corner was going to have to be metaphorical, movable. In order for that to happen, I was going to have to get moving.

So, I went for a run.

Starting slowly, I loosened myself into the right-left oscillations that my body created. If we let ourselves get poetic for a moment, running is really a kind of alternated groundedness – a combination of free-fall and safe landing.

An exercise in catching yourself,

maybe.

There is a certain poetry to the choreography of running that its name (and the sweat) doesn't account for.

The rhythm was soothing, elucidating. The tiny mechanisms that were making this possible gradually became very big, very significant. Head, shoulders, knees and toes all working in concert to produce this kinetic symphony of muscle and motion. A transcendent hokey-pokey, if you like. Conducting it all: breathing.

Each inhalation threaded my body together, each exhalation unravelled it. In this cadence of contraction and expansion, perspective returned. Breathing isn't always easy, nothing that's worth anything ever is. Cambridge, too, falls into this category of difficult but valuable things.

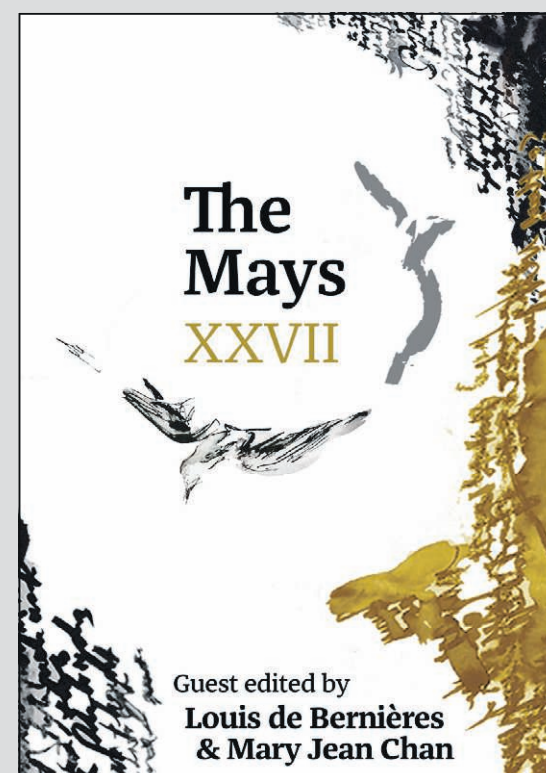
As this term hurtles into view, find some new way to slow down, to hone in, and to re-engage with the body and the brain that allowed you to be here in the first place.

It doesn't have to be running; it could be stretching, sitting (N.B. not at a desk), walking, singing, dancing. Even rowing. Anything that helps you breathe, and breathe properly.

“*Running is really a kind of alternated groundedness – a combination of free-fall and safe landing*”



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Opinion

Extinction Rebellion's action excludes those most affected by climate change

The conscious decision by Extinction Rebellion organisers to engineer mass arrests alienates marginalised voices

Over the last week I, and many others, have been confronted with one recurring question: why are we not attending the Extinction Rebellion protests in London? Exhausted by the constant need to explain myself and my absence from these protests, I thought it might be helpful to gather some of my thoughts on Extinction Rebellion (hereafter XR) in one place.

My chief criticism of this organisation should be fairly easy to grasp: XR is inherently exclusionary. Its direct actions – as described by founding member Roger Hallam – are specifically designed in order to engineer as many arrests as possible. This marginalises the voices of minority groups most vulnerable to arrest and to police violence (including, but not limited to, working class communities and people of colour). These are the very groups worst impacted by climate change and environmental degradation, and so excluding their voices from actions against this crisis is hardly conducive to an effective or sustainable movement. If such groups are to be included in XR, this is inevitably in a “supporting role”, thus reproducing pernicious racial and class divides within a movement which should be set on demolishing these. Members of XR frequently attempt to bypass these criticisms by claiming that they are “using their privilege” on behalf of others. This is something which I find both paternalistic and patronising: I desire my own voice within the environmental movement. I do not want to be spoken for.

In addition to the above, it should be noted that XR have been known to collude with police in an effort to maximise arrests. While seeking to generate public sympathy for protestors suffering police repression, the movement's leadership appears to be complicit in and actively aiming for this repression. This is self-evidently contradictory and hypocritical. More importantly, however, it risks undermining public support for protests in real cases of repressive state action.

This dangerous tendency is further encouraged by XR's representation of their – majority white, middle-class – actions as prime examples of “good” protests (aided by the media and police, who have described protestors as “nice”, and essentially non-confrontational). This narrative only makes sense if constructed in opposition to an imagined image of “bad” protest. Given the Met's history of violence directed against people of colour and working class communities, too often justified by (false) claims regarding the victim's supposed aggression, it is easy to see which demographics might be chosen to represent the “Other” in this binary. Such narratives legitimise the targeting of vulnerable communities. Serious discussion needs to be held on the issue of XR's potential complicity.

As if the above wasn't enough, leading figures such as Hallam have been known

to compare Rebels' arrests to those of the US civil rights movement – during which real, racialised police violence destroyed thousands of lives. These comparisons are inappropriate and trivialising. They merely serve to make the group's tactics even more alienating and insulting.

When talking to XR members about these issues, I tend to receive two responses. The first is the claim that they have not witnessed any exclusionary behaviour in XR circles. This hardly stands up to scrutiny. If the person in question bears considerable racial and social privilege, then it stands to reason that they will not have personally encountered such attitudes. Besides this, as I hope to have made clear, what we are talking about is not exclusionary actions taken by individuals – the problem lies within a wider institutional structure which works to marginalise particular voices.

Secondly, XR members will tell me that I should criticise the movement from the inside. This comes from a real place of arrogance. XR is *not* the world's only environmental organisation, and the assumption that a refusal to participate in their actions amounts to a rejection of environmental politics is frankly insulting. This response also betrays a wilful ignorance of the terms on which I am arguing. I – and many others – do not see joining this movement as a realistic possibility. The burden should not be on us to enter spaces within which we are deeply uncomfortable to reform them. Instead, we hope that those currently within those spaces might recognise that they have a problem with alienation, and work to change that – opening spaces in order to encourage diversity, rather than blaming minority groups for refusing to engage with closed spaces.

It is important to note that such criticisms and demands have long been directed towards this organisation without yielding results. In such a context, it may be time for XR members to consider whether there might be institutional barriers preventing these messages effecting real change within the group. A critical discussion regarding the movement's leadership, internal hierarchies, decision making structures, and the extent to which they might be inimical to substantive change, is long overdue.

As a disclaimer, I should make it clear that I have a huge amount of respect for many friends involved in this organisation, and I do not hold all members responsible for the decisions of all others. Movements of this size necessarily encompass a range of perspectives, and generate diverse experiences. Furthermore, it is my sincere hope that the following issues can in fact be resolved, and the movement sustain itself – continuing to grow and develop its politics. However, this needs to be done with considerable urgency, and there are significant barriers in the way of such progress at present.



▲ A Metropolitan police officer at an Extinction Rebellion protest in London last week (KARLIS DAMBRANS)

Beth Bhargava

Lucy Cavendish's feminist work is not done — it should not take the decision to go co-ed lightly

Lucy Cav's newest policy change is not a progressive endeavour

Gen Riccoboni & Laura Carman

As alumnae of Lucy Cavendish College, we are disappointed by the College's recent changes to its admissions policy, opening the College to students of all genders from the age of 18. The decision was hailed by the College, a number of alumnae, and outside observers as a progressive, courageous decision that addressed the needs of contemporary academia.

Yet since its creation in 1965, Lucy Cavendish has been a haven for mature women to access and enjoy a Cambridge education – it is the only college in Europe specifically for women aged 21 and older. We believe that women's colleges should continue to exist, and hold that they meet a unique need within the Cambridge microcosm. That's not to say they should remain static in the face of social change. Many Lucy students and faculty, ourselves included, have long advocated for the inclusion of self-identifying trans women and non-binary students, as well as increased outreach and financial support to those from marginalised backgrounds. We stress that inviting self-identifying trans women to apply and be supported by the College is *not* the same as inviting all. Lucy Cavendish is a unique sanctuary for women and provides a much needed space dedicated to the personal and academic needs of mature women – needs that are often different to those of younger students.

Changing the unique and long-stand-

“To say that the mission of the college has been achieved is to imply that the work of feminism is complete in university contexts”

ing mandate of a College should be done carefully and thoughtfully. However, the stated justifications for Lucy Cavendish changing its admissions policy are, in our view, circular. The College stated that the policy change will better help the college reach out to disadvantaged students. It claims that the “mission of the College has been fulfilled”, in that now the overwhelming majority of women, “regardless of their background” can attend university at 18 or 19.

We reject this dichotomy between “mature women” and “disadvantaged students” in the strongest terms. Firstly, it is patently untrue that the overwhelming majority of women are now able to go to university at 18 or 19, “regardless of their background”. Global realities of racial, national, class, and gender inequality all systemically and disproportionately block women, especially women of colour, from both equal opportunities and equal outcomes.

Secondly, we wholeheartedly agree that greater outreach and actual support to disadvantaged students is needed. But we were already here. Many Lucy students are first-generation university students, women of colour, women with disabilities, and women who financially support family members. Lucy students have children, have had careers before attending university, come from around the world, and grew up in radically different socioeconomic circumstances. These realities are inextricably linked to our daily experience of academia and

the way our academic studies relate to our lives. We have all long needed *additional* support from the College, not a changed mandate that de-prioritises our needs and does not give us targeted assistance. Our concern is that there will inevitably be a negative impact upon the provision of support and resources to the amazing women who *need* Lucy Cavendish following these changes.

To say that the mission of the college has been achieved is to imply that the work of feminism is complete, at least in university contexts. We do not believe that the College, a proudly feminist organisation, necessarily meant to imply this. However, just recently we have seen rampant sexual violence across campuses globally, a number of scandals involving sexual and racist harassment here at Cambridge, and the persistence of inequalities in pay and status between men and women in academia. Many of our sisters worldwide continue to struggle, to be prevented access to education, and fight for equal rights.

It is clear that, as the various ‘decolonise’ movements and working groups across Cambridge (and universities worldwide) continue their good work and look for support from departments and colleges, intersectional activism and ideas remain prevalent. We do not believe our work as women, as feminists, as activists, is ‘done’.

Moreover, supporting students from marginalised backgrounds means directly, actively, and relentlessly pursu-

ing real access initiatives and putting money where it matters. That's something which is potentially impossible with a financial situation so dire that it has necessitated the admissions policy change. We believe that this policy shift should not be hailed as a ‘progressive’ endeavour, but rather, as an unfortunate necessity. We therefore encourage the College to offer more detailed plans on their ideas for supporting marginalised students, and open these to student and alumni feedback.

Ultimately, if the College's existence and financial stability depends on a policy change, so be it. We both love Lucy Cavendish College, and want nothing more than for it to persist and thrive.

But this is a change that comes with consequences, and could risk damaging an ethos and environment that has been decades in creation. Thus, as Lucy Cavendish prepares to implement the change, it must continue to grow as a college with the right support, better recruitment and media, and a stronger focus on the betterment of the college with respect to student wellbeing.

It is impossible to see this change as anything more than an regrettable and retrograde step, and it must be followed by a renewed commitment to progressive and feminist values, principles the college should continue to uphold and represent. Ultimately, we implore all colleges to remember that students (prospective, current, and alumnae) are their *most* important stakeholders.

WomCam's executive must include a class rep

Class background colours many women and non-binary people's experiences at Cambridge, and WomCam must provide for this

Belle George

Cries of “women, united, will never be defeated!” echoed from the protestors in the Reclaim the Night March at the end of Lent term. The march is organised annually by the CUSU Women's Campaign (Womcam) which operates to “support and represent all women and non-binary students at Cambridge”, asserting itself as “the main representative body for women in the University”.

Womcam is faced with an opportunity to make meaningful change with the addition of a representative for working class female and non-binary students. Currently, the lack of a class representative is symptomatic of the marginalisation of working class students in Cambridge, long dominated by students from privileged backgrounds. This opportunity for change should not be passed over.

Seven of the roles on the Womcam Executive Committee are ‘representational officers’. These represent LGBT, trans, disabled, graduate, international and BME students of marginalised genders on Womcam, yet there is a gaping hole for a dedicated representational officer for those from working class backgrounds. This lack of representation is not limited to Womcam – JCR and MCR committees, despite reserving positions for other marginalised groups, lack class reps, often leaving the representation of working class students to access officers.

Representation has improved recently – in Michaelmas, CUSU voted to adopt Class Act as an official liberation cam-

paign. But while the Class Act liberation campaign has a Women's Officer, Womcam does not have a reciprocal role for the representation of working class female and non-binary students in Cambridge.

Women and working class students have been traditionally underrepresented at Cambridge. In 1970 only 13% of undergraduate Cambridge students were female. Similarly, in 1961 only 27% of all students at Cambridge had attended a state grammar school – the only type of maintained school to send pupils to university at the time. Statistically, the situation has improved: in 2017, 48% of accepted students were female and 64% were from state schools.

However, breaking down this figure further reveals that Cambridge still has a long way to go in terms of representation of working class women. Of the 1,292 female Home students accepted to Cambridge in 2017, only 528 attended comprehensive schools, sixth form colleges, or further education and tertiary colleges. 422 came from independent schools and 205 from grammar schools. With only around 232 grammar schools across the UK, this is not particularly representative. It's obvious that there is room for improvement in terms of access for working class students, but it should not stop at admission. A representative on Womcam would continue access efforts for working class female and non-binary students.

Nationally, working class women have also been largely invisible from the history of feminism. Cambridge is not an exception – looking at figures like

Millicent Fawcett who were central in the push for getting women accepted to the University (as well as part of the movement for female suffrage), one sees a history of predominantly white and middle class women.

Developments in feminist theory and practice mean we can look back on Cambridge's early feminists with a critical eye, while still appreciating the commitment they showed in the fight for gender equality. An intersectional perspective highlights the danger of women's issues being appropriated by middle and upper class women who risk ignoring or tokenizing issues disproportionately affecting working class women.

Feminism at our University must not be alienating to working class students. Just as other groups of marginalised female and non-binary students including those who identify as BME, LGBT+ and disabled merit their own WomCam representative, so do those from working class backgrounds.

A recent *Varsity* article drew attention to the high rents paid by students at Newnham, Murray Edwards and Lucy Cavendish, Cambridge's three female-only colleges. The burden of high rents has more of an impact on lower income students at these colleges, demonstrating the need for an understanding of how class background changes female students' experiences.

Concern about high rent is only one of the numerous factors that impact the lives of working class students in Cambridge. When considering the burdens faced by lower income students, money is often

“Feminism at our University must not be alienating to working class students”

the first to spring to mind. However, this is a simplistic understanding of class, blind to cultural and social factors that are inextricable from people's lived experiences. To fail to see this is to obscure institutionalised sexism and elitism. Suffice to say, experiences of social class at Cambridge are influenced by far more than just bank balance. Uncomfortable experiences grow not only from a disparity of wealth but also from a disparity of cultural capital. Womcam must actively work to counter the feelings of exclusion and discomfort that stem from working class students' encounters with these pervasive attitudes by providing a network of solidarity and support.

One anonymous opinion from a survey conducted by the women's officer on Class Act captured the need for a class representative on Womcam in a nutshell, saying that they “would prioritise representation of students who come from a nontraditional background, ensuring they are a part of a conversation which includes and values their experiences”.

The unique nature of the struggles faced by working class women merit a representative for them. Next term's committee elections will demonstrate' passion for continuing the tradition of dismantling structures and countering the practices which inhibit the experiences of female and non-binary students. Channelling part of this passion towards bettering the experiences of current and future working class students through the creation of a class representative role must be a priority..

Opinion

The feminist student left must engage with antisemitism if it is to be truly intersectional

My Jewish identity has all too often seemed to undermine my place in the student left, writes Sarah Davidson

Sarah Davidson

Since starting University, my identity as both a feminist and a Jew has been increasingly called into question. Somehow my religion seems at odds with the language and space of the student Left that most of the time I am comfortable and fluent in. Yet surely, by virtue of being Jewish, and even more so because I can't pass off as being a 'white-Jew', I am part of the host of minorities that the Left should be fighting for. More often than not however, this is not the case.

Even the Women's March Movement last year was described by an article in the New York Times as "roiled by accusations of anti-Semitism". It was reported that Women's March activists were "grappling with how they treat Jews – and whether they should be counted as privileged white Americans or "marginalised" minorities". This was put into sharper focus in the aftermath of the October mass shooting in Pittsburgh, when 11 people were gunned down at their synagogue. If not clear before, it is undeniable after that antisemitism continues to exist.

Thus, what these activists face is a test of intersectionality. A chance to look at a gendered experience in a way that shows how women's experiences are defined and attacked on account of their identity, religion, ethnicity, class

and race; and how often these attacks do not adhere to the neat categories of the Left. Vanessa Wruble, an early organiser of the Women's March, said that she was told by one of the march leaders that "we really couldn't centre Jewish women in this or we might turn off groups like Black Lives Matter" since members of the group have expressed solidarity with Palestinians under Israeli Occupation.

Yet my relationship with Israel has never been uncomplicated and it should not undermine my place in the feminist Left. We can acknowledge Palestinian oppression and anti-Semitism at the same time – they are not mutually exclusive. In the words of April Rosenblum, an academic and activist, "Every oppression is different, and every oppressed group deserves our time and commitment to learning what their specific experience is like, and how we can best support their struggle for liberation." Moreover, the conflict does not justify the use of Anti-Semitic tropes that place 'the Jew' in a capitalist, religiously conservative, right-wing discourse. Such tropes hugely undermine our struggle for mutual understanding and equality. While, of course, this recycling of Anti-Semitic tropes isn't confined to feminist spaces, it is unequivocally a feminist issue.

Ultimately, we have not faced the realities of our society if we think that white supremacy is fuelled by a hate that

limits itself only to certain groups. By saying we can only appease one minority group at a time, aren't we are just simply perpetuating the inequalities we are trying to extinguish in the first place? Surely we can fight Islamophobia, racial injustice and Anti-Semitism at the same time? They do not need to be flattened, straightened or ironed to fit someone else's definitions. Indeed, the idea that we can only legitimise one gendered experience at a time is detrimental to our strive for equality.

While the Women's March in America might seem fairly detached, it highlights what has become a commonplace attempt to detach Feminism from anti-Semitism. This February, students at the University of Essex wanted to start a Jewish Society. A poll was conducted and revealed that a total of 36% of students at the University voted against the creation of a Jewish Society – a safe space for all self-identifying Jews – at the University. Jsoc provides a religious framework, for all denominations, at University. For some, it is a Shabbat meal, for others, it is a space in which you can feel unashamed of your cultural differences. Therefore, the denial of Jewish students such a space was shocking enough, nevermind the silence that followed it. My feeling is that student politics, which creates safe spaces for Women and Non-Binary people (and

therefore BME women, disabled women and LGBT+ people), whether actively or passively, does not engage with the rise of anti-Semitism. We must realise that injustice and inequality exist in pluralities and while sometimes they challenge each other, we cannot silence them.

This is not merely a personal struggle. This is a widespread contradiction that places the burden on Jewish people regardless of their political views, religious affiliation or ethnic background to bear the guilt and consequences of actions that are not their own. This contradiction strips away not just the notion, but the possibility of rights that a liberal society promises all of us. It infringes upon our freedom of speech, our right to self-identify, to practice our religion without the fear not only of ethnic violence but social stigmatisation. It essentially tells us that because of our religion, in any of its manifestations (culture, faith or ritual) we are simply not welcome.

So I'm posing a problem inherent to the way we conduct our feminism – our struggle for equality, liberation, reclamation and emancipation. My place – as both a self-identifying Woman and a Jew – has been defined by the conflict I've presented here. I'm not saying this is simple: I'm just making what is a complicated struggle for equality a little bit more complicated and a little bit more equal. I invite you to as well.

“The idea that we can only legitimise one gendered experience at a time is detrimental to our fight for equality”

We cannot lose Extinction Rebellion's momentum

After a week with Extinction Rebellion, Tigs Louis-Puttick writes that though XR's rhetoric must be developed, it has proved that resistance can be powerful as well as peaceful

Tigs Louis-Puttick

Arriving in London last week, I intended to pop by the Extinction Rebellion protest for a few hours. Yet after chatting to other 'rebels' on tree-lined, car-free, bee-populated Waterloo Bridge, I was compelled to stay longer. From kitchen volunteers, to arrestees, to media teams, everyone was contributing to create this beautiful, peaceful disruption. At one point, as waves of police advanced up Waterloo Bridge, I realised my time was no more valuable than anyone else's. I joined the 'arrestable' people sat singing on the ground, and spent the next 12 hours in a cell.

Whilst my experience of arrest was emotionally charged yet largely positive, it is of utmost importance to recognise that this experience was a privilege I was afforded due to my identity as a middle class, white, English-speaking woman. Many are subject to entirely different, negative police encounters due to structural racist, anti-immigrant and classist sentiments which persist in Britain (and the world).

Returning to Waterloo Bridge 12 hours after my arrest, I found my bag exactly where I had left it, demonstrating the spirit of community and trust created by the Rebellion. Throughout the week, each occupied site became a space for sharing stories and ideas with complete strangers. We supported each other through feelings of responsibility and sadness alongside determination rebelliousness. From dancing in the road in Parliament Square at 4am as traffic lights changed,

unheeded, to watching a woman in a wheelchair blockading Oxford Circus as lines of police advanced, this week was an unforgettable experience. The Extinction Rebellion started in response to imminent climate disaster. In 12 years time, the 1.5°C global temperature increase will be irreversible. Sea levels and extinction rates are rising at unprecedented speed, and extreme weather events are devastating communities – particularly in the global South. Preferring to continue with 'business as usual', governments have been complacent and even denied that climate change exists. By burying its head in the safer sands of Brexit negotiations, the UK government refuses to prioritise the true emergency.

In light of this, XR demands for governments to: be truthful about climate change; produce legally binding policies to reduce carbon emissions to net 0 by 2025; and establish a national Citizen's Assembly to oversee the changes. The demand for a 2025 zero-carbon target is ambitious – but not impossible. As Andrew Simms from the Rapid Transition Alliance commented, if we treated the climate crisis in the same way as economic crises, the results would be astonishing. It is easy to forget how powerful people working together can be, especially with both governments and corporations onside. Non-violent public disruption has become one of the only options available. I regret that many people's journeys through London have been disrupted this week, but such disruption is minor in comparison to the

chaos of climate change. Why should a Londoner's commute be prioritised over the lives of so many others? With over 1000 arrests (making it the biggest recent act of civil disobedience), all action has remained non-violent. Continuous effort is being made to ensure the spirit of the movement is positive and painted with a beautiful wash of togetherness, dissolving political and social divisions and embodying true solidarity.

However, the arrest-based tactics of XR have alienated and marginalised people of colour, working class people and disabled people. Advocating – and glorifying – arrest as a tactic ignores historic and ongoing oppression at the hands of police which many people face. XR must reconsider their methods in order to become truly inclusive. Critical to this is decentralising the organisation to allow for the introduction of a wider variety of methods. I feel that such analysis has already begun this week. Speakers reminded us that XR non-violent direct action is a privileged experience far removed from the non-violent movements of MLK, Gandhi and Fawcett; people were invited to the stage to discuss their own international struggles; and working groups were set up by the People's Assembly to tackle the barriers currently preventing inclusivity.

I respect people who have not participated in the protest due to institutional problems within XR. If the movement does not include and amplify the voices and concerns of the communities most affected, it cannot be truly rebellious.

However, given the urgent nature of this crisis, XR's powerful momentum cannot be lost, but its rhetoric and method must be developed.

So – has it been successful? The aims of disruption have been realised, with West End businesses reporting losses of £12m after only 2 days. At the same time, a study was conducted which found that the occupation had more support than opposition from the public. Passers-by gave everything from 'thank yous' to food as they walked past occupied sites. Appearances from Emma Thompson and Greta Thunberg increased public support and media coverage. Of course, there were negative reactions too, but even if people don't support the methods, discussion of climate change has exploded, with climate-related headlines splashed across the UK. We are waiting on MPs to respond. I hope they start enacting the changes we so desperately need. The XR movement is far from perfect, and requires much work to ensure it goes from strength to strength as we head into an uncertain future. Personally, I have felt inspired, empowered and humbled by my experience of the Rebellion. Despite the underlying climate sadness which characterised the protest, it has proved that resistance can be powerful, yet also peaceful, uplifting and imbued with hope and joy. As Greta Thunberg said to the thousands-strong crowd at Marble Arch, protesters will never stop fighting for this planet. I certainly don't plan to, and if anything I feel this is really only the beginning.

“Personally I have felt inspired, empowered and humbled by my experience of the Rebellion”



vulture

Photography by
Lucy Kirkwood

► **ARTS**
NOSTALGIA THROUGH
SNACKS • 24
► **FASHION**
QUEENS' STREET
STYLE • 28-29
► **THEATRE**
FORGETTING MY
LINES • 33

Vulture's Easter term theatre overview



▲ (Clockwise from left) *Saint Joan* (Becky Teagles), *The Footlights International Tour Show* (Instagram: @footlightstour) and *The Revlon Girl* (Benjamin Johannes Hjorth)

Varsity's highlights of the upcoming theatrical calendar include ADC shows, late-night comedy, and college Shakespeare.

Despite the oncoming exams, this term promises a huge variety of exciting student theatre. An eclectic assortment, ranging from May Week Shakespeare to jazz-influenced Marlowe to late night stand up, *Varsity* Theatre picks our highlights for the term ahead.

Week 1 - *Saint Joan* at the ADC Theatre, *Magnum* at the ADC Theatre, and *Constellations* at Corpus Playroom. The production team describe it as 'a cerebral tragedy of faith and power,' this period adaptation of George Bernard Shaw's 1923 play 'gets to the heart of what makes Joan such a world-changing figure'. Meanwhile *Magnum* is a multi-media sex comedy. The story of Kia who wants to lose her virginity whilst still a fresher. Along

the way she discovers her inner sexuality in an uplifting tale about the unbreakable power of female friendship. Finally, *Constellations* tells the tale of lovers who meet twice under different circumstances; coincidence propels them beyond friendship.

This production looks to be a thought-provoking drama which interrogates our approach to the decision making behind relationships, as well as questioning the nature of choice itself.

Week 2 - *The Revlon Girl* at the ADC Theatre and *Techno Electra*. Last term our reviewer gave 'The Revlon Girl' (a Brickhouse Production) 5 stars and praised the cast for their "subtlety and gentleness". Director Geraint Owen describes it as the only play that has ever made him cry from the page, staging a true story from eight months after the Aberfan disaster that became a hugely significant event in Wales' cultural history.

The play dramatises a meeting between the bereaved mothers of the village and a representative from Revlon. *Techno Electra* combines Sophocles' tragedy with a chorus of slam poets and a score of original electronic music.

Week 3 - *Market Magic*: Footlights Harry Porter Prize 2019 at the ADC Theatre Late and *Private Peaceful* at Fitzwilliam College au-

ditorium. *Market Magic*, chosen by famous funny-person Alex Horne as the winner of the Footlights' Harry Porter Prize 2019, and written by Jamie Hancock, promises to take customer service where no comedy has before.

For Ali, what begins as just another late-night shift in a low-end supermarket turns into an absurd and unsettling journey through a strangely familiar new world. This product contains sneering self-checkouts, consumerist creatures, conniving councils, and clandestine conspiracies. Consume at your own risk.

Private Peaceful, an adaptation of Michael Murpurgo's wartime classic tells the story of Tommo Peaceful as he follows his brother to defend his country. This play brings to life the emotional trauma of war on the Fitzwilliam stage.

Week 4 - *Doctor Faustus* at the Corpus Playroom and *FootDarks* (ADC Late). *Doctor Faustus*, adapts Christopher Marlowe's Renaissance play for the Corpus stage. Drawing on the well-known myth of the man who sold his soul to the Devil, this new production features original music and jazz funk choreography. *FootDarks* are three BME (they once heard "alt-white") stand-ups from the Footlights.

Find out why Danny Baalbaki believes white people prefer their dogs over their

children, how some people at Patrick Sylla's college became anxious about offering him fruit, and what Hasan Al-Habib has in common with Tommy Robinson.

Week 7 - The Footlights International Tour has their opening run at the ADC - Last year's tour travelled to London, Edinburgh, California, Boston, Chicago, New York, Cambridge, and many more.

This is the latest on offer from the group that launched many of the greatest names in British comedy, including Stephen Fry, Emma Thompson, Hugh Laurie, Mel Giedroyc, Sue Perkins, John Cleese, David Mitchell, Robert Webb and Olivia Colman.

May Week - Once exams are out of the way, the theatre scene is fully saturated! As *You Like It*, *Twelfth Night*, *La Naissance d'Osiris*, *Volpone*, *A Woman of No Importance*, college theatrical societies present their usual varied mélange of May Week theatre.

Typically outdoors, these classic plays are usually put together post exams and provide an injection of culture into the 'debauchery' of May Week!

Whether Shakespeare and his contemporaries or some pastoral opera on the banks of the Cam, this year's May Week productions will be something to look forward to at the end of a busy academic year.

Our top ten drugstore buys

Annabelle Gorman looks at what to buy without breaking the bank

YouTube and Instagram have become the main ways to find reviews and recommendations for makeup products. However, quite often, the products that come out on top are often way off budget and inaccessible due to localities and availabilities. As our feeds are constantly flooded with luxury makeup products, less expensive products become tainted by the view that they won't perform as well or last as long. At the time same time, we are encouraged to buy large quantities of makeup, to use multiple products for one purpose, and that the more makeup we wear the better we will look.

This is a false cause-and-effect analysis. Buying makeup on a university budget can be difficult. Instead of buying many products, it is better to find products that suit you best. Makeup should be about choosing an area of your face that you want to accentuate and bring attention to. Thus, by choosing just a few products off this list, it is possible to create a look that best expresses you and your personality. These individual drugstore items can be used to tailor your perfect every day and

night look. Remember: it is often not about the product, but how you use it!

L'Oréal Unlimited Mascara £11.99.

This is one of my all-time favourite mascaras. It's a great dupe for products such as Benefit's They're Real! mascara. It lengthens and dramatises lashes but is also super-buildable. This makes it perfect for daytime and evening use. Another great thing about this mascara is that it's completely budge-proof — so no need to fear the dreaded panda-eye!

NYX Worth the Hype Mascara £9.

Fancy something more striking? This lengthening mascara comes in the shades black, blue, and purple. While it appears electric blue in the tube, the colour is only visible when your lashes catch the light. This adds another dimension to either a more natural or distinctive look. This is a great choice for those who want to accentuate their blue eyes, whilst the purple shade would be suited to those with brown.

Rimmel Stay Matte Pressed Powder £3.99.

This powder is great at ensuring that your base stays put all day. The powder has a natural finish, so it is not too mattifying or cakey.

For dryer skin, lightly sweep over the T-Zone with a brush, whilst people with oilier skin can use this to touch up during the day.

Revolution 196 Colour Spectrum Palette £28.

The ONLY palette you will need. With 196

colors, the range of looks that can be created vary from a super natural look to something more creative and playful.

Yes, some of the matte colors do take a bit more blending than others. However, the shimmers and metallics are amazing, and these are applied best with your fingers rather than brushes. Once applied, they rival shades from Naked or Too Faced palettes.

Maybelline Master Precise All Day Eyeliner £6.99.

When comparing this liner to other high-end products, such as MAC's Brushstroke liner, it's clear that you don't have to spend much on liner to achieve the perfect wing!

This product has a very fine felt nib which means you have a lot of control over the accuracy of the line and wing. Once applied, the ink doesn't transfer or smudge.

Rimmel Lasting Finish Soft Colour Blush £3.99.

This is a very affordable and portable blusher due to its small size. It comes in four natural shades and gives the perfect pop of colour on the cheeks for a natural, day-to-day look.

Collection Lasting Perfection Concealer £4.19

This concealer has been raved out about by influencers for years, and it is still a makeup bag staple. It does what it says on the tin: a full-coverage, matte concealer that lasts all day.

The only drawback is that it can be drying, so put a small amount on your fingertips and lightly pat onto the under-eye or blemishes.

Revlon Ultra HD Lipcolour £7.99

For those who find lipsticks drying, this product is perfect. Revlon have created a unique product, as it is a combination of a lipstick and a lip balm. It glides on seamlessly without much work and doesn't accentuate dry areas. It is very nourishing without compromising colour pay-off.

EcoTools Eyeshadow Brushes £6.99

The right makeup brush can make a huge difference to the way that powders and creams sit and blend upon the skin.

Unfortunately, these can often be very expensive. However, this set is an affordable option with two double-ended, labelled brushes that seamlessly blend shadows. This would be a cheaper option for those considering brands such as Real Techniques.

NYX Proof it! Waterproof Eyeshadow Primer £6.

This primer appears white on the doe-foot applicator but dries clear on the lid. The consistency is not too wet, so it is easy to blend with your fingers or a brush. Once applied, eyeshadows eyeshadows applied on top wear very well and don't crease during the day. The only drawback is that as it dries, it loses its tackiness, so place the shadow on top right after applying the primer.



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The snacks our family's three generations grew up on

Sheren Mao makes a visit to Mr Chu's convenience store, in the latest instalment of her column documenting the stories of the owners of Hong Kong's traditional industries

Mr. Chu's store will forever hold a special place in my heart; since a young age, my parents have always brought me here on the weekends, as I find myself standing timelessly in front of the shop, drooling over the array of snacks while carefully making my pick for which goodies I wanted to have this time.

What makes Mr. Chu's traditional convenience store so distinct is very simple: nostalgia. Amidst the rapid gentrification in the surrounding neighbourhood, this store is one of the final surviving traditional convenience shops in business within the area, and Mr. Chu is currently its third generation owner. Something very interesting to note is that one can easily know this store has been operating for many years just from observing its layout: while this building's ground floor is the shop with a kitchen at the far back where the family prepares their products every morning, the second floor is the home to Mr. Chu and his family. This conjoined setting of shop and home is a very common feature of the late 1900s buildings of Hong Kong.

"Nostalgic snacks and biscuits, preserved fruits, bottled soft drinks... you name it, but our traditional Hong Kong cake delicacies like sesame rolls, red bean pudding, and fresh mango mochi still remain as our best sellers," Mr. Chu's wife proudly told me. "Every morning, we wake early to prepare most of these delicacies, which generally require a minimum preparation time of four to five hours. Otherwise, our other products like traditional bottled soft drinks and fruit teas," as she pointed to the three rows of colourful drinks on the wooden shelves, "are imported. But one thing that has remained unchanged all along is that we have been selling all these products since my grandfather-in-law's days."

If I am being completely honest, one would easily miss Mr. Chu's store as it is hidden in such an inconspicuous location, opposite two major supermarkets. However whenever I walk by, I never fail to see customers, ranging from toddlers to construction workers. It really is a heartwarming sight, and I am sure it is, too, a fulfilling feeling for the Chu's, in particular in light of the hardships they face when running this business.

"There's no denying it but there is not much joy to my job. I go through the same routine every and it gets quite boring sometimes. It also becomes tough when there are not enough people to help out or if business does not go well that day," Mr. Chu explained. "However, what keeps me going is having customers compliment our food and come back for more. In particular, it is extremely touching to see different generations from the same family purchase from us. Their kind words and support give my family and I motivation to continue this business in this

“Because the chances of... any successors are very, very slim, this makes me even more determined to last as long as possible in this business”

►▼ The goods on offer at Mr Chu's convenience store
(SHEREN MAO)



competitive society." A slight smile curved up on his face.

"Yes, making a living is the primary reason why this shop is still open, but my perseverance is also fuelled by my perception of what a privilege it is, to be able to create and share my home's most authentic food culture with future generations. In the recent years, I am sure you have seen numerous articles on the closing of many traditional convenience stores as rent prices skyrocket; this is definitely a pity as this means many younger people may never be able to savour and relive, even if it is just a little bit of, their parents' or grandparents' childhood days."

Seeing how there seemed to be a continual steady flow of customers at Mr. Chu's shop, I became more curious about how affected his sales and rent were by recent gentrification projects in the neighbourhood, and the future prospects of the industry.

"On one hand, thankfully, my grandfather bought this location, so we don't have

to worry much about rent prices and being evicted. On the other hand, even though this neighbourhood has had multiple new building projects in the past years, I would not say there has been a massive drop in our business. Yes, more tourists have been spotted around here, but they actually only make up about 0.01% of our consumers; people from the neighbourhood will always remain our main customers."

"In terms of the industry itself, it is no doubt these traditional convenience stores are in decline, and I would even dare say there is no use relying on the government at all. Commercialisation will do us little help as well. It really is ultimately up to the willpower and perseverance of existing owners to push on. Because the chances of having any successors are very, very slim, this makes me even more determined to last as long as possible in this business. It will most certainly be very regretful to have Hong Kong's nostalgic delicacies fade away."



‘I want to be a Machine’: review

Esmee Wright reviews Andy Warhol and Eduardo Paolozzi at the Scottish National Gallery

The snappily christened ‘Modern Two’, the second half of the buildings which makes up the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, is currently showing an exhibition of work by Andy Warhol and Eduardo Paolozzi. The exhibition is titled “I want to Be a Machine”, a quote from Andy Warhol, and, at least ostensibly, the exhibition is organised around both artists’ responses to the increased mechanisation of the world around them from their beginnings in the 50s to (in Paolozzi’s case especially) the very near modern day.

Andy Warhol, pop artist extraordinaire is iconic. Everyone knows who he is, or has seen his art in some way. Eduardo Paolozzi, I discovered when telling my friends about this exhibition, is apparently less universally recognisable. Born in Leith, at the edges of Edinburgh, to Italian immigrants in 1924, he died only in 2005, having created many notable works of art, and having been knighted for his for his achievements as a sculptor.

Paolozzi’s lack of fame was, to me, somewhat bemusing. From childhood, I have seen and interacted with Paolozzi’s work. His sculpture “The Manuscript of Monte Cassino” sits in front of St Mary’s Catholic Cathedral in Edinburgh, next to John Lewis, and is regularly used as an impromptu climbing frame by children on a Sunday, whether they are coming from church or merely a pilgrimage to the John Lewis soft furnishings department. It was built as a monument to the devastation of the Second World War, something which as the child of Italian immigrants, Paolozzi suffered from in a very particular manner. His



▲ Living in post-war Britain, Paolozzi saw the “new world” being created in image differently from the self-proclaimedly “commercial” artist Warhol INSTAGRAM:@BONNIESCOTLAND

father, grandfather and uncle were interned as enemy aliens and drowned when the boat they were being taken to Canada on was hit by a U-Boat. The sculpture itself consists of three monumental body parts, a hand, an ankle and a foot, all dissected by mechanic looking pieces of metal; a testament to the destruction of war, as well as the possibilities for rebuilding.

As Keith Hartley, Chief Curator and Deputy Director of Modern and Contemporary Art at National Galleries Scotland told The Edinburgh Reporter, although Paolozzi did not embrace the ‘Pop Art’ label, he was “invested” in popular culture.

This is demonstrated by the collages on show, including ‘Real Gold’ (1949), a mish-mash of images exemplifying something of the American ideal, including a corvette style car and ‘Real Gold’ Orange Juice. The exhibition does contain some of the images Paolozzi made to express his malaise when confronted with the modern world, including ‘Take off’ (1950). An ice skater leaping in a pink feathered costume is contrasted with an American WWII Hellcat in take off; an evocation both of the amazing advances humanity has made in art and mechanics, as well as the destructive potential and the fleetingness of the beauty created.

The silkscreen prints the gallery has on show also include ‘War Games Revised’ (1967), an image which appears to be taken from a computer game of the era. Yet there is a certain menace also from this dispassionate arrangement of weaponry; as the wall tag suggests, “computers seem to have organised some terrible military strategy to annihilate us”.

Living in post-war Britain, Paolozzi saw the “new world” being created in image and in advertising very differently from the work of self-proclaimedly “commercial” artist Warhol.

Rather than criticise, Warhol embraced and manipulated this new culture, something which, as the exhibition shows, explains ex-

of creating a brand, of selling oneself, and of using bold, striking imagery to do so. His prints of Marilyn Monroe, a series started in 1962, the year she died, are ubiquitous, and for good reason. The numerous bold copies made highlight not just the pervasiveness of celebrity culture, and by extent the power of advertising to artfully bring about that constant presence, but also their ephemeral nature; one moves onto the next one and the next one and the next one, each only very slightly different, each passed across so quickly that nothing is really taken in. If were to be asked which colours were used in the prints shown in this exhibition I would not be able to make more than a vague guess, despite the prominence of the image itself.

Warhol said ‘I want to be a machine’, and his artwork often reflects this drive to create the perfect advertisement as what is essentially a piece of performance art, to spew out print upon print of vivid image to fleetingly capture the attention of a ravaging audience before it moves on to the next big thing, and to be the thing that provides that new stimulus too.

Paolozzi, having seen the devastation of war, focused less on the voracity of the culture newly emerging, than on the fact that it existed at all.

Human ingenuity had created machines capable of wreaking destruction across continents, and yet that same enterprise wrought the most beautiful things, the danger, and fascination with which he explored across various mediums.

actly why Warhol is the better known of the two. He understood the emerging importance

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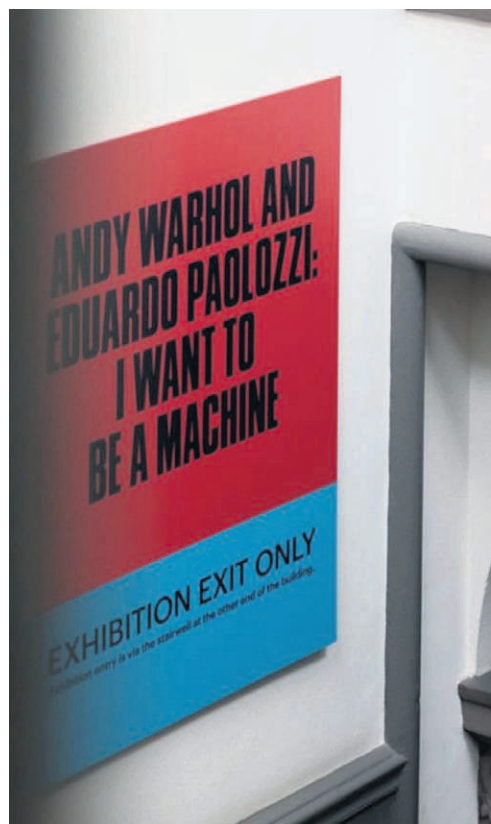
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▲ Two pop artists are showcased INSTAGRAM:@HELLOJOERUDI

Fashion let me find what I thought I'd lost

'Strong, autonomous and in control': Caterina Bragoli discusses how her relationship with fashion led to her recovery

Content note: anxiety

Aged 17, suspended in the vacuum of sixth form, I gradually watched people that were so familiar to me, and had been for six years, grow and evolve. Year nine house parties turned to *proper* nights out, people started to form real relationships, university was looming, and people's lives seemed to be going *just right*.

But mine didn't follow that pattern. It's the classic cliché that has become all-too familiar in recent media: anxiety became the arbiter of my life, and I slowly began to lose control. A void grew between my peers and I struggled to navigate the regularity of day-to-day life with this pain in my chest and an acute awareness of my fragility. If one more person told me "you're a shadow of your former self", I would have just about exploded.

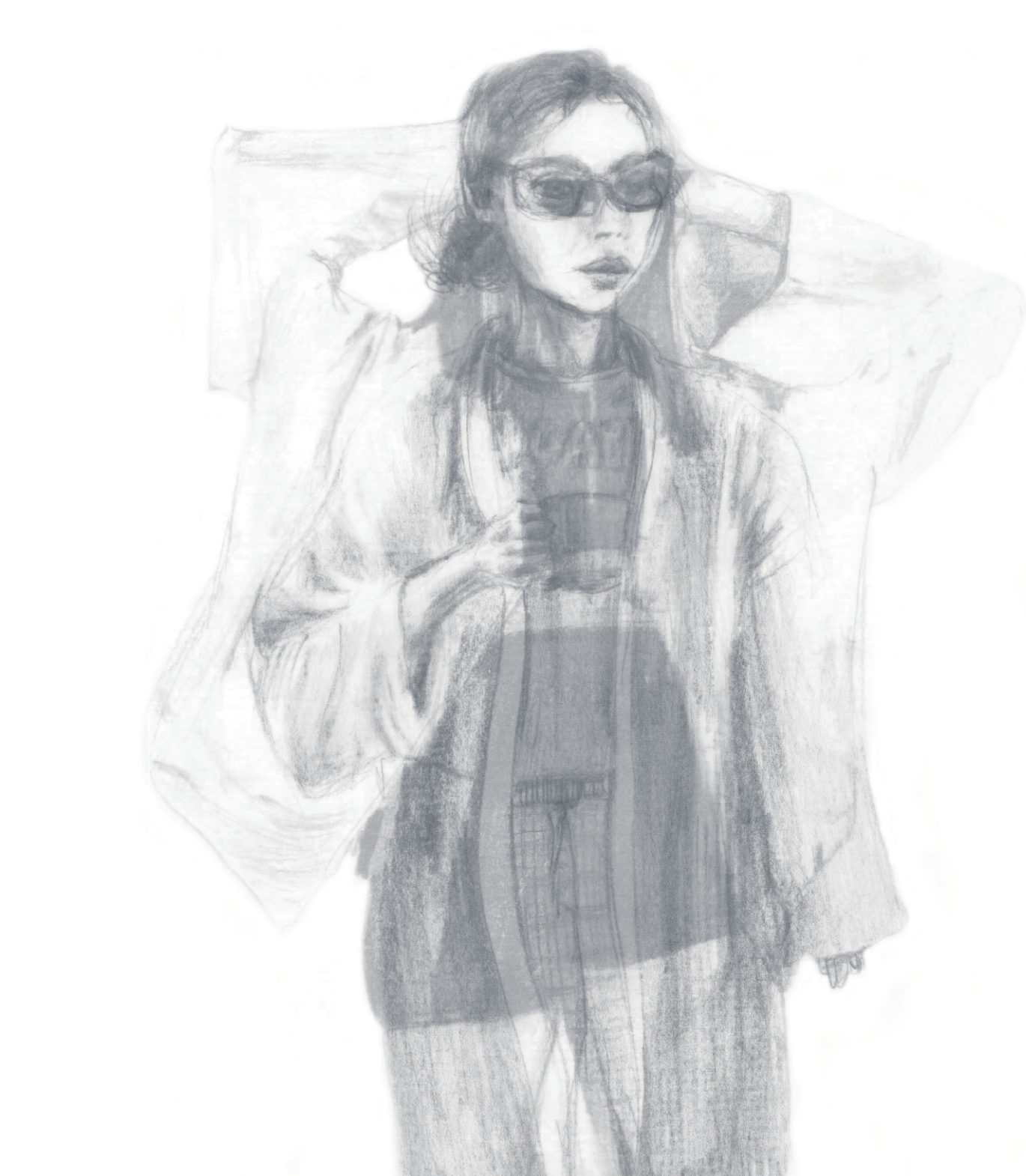
The phrase 'fashion is empowering' can prompt significant debate. How can something seemingly so superficial and disposable amount to empowerment? Whilst this is undeniably true, the notion of empowering fashion needs to be taken past face value. Empowerment takes place beyond an aesthetic significance: an emotional empowerment as a result of your choice of clothing. This is exactly what happened to me, and fashion became the catalyst to my recovery.

Grappling with this intangible realm of fashion was always a challenge. The wrack of fear that would overcome me the morning of non-uniform day, as I scrambled to piece together an outfit that was both fashion-forward yet socially acceptable, remains prominent in my memory. It felt like a precarious balancing act, wanting to wear unique pieces that I loved, but still fitting the mould carved out by those around me.

Resentment grew within, as many young girls and teenagers would have felt, at the prospect of constantly having to shun what I really felt represented me in clothing to wear what everyone else was. Fitting in essentially became a form of safety.

Nevertheless, as the world of fashion became slightly more tangible, I immersed myself in runway collections. The Fall-Winter 2015/16 Haute Couture Chanel Show became something I watched daily, rendering me in utter awe at the unbelievable craftsmanship and artistic license to create something that exceeded the boundaries of anything I could have ever dreamt of wearing. This undeniably triggered my gravitation towards avant-garde clothing.

Transgressing acceptable boundaries gave me a sense of exhilaration: walking down the street wearing men's pinstripe dungarees that were four sizes too big and a black trench coat that was so long it dragged on the floor became my go-to. This considerably hideous concoction that broke every single sartorial rule in the book attracted multiple comments, stares, and pointing, yet somehow, I subverted that feeling of being a walking spectacle into something more. I became a visual representation of who I wanted to be – someone willing to *challenge* gender boundaries – and every finger waving in my direction became a testament to that fact.



▲ ILLUSTRATION BY APOLLINE BOKKERINK FOR VARSITY

Despite thinking I had overcome the dichotomy of social acceptance and being true to my style preferences with each pair of boxy cigarette trousers I purchased, the former started to rear its head when entering sixth form. Even though wearing a uniform was thankfully a distant memory, somehow the students managed to create their own. Skinny jeans, a cropped top, accompanied by a bomber jacket and Adidas 'Superstars' was the outfit of choice for 500 students, and I struggled to conceptualise this. I struggled to not conform, which was when the floor-length coats were substituted.

Drawing a link between mental health and fashion can seem artificial, ridiculous, or even inconsiderate. How can something as important as mental health be degraded by the vanity of fashion? They seem like polar opposites, but the answer is simple. When fashion is the one source of refuge you have, when it's your armour and your expresser simultaneously, it can easily become a constant. A focal point of comfort and acceptance. Recounting how I felt to people that had no vested interest in the

whimsicality of fashion seems ludicrous even now. However, it can't be so easily dismissed: that feeling of extreme discomfort in a pair of tight, skinny jeans when I longed for my androgynous tailoring was damaging to the way I perceived myself.

Losing such an integral part of me was a forerunning contender in my anxiety battle. I mourned the loss of my creativity and my desire to eschew every sartorial expectation. I mourned the loss of the *me* that I was when I felt so enabled and inspired by my clothing. People are empowered by a myriad of things, often politically or socially, yet this doesn't serve to undermine the power that fashion had to elevate my self-worth and my defiance. Not being able to return to my source of refuge exacerbated the feeling of emptiness I had.

After months of relentless nothingness, I returned to that focal point of acceptance. It was the realisation that fashion is *mine*, and that my clothing belongs to *me*, that facilitated any kind of recovery. Going to the darkest corners of my wardrobe where I had seemingly attempted to ram my personality into allowed

myself to access that feeling of empowerment again. Dusting off the bejewelled jackets and vintage pieces that smelt as old as they looked felt like returning home, to an archived part of me that I could never ignore, as much as society had tried to make me.

Looking in the mirror will always be a double-edged sword, for most people. I am not exempt from the nitpicking and the scrutinising, however I have the pride to acknowledge what I am wearing as my own creation, as something that allows me to voice my disobedience. The enduring labels of superficial and vain will continue to be associated with fashion, because of the very nature of its marketing. Yet, it is equally as important to recognise fashion as an art form, because it takes a inspired and distinctive mind to conjure up outfits that I admire on the street daily. Fashion became my recovery, allowing me to access the parts of myself that I thought I had lost, but were being preserved through my clothing and the way that it made me feel. Strong, autonomous, and in control of my own perception of myself.

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Street style fit for a Queen

Lucy Kirkwood scouts out some of Queens' top dressers for some springtime outfit inspiration in this golden-hued shoot



◀ Clockwise from top left (Photography by Lucy Kirkwood)

Sarah – PBS, wearing a Unif jacket, thrifted skirt, shirt, and hand-me-down shoes

Elisa - History - wearing a Topshop shirt and jeans, Reebok sneakers, Depop earrings, a Levi's denim jacket and assorted necklaces.

Alice, Elisa and Sarah

Pimmy - Land Economy - wearing an Underarmour sports bra, New Look denim jacket, Calzedonia jeans, Nike sneakers, Prim and Proper earrings and a Swarovski necklace.

Namnueng - Engineering - wearing a Missguided sweater, Topshop jeans and Fila sneakers.

Alice - History - wearing a Topshop turtle neck and skirt, Zara blazer, a thrifted denim jacket, Dr. Martens boots and Asos jewellery.

Anna - MML (German and Russian) - wearing an Asos pinafore dress and shoes, a hand-painted H&M shirt, gifted necklaces, earrings from a Hanoi market and bracelets from charities and travels.

Liv - MML (French and Spanish) - wearing a Zara dress, Anthropologie headband, Victoria shoes, Tiffany jewellery and earrings found in a French market. With **Julie** - History and Politics - wearing an Urban Outfitters jacket and trousers, Zara top and Dr. Martens shoes.



Anderson .Paak's *Ventura*: is there really 'nothing new or sharp' about the cutting edge?

Shay Gillams writes that while this new album may hit all the right summery notes, it's lacking in the quirkiness through which .Paak has set himself apart

On first appearance, Anderson .Paak's *Ventura* seems to be the perfect antidote to exam term. Paak's sun-soaked lyrics and naturally swaggering vocals radiate over honey-glazed funk-soul grooves to create an album that'll chase even the darkest revision-based blues away. The tightly-produced 11-track effort is filled with guests (Smokey Robinson and Jazmine Sullivan are the stand-outs) doing what they do best, and combining with Paak's sandpapery yet oh-so-smooth singing and rapping to perfection. As an RnB funk-soul album, it's positively delightful.

Despite the appealing vibe, this is not a brilliant Anderson .Paak album. It feels too

safe, and so many of the artist's quirks feel subdued or erased. Listening to *Ventura* is more of a one-note experience than any of .Paak's prior works. That's not to say that the note *Ventura* hits isn't charming. The record puts you in a blissful mood, and makes the artist seem like a carefree crooner, recreating soulful classics with a hint of rap, like an indie Bruno Mars wannabe. It's nice, safe, sedentary and completely fine with what it is.

But nice, safe, sedentary and self-assured isn't what we have come to expect from Anderson .Paak. We expect .Paak to be funny (as in 'Headlow' – from 2018's *Oxnard* – which memorably describes a lewd act on the i9 interstate). We expect .Paak to have complex emotions (the pain in the opening bars of 'Put Me Thru' – from 2015's *Malibu* – as the artist strains through the line "why the hell would you run this game"). We expect Paak to have a cockier, cooler mentality (like 2018's Grammy Award winning 'Bubblin' where a refrain calls the audience to "look at the cash bubblin", before the next verse unexpectedly starts with "I'ma need all the fries you can give me").

Ventura delivers minute doses of each of these. 'Winner's Circle' has a couple of amusing bars, but the funniest verse on the album is by André 3000 rather than .Paak. 'Make It Better' has superficial complexity, with prom-

ise of calling a lover to improve a relationship, but both artists seem far too overjoyed throughout to really deliver anything but one-dimensional RnB. Yada Yada has some of that trademark Anderson .Paak confidence, but not the decadent heights of arrogance we've come to expect.

Fans also expect more musical dexterity from .Paak. There's less disco, less electronica on Paak's new album. There's also a little less tension in *Ventura*. Discord and unsettledness has consistently lurked behind .Paak's tracks in the past, from the rattling bass on 'Milk N' Honey' (from 2014's *Venice*), to the oddly pitched bassline and faint autotuned quasi-adlibs on 'Who R U?' (*Oxnard*). Anderson .Paak's music has been filled with shouting samples, off-beat and constantly tempo-changing raps, and discordant disco. All of these things feel muffled in *Ventura*, smothered by swathes of good vibes and silkiness.

Perhaps what's strangest about this shift in .Paak's style is the fact that it's artificial. *Ventura* was recorded in the same sessions as 2018's *Oxnard* (a straight-up hip-hop record which was criticised for being a bit over the top and lacking many slippery RnB vocals) and then divided off from that album as a separate project. Anderson .Paak, or at least his label, seemed to want to split off the artist's

personality into its component parts, making a fun rap album and then a velvety funk-soul album.

But what made Anderson .Paak's music so compelling was the blend of the two; the ebb and flow of 'Malibu' and 'Yes Lawd!' is so exhilarating because it never settles down as one thing. It's changing, it's new, it's sharp.

The split of *Oxnard* and *Ventura* might concern more pessimistic fans. They might think it marks the start of Anderson .Paak boxing himself into corners, or being pressured by his label to be more consumable. There may be concern that .Paak has come to believe that there's "nothing new or sharp about the cutting edge" (as he says on 'King James'), and that he's now going to be more formulaic, and simpler.

Fortunately, we know that .Paak hasn't sold out his artistic integrity, or really changed direction; he's said in interviews that he had a lot of artistic freedom under the guidance of Dr Dre, and if you listen to *Oxnard* and *Ventura* together, they balance out very well indeed. From a certain perspective, it could be that he's got too much musical inspiration to be contained in one project. It's a sign of abundance, of continuity, of him still being him. At the very least, the rap/soul-funk maestro will always raise your spirits, and it doesn't seem like he's really coming down anytime soon.

Loyle Carner's *Not Waving, But Drowning*: beautifully personal, inherently charming

Individual experiences are laid bare to reveal insecurities and societal realities, writes Music Co-Editor Alex Spencer

Benjamin Coyle-Larner lives the life that we all want to lead. He's close with his heroes, from contemporary hip-hop artists to world-famous chefs, yet remains inexorably attached to old friends and family. He writes the music he loves, writing and producing with artists he has come of age with, and offers tickets to sold out shows in return for vintage football shirts – all this while maintaining a grounded reputation and avoiding negative press.

Not Waving, But Drowning exudes a homely warmth which perfectly encompasses the image of a man creating music on his own terms, grateful and content, but comfortable with exposing his frailties. Each song is endearingly personal, and not in a clichéd sense either. Carner is unashamedly honest and vulnerable – he writes about what he cares about, and doesn't seem to mind if no-one shares his concerns. There is a track lamenting the loss of chef Antonio Carluccio, as well as a recording of his family watching the World Cup.

This honesty makes Carner's second album

a truly intimate affair and it bears the marks of deliberation and genuine care. The album's sound is not a far cry from his debut, *Yesterday's Gone*. Carner has not veered in a new musical direction, but has focused on honing the style which he has made his own. His familiar casual flow can be heard on 'Angel' with Tom Misch and 'Still', amongst others, while no track pulls him away from the calmness which characterises his music.

Enveloped by tracks written to and from his mother about moving on in life, the album journeys through various personal experiences and relationships. We hear of his artistic insecurity ('Not Waving, But Drowning'), the relationship between ADHD and love ('Still'), and his appreciation of critics ('Angel'). Carner's songs are refreshingly focused on humble, meaningful events, rather than looking for universal answers. There is a realisation that what is truly personal must be underwhelming to the casual spectator – the upbeat 'Ice Water' centres around hearing a cab driver playing his music, and ends with a phone call to the driver's son.

Carner adds diversity to the style of the album on 'Loose Ends' with Jorja Smith, a more blatantly emotional track than his usual work, as well as 'Sail Away Freestyle', an impressive, almost arrogant, one-take track about monetary pressure. The album's repertoire is expanded by the greater sensitivity of 'Ottolenghi' and 'Looking Back'. Carner tackles issues of racism and racial identity, while remaining firmly grounded in his own formative experiences.

'Krispy', an emotional highlight, focuses



▲A still from 'Ottolenghi', a single from Carner's new album (YOUTUBE/LOYLE CARNER)

nominally on his distanced relationship with former co-producer Rebel Kleff, revealing a wider stigma around male emotional sincerity. Much like the album as a whole, it displays a poignant subjective touch, but also highlights the relatable pressures which penetrate even the most individual experiences.

Adhering to unpretentious lyricism and silky production, *Not Waving, But Drowning* encapsulates the balance between contentment and fragility in Carner's music.

It is personal, yes, but it is made accessible through a conceptual simplicity which is inherently charming.

Vulture restaurant reviews: Shelley and Sarah's



Callum Wainstein cannot recommend the van in Market Square highly enough

▲ **The van sitting in Market Square** (CALLUM WAINSTEIN)

Shelley and Sarah's, located in market square, feels like a location which exists outside of the madness of Cambridge, even though its located right in the centre of

Cambridge and all around you are streams of tourists! Even with all of this you don't feel like you are in Cambridge, instead Shelley and Sarah's has a relaxed vibe of a local café which could be anywhere in the country. This is part of what I love about Shelley and Sarah, going there gives you a brief respite where you feel like you have instead re-entered the real world.

Obviously this would all be largely ephemeral if the food did not stand up as well, and it does. The stand out option at Shelley and Sarah's is the bacon sandwich. I have dedicated a considerable amount of time to searching for the quintessential bacon sandwich, from trucker's stops on the A12 to train station cafes in Bodmin Parkway.

None compare to Shelley and Sarah's rendition, it hits all the notes one would expect from a great bacon sandwich. The roll is an exercise in simplicity, whilst the bacon is divine, the perfect greasy style bacon – it is British style back bacon at its apotheosis. That is it, it's a bacon sandwich which is bacon, butter and bread, and yet that is all it needs to be. It should also be noted that the sandwich is huge, a liberal portion which will certainly suffice for breakfast or lunch.

I also tried their cheeseburger. In particular, the cheese has a really strong flavour and a satisfying oozy consistency. The other star of the show is the grilled onions, which provide a nice sweetness for the burger. Personally

I found their beef patties to be a bit on the small side, which means that they become a bit on the dry side. The burger reminded me a lot of going to football and getting a burger outside the stadium, it had a nice nostalgic quality – but at the same time you can find better burgers in Cambridge.

The final dish I tried was their spicy chicken baguette and I was honestly shocked by how good it was. Every component of the dish combined well. The chicken had a satisfying outer char whilst maintaining a juicy interior – the spice was subtle but did grow as you continued with the sandwich. I couldn't exactly put my finger on what it reminded me of flavour wise; I think there were influences from Thai cuisine in particular. Contrasting to the spiciness of the chicken was the cucumber which provided a cool fresh counter point. Demonstrative of how good the sandwich was is the fact that normally when I do these reviews I don't finish everything as I'm eating multiple dishes, but I happily wolfed down the entire sandwich and would have happily had a second.

Overall I really can't recommend Shelley and Sarah's highly enough. Looking at it from a holistic standpoint which considers more than just the food, but also the ambience and the atmosphere, Shelley and Sarah's is probably my favourite place in Cambridge – there is just something magic about it which I really recommend you go out and try.

Vulture reviews the The Locker Cafe

Callum Wainstein finds the cafe to be the perfect Cambridge escape

The Locker, located on 54 King St, is light and airy. The white walls are decorated with a rotating selection of independent art (which is for sale), and the large windows create a light, pleasant atmosphere. The café is filled with greenery, plants are liberally placed around the room, creating a fresh relaxed feel. The Locker is not for people in a rush, of places I've been to in Cambridge the food isn't the quickest, however it's perfect for those looking for a more chilled fair – in the need for a catch up meal with a friend, the Locker is perfect. The Locker also has a pretty outdoor area, which though I was too cold to brave on the winter morning I visited, I think would be very pleasant during a warm summer day.

The Locker describes its Ham and Cheese as being 'famous' and therefore it only makes sense to start here. On the surface ham and cheese is the most basic item on a menu – but behind what is fundamentally a three component dish is actually a lot of craft and thought. The first thing that stands out in the sandwich is the bread, sourdough sourced from the Crust of the Earth (which sets up in market square), it has a brilliant, buttery

crunch which then gives way to a soft interior. The bread has been griddled on one side (with the other side cooked on a flat top), the result of which is ridges of maillard reaction which provide both flavour and an interesting texture. As a vehicle for a ham and cheese the sourdough is perfection – the juxtaposition of the tangy outside with the gooey cheese filling. The cheese is dominant over the honey roast ham, it is a liberal portion and simply oozes out of the sandwich – in my opinion the sandwich would certainly be almost as excellent served as a plain cheese toasty for those who are vegetarian.

I also sampled their chorizo, cucumber and raclette special. Surprisingly it is the cucumber which is the star of the show, it provides an excellent sweet antidote to the richness of the chorizo (which though sliced thin still is a formidable presence). The raclette's presence is subtle, unlike in the ham and cheese it does not overwhelm the dish, but instead provides a welcome creamy texture. The sandwich is clearly something which a great amount of thought has gone into.

Locker also offers a brunch menu up to three, from which I tried the avocado toast. Avocado toasts may appear to be a dish which lacks much finesse – it is in its most fundamental form just mashed avocado on bread. However, Locker's iteration demonstrates all the subtleties which one looks for in the dish. The consistency of the avocado is exactly on point, not so mushy that it loses all tex-

ture and becomes baby food, but not in such large chunks that the structural integrity of the dish is compromised. The bread provides a good structural, crunchy contrast, it could be slightly improved though by toasting the bread so that the entire piece is crunchy instead of just the (admittedly fantastic) crust. The lime supplied produces a good acidity which works well in tandem with the liberal supply of salt and pepper, though I think a little bit more would not have been remiss. Overall the dish is light and refreshing whilst avoiding being bland.

The pastel de nata (which is supplied by Norfolk Street bakery) was a little on the disappointing side. Being someone who grew up living only a short walk away from a Portuguese Deli in London, I have to hold them to a high standard, and they are lacking. Whilst the filling is satisfactory, a thick viscous mix of cinnamon and lemon offsetting the custard, it is the outer pastry which lets the dish down. The pastry is too dense on the bottom, whilst the outer layer does not have the delicate flaky texture which I look for in a pastel de nata. In my opinion the true shibboleth of a quality pasta de nata is the juxtaposition between the flaky buttery outside and the rich interior, and sadly on this count Locker disappoints. However, I feel obligated to point out that I am *particularly* pedantic about pastel de natas, and my lunch companion with still enjoyed theirs.

The Locker's food is great, and if this alone



▲ **The Locker's exterior** (CALLUM WAINSTEIN)

was its appeal I would still say that it is worth a visit. However, more than food alone, the Locker shines because of its atmosphere – its somewhere where you can escape the constant stress of Cambridge life and just relax over a great meal.

Baptiste review : nordic noir, but make it xenophobic

Watching *Baptiste*, Helen Grant finds a “high-production-value dog whistle” in the new BBC drama

Deal, England. White cliff country. An elderly Englishman collects rare “lefties of the shoreline” seashells. A bearded Romanian comes to check the gas metre armed with a plastic bag and a chainsaw. The opening scene of *Baptiste* unfolds like a Lars von Trier reimagining of one of UKIP’s 2015 general election billboards: a high-production-value dog whistle. Murder in Deal. Welcome to the water-cooler drama the BBC picked to accompany Britain’s planned exit from the EU.

The killer, we eventually learn, is named Constantin Baracu (played by Alec Secăreanu), and he is the head of the Dutch branch of Romanian trafficking gang the Serbilu Brothers. Audiences who watched Baptiste’s hugely popular parent series *The Missing* will by now feel quite at home with the Romanian gang bogeyman trope: in 2014 Jack and Harry Williams darkened our good English tellies with

the terrifying Caid de Cité; now – and as the proverb goes, if the xenophobic stereotype ain’t broke then don’t fear exhausting it – titular hero Julien Baptiste (Tchéky Karyo) finds himself facing this familiar foe once again, under exceptionally convoluted circumstances. Having abandoned their avant-garde experimentations with chronology along with the title of *The Missing*, writers Jack and Harry Williams instead seek to dumbfound their viewers with a nightmarish Eurovision of Amsterdam red light windows, vanished sex workers, blood money-concealing tulip fields, Schengen zone slippage and bent Europol agents. And Romanian gangs, Romanian gangs everywhere, violating our English caravan sites, lurking in our supermarkets.

This makes *Baptiste* sound unwatchable; it’s actually insidiously, compulsively watchable. It is European in form as well as content, profiting from the gritty, social-malaise-based Nordic noir that came into vogue in the early 2010s and encouraged anglophone crime drama to look like *Broadchurch* and *Happy Valley* rather than *Morse*. Yet while *Broadchurch* uses Europe’s binoculars to get a fresh look on Britain, the world of *The Missing* has always been about using Europe’s binoculars to look back at Europe itself. At first this masqueraded as a sort of visual neo-sublime – the cinematography in Series 2 devotes most of

its energies to wide shots of formidable urban snowscapes – but now we are seeing this for the third time round it becomes apparent that evoking continental Europe as the background for exploring British nightmares easily wanders into the territory of political parable.

Baptiste takes everything that was slightly uncomfortable about its predecessor and then uses it to write the entirety of the new show. Women under the age of about thirty are the choking canaries in this bottomless coal mine: in *The Missing* Series 1 they were all volatile drug addicts in crying need of a Jean Baptiste-shaped saviour, in Series 2 they were promoted to being the central concern of the show (and being locked up in a basement by a psychopath), and now in *Baptiste* it’s drug addiction again and sex work. Once again, we may blame the eastern Europeans: “The Romanians ... traffic girls here,” Troubled Waif Natalie (Anna Prochniak) tells us. The fatherly concern we are encouraged to feel for these women is not inconsiderably confused by lingering shots of various nubile, bikini-clad bodies.

If the show had any other motive for evoking people trafficking other than to treat it like an ingredient in a readymix ‘gritty plotline’, then it would have focused on the experiences of the victims. Unfortunately, and I cannot stress this enough, you aren’t ‘raising aware-

ness’ about a crime if its function in your TV drama is to offer an extra dash of pathos to the misfortune of a middle-aged white man (Tom Hollander). In contrast with the BBC’s other recent shows like *Doing Money*, *Silent Witness*, *The Cry* and *Informer*, which have all tackled a wide range of difficult social issues with nuance, empathy and imagination, *Baptiste* masks its fundamental intolerances beneath the cosmopolitan veneer of an international cast and a series of ultra-English-Channel location choices.

Romanians make up the second largest EU27 population in the UK, after Poles, and eastern Europeans as a whole have found themselves to be a focal point for the anti-immigration sentiment surrounding Brexit. If cultural importations like Nordic noir inevitably convulse in times of socio-political pressure, then it’s worth asking ourselves whether we should temporarily leave the genre and the subject matter to the people it belongs to. Although *Baptiste* might be vaguely exciting for those who aren’t currently suffering under the hostile environment created by day-to-day Brexit politics, it’s not even tightly-plotted enough to be a ‘good’ example of its own genre. Watch *The Missing* on iPlayer if you want a harrowing exploration of what it’s like to lose a child; avoid *Baptiste* as six episodes of glossy fear-mongering.

Commercial Feature

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Gizz Butt became something of a household name when he shot to breath-taking levels of success as the guitarist of The Prodigy. He’s been featured in *Guitar World*, *Total Guitar* and *Kerrang!* magazine - rated as one of UK’s best guitarists.

Gizz has played some of the biggest gigs in the world such as headlining the Reading Festival, Glastonbury Festival, Phoenix Festival (alongside David Bowie) Knebworth (alongside Oasis) in front of 125,000 people and a 1997 landmark gig in Moscow’s Red Square in front of 250,000

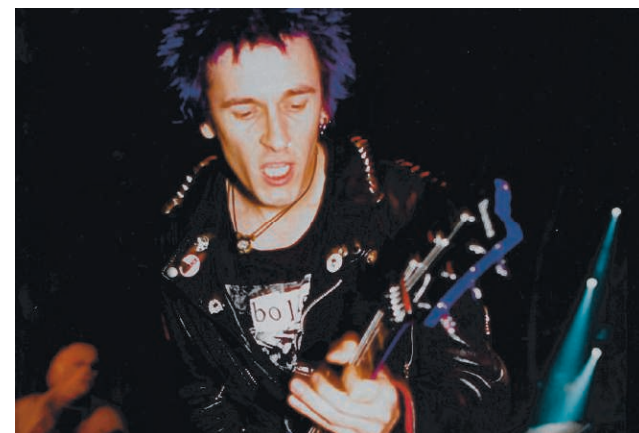
people!!!! He featured on The Prodigy number one hit single *Breathe* and the worldwide platinum selling album *The Fat Of The Land*.

He’s also played for English Dogs, Sabbath (Andy Sneap), The Fields Of The Nephilim, Steve Ignorant (Crass) and The Destroyers. He’s also played live with The Foo Fighters. With his own band, Janus Stark he had a USA chart hit with the song *Every Little Thing Counts*.

Gizz has also written songs for the films *Varsity Blues*, *Disturbing Behaviour* and *Dead Man’s Curve*.

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The day I forgot my lines



▲ Promotional material for the play *Crave*, with which the author had a tricky experience forgetting lines (ALEX STROUTS)

Ellie Gaunt recounts her experience of every actor's worst nightmare

Cn: brief mention of paedophilia, alcoholism, eating disorders and suicidal thoughts

C: You're dead to me.
B: My will reads, f*ck this up and I'll haunt you for the rest of your f*cking life
C: He's following me
A: What do you want?
B: To die.

This may sound like an incongruous selection of lines; in fact, these are the opening lines of Sarah Kane's final play: *Crave*. At least, this is how the opening lines of the play are meant to read.

The rest of the play follows this style, largely made up of four word sentences that could be related if you tried really, really hard to find a connection with the aid of a SparkNotes revision guide. Line learning is hard enough, let alone when there is no real story, no question-answer structure, no real

conversation.

Now, I'm bad at learning lines generally but when I was cast in a production of *Crave* at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival line learning was a real challenge. We had a two-week run, performing in a late-night slot. This meant flying before the show, persuading drunken punters that they really wanted to see a group of students playing a paedophile, an alcoholic, and a young girl with an eating disorder as opposed to some topical comedy show. By Week Two, the late nights and my increasing addiction to Millions (the sweets) as a pre-show energy boost meant I wasn't on top form. Now don't think this is an excuse. No, no, I'm just contextualising.

Our production of *Crave* was set in an NHS waiting room. My chair was at the front of the stage with my back to the audience. Most importantly my back was roughly 30cm from the audience so it really was an immersive experience for all parties involved.

The house lights go down and B (all the characters in the play had letters for names: A, B, C and M) begins the sound-scape-come-movement-sequence that began the show. I was playing C and I had the first line. I hate having the first line. Having the

last line is great; it's like having the last word in an argument, but the first line is so much pressure. I see B's movement cue and I say my line: 'he's following me'.

So here we have a problem. Yes, I say my line. But it's not my first line, that generally tends to start the play. It's the second one, and the third line of the show. I realise instantly, panic for a second as the fast pace nature of the play means a second is all I've got and B says his line. B says his first line. The correct second line of the play. Great. My turn. 'You're dead to me.'

Now I've just successfully said the first line of the play. Wrong order but at least I got it out eventually? Wrong. B looks at me. When I say 'looks', I mean looks into my soul and I know that I will probably have to clean the kitchen for the foreseeable future to make up for this. If I'd just said the second line again I would have been fine, but no.

As I've mixed up the order of lines A isn't cued, and because the ordering of these lines is so important to actually keeping track of the play we are in a bit of a pickle. Luckily M is on it and has actually learnt the entirety of the play (my idol). So instead of going round and round like a nightmare version of

Groundhog Day and starting the play again, she says C's line and we manage to get past the first three lines of the play. Success! I'd like to think we were saved by the incongruity of *Crave* and the audience were none the wiser, but the fear in our eyes and noticeably paler complexions may have blown our cover.

Post-show I received my director's notes. Actually, the most sparse notes that he'd written for me during the entire run. Win! All he'd written in capitals, underlined, bold and in my opinion a few too many exclamation marks than were entirely necessary: 'ELLIE WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!?!?!?!?' Safe to say, I had no idea what I was doing. Luckily this didn't happen for the rest of the run, and the director did cast me again: much to both of our surprise. However, I get regular reminders about my 'remix' of the opening scene. Only last term the director posted in the group chat – bearing in mind that we performed *Crave* nearly TWO years ago. 'Lol remember when Ellie forgot the first line.' Yes, we do. Yes, we would all like to forget. Much like I did the line.

The moral of the story is don't audition for plays with incongruous plots or more simply don't forget the first line of the play. Simple.

Science

How low can we go? The challenges of deep sea diving

George Milner discusses the dangers of plunging deep underwater, and the methods which have been invented to overcome them

It is often said that we know more about the surface of the moon than we do about the depths of the oceans. Although each year millions of divers around the world are drawn to descend beneath the surface of lakes, oceans and even swimming pools, the vast majority do not exceed the recommended recreational dive limit of 40m. Yet some have descended far further. These endeavours push the human body close to the combined limits of human physiology and scientific ingenuity. What are the challenges faced by humans who, armed with a wetsuit and breathing apparatus, plunge deeper and deeper? And, just as importantly, what allows them to return to the surface to tell their story?

In contrast to ascent to altitude, the overarching issue faced by divers is a dramatic increase in pressure, with every 10.3m of depth gained adding the equivalent of another atmosphere. The effects of high-pressure nitrogen and oxygen are a primary cause for concern. Nitrogen itself is rather inert, meaning it doesn't react easily with other substances. However, when its pressure in the body increases, this normally benign gas can produce a condition referred to as nitrogen narcosis.

This appears on a sliding scale of severity that includes impaired judgement, euphoria and loss of consciousness. Symptoms typically appear when breathing compressed air at around 50m, with almost all divers being severely affected at 60-70m. The neurological effects of high-pressure nitrogen are more colloquially referred to as 'Martini's Law'. Every 10m descended is reported to have the equivalent effect of one martini. The accuracy of this remains to be tested, however, as funding for such a summer research project has surprisingly not been readily forthcoming...

Nitrogen narcosis can be avoided, however, by replacing nitrogen with non-narcotic helium in a mixture creatively termed Heliox. As helium is much lighter than molecular nitrogen, this also increases the ease of breathing, which gets more difficult at depth. As such, there is also particular interest in using Heliox for conditions such as asthma and lung disease, although cost currently limits this clinical use.

Returning for a moment to the recreational dive limit of 40m, it is not only nitrogen that divers should start to be wary of. At high pressures oxygen itself becomes toxic, though unlike in the

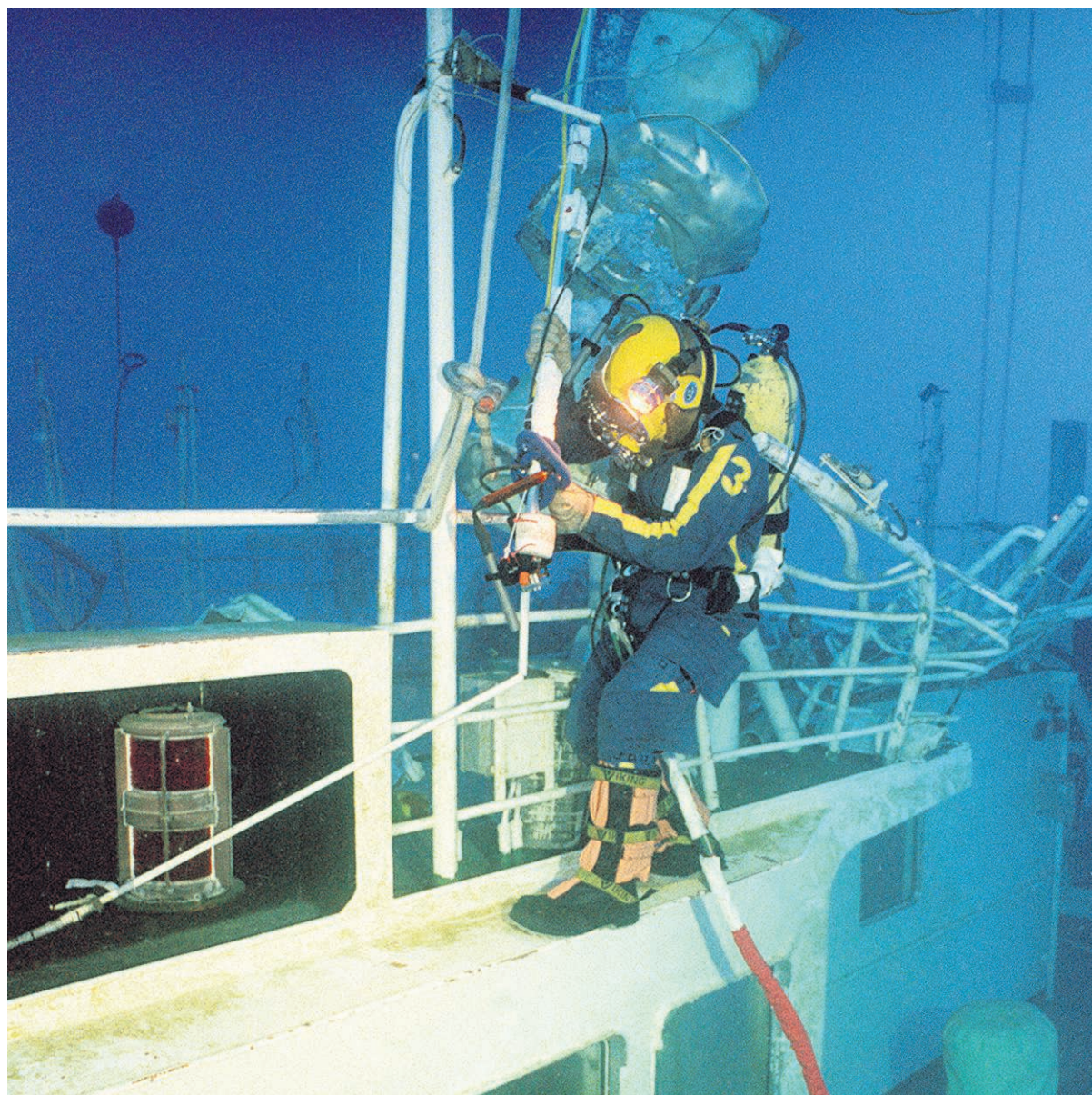
case of nitrogen, this toxicity is due to chemical reactions which it undergoes in the body. It is recommended that long term exposure to oxygen is limited to about 2-2.5 times atmospheric oxygen pressure, or that which is found when breathing compressed air at 10-15m. This limit mainly poses an issue for professional divers working on long-term projects.

On the other hand, if you breathe compressed air at greater depths, oxygen toxicity can occur far more rapidly. Neurological symptoms leading to convulsions and unconsciousness occur in under five minutes in susceptible individuals at around 70m. For longer, deeper descents, it is therefore dangerous to use standard compressed air, and the concentration of oxygen supplied by breathing apparatus is reduced significantly. Descend past around 120m, and the susceptibility of the nervous system to high pressure starts to pose an issue. High pressure can cause tremors, exaggerated reflexes, muscle weakness and hallucinations, among a constellation of symptoms termed high pressure neurological syndrome (HPNS).

This is thought to be caused by altered ion channel function in the nervous system as opposed to compression of non-gaseous components of the body which only starts to become noticeable at depths of around 1500m. In contrast to nitrogen narcosis, the overall syndrome is one of excess excitability. As such, it has been suggested that reintroduction of a small amount of nitrogen into diving cannisters could mitigate against HPNS effects by inducing a degree of mild, compensatory nitrogen narcosis. However, reaching record-breaking depths is only the first half of the challenge. Ascent to the surface carries additional risks, the most recognised of which is decompression sickness (DCS), also known as "the bends".

As pressure increases upon ascent, even poorly soluble gases such as nitrogen are forced to dissolve more extensively in the body. The amount of dissolved gas depends both on depth and, up to a threshold, the amount of time spent at each pressure. Return too quickly to the surface and a diver rapidly removes the pressure keeping gases dissolved. This can result in the potentially lethal formation of bubbles, most notably in the blood vessels of the brain and heart.

Accordingly, ascents from deeper, longer dives include decompression stops in which a diver remains at a certain depth for a short period of time to allow dissolved gases to move out of the body more slowly. Dive deeper and the decompression stops required become longer and longer. Ahmed Gabr's record breaking SCUBA diving descent of



▲ A US Navy diver in Hawaii

(ANDREW MCKASKLE/
US NAVY)

332.25m involved spending over 14 hours in the water. The time required for decompression following long, deep professional dives makes it impractical to ascend each day and technical crews in the oil and gas industry can live for days in artificially pressurised living quarters to avoid the daily necessity.

Yet evidence suggests that humans can dive even deeper. In 2006 a US Navy diver descended to a depth of 610m in a specially designed atmospheric diving suit offering protection from high pressure. Furthermore, in 2010 the Hydra research program in Marseille saw three divers exposed to artificial pressures equivalent to a depth of 701m. They breathed a novel mixture of hydrogen, helium and oxygen shown to reduce the effects of pressure on the nervous system and increase the ease of breathing. Recreational divers weary of their own decompression stops should take note of the 24 days of decompression that the

“The overarching issue faced by divers is a dramatic increase in pressure”

“These endeavours push the human body close to its limits”

three divers underwent before their return to the outside world.

In contrast, in the sport of free diving, it is the rapid speed of descent and ascent rather than decompression stops and specialist breathing apparatus that protect against nitrogen narcosis, oxygen toxicity and decompression sickness. Nevertheless, it is perhaps surprising that the no limits free diving record set by Herbert Nitsch in 2012 with a single breath stands at 253.2m, less than 80m off the record for SCUBA diving.

Just as naval captains don't know exactly how deep their submarines can really go, it is not possible to state an absolute limit for human diving in the absence of pressure-controlling suits. Yet what is certain is that humans consistently maintain an interest in life at the extremes. Where there are records to be broken and theories to be tested, it would be more surprising still if people weren't up for the challenge.

Time for a VRReality check?

Karoliina Pulkkinen explores the virtual space inhabited by the new online multiplayer reality game VRChat

In the uncanny valley, realistic becomes borderline creepy. But we have a new valley now. In contrast to its uncanny cousin, the inhabitants of the new geographic formations don't look eerily familiar. They are anime goddesses, buff eggplants, and warrior pigeons distinctly different from us. But once their 3D modelled mouths open and we hear the sounds of the humans controlling the characters, they strike us as strangely familiar. The angelic cat could be the kid next door, and the skeleton has the same accent as the Finnish exchange student down the hall. For the full experience of this brave new world, you might want to acquire a VR headset. Or, at the very least, search for VRChat on YouTube.

Syrmor, a 22-year-old Canadian YouTuber posts interviews with the quirky avatars in his channel "Humans of VR." (Syrmor's takes are not dissimilar to the heartfelt stories in Brandon Stanton's *Humans of New York*). In one viral video, Syrmor interviews Bugs Bunny, whose mother was addicted to methamphetamine. Then there is the 8-year old Jordan, who is "a little too evil for VRChat" and takes a break from gameplay to describe to his mom what kind of pizza he would like her to order for him.

At times, you can hear how the headset mic catches dogs barking in the background. Perhaps the most memorable interruption comes from a father who took over his son's description of living with a rare genetic disorder. As Syrmor reports for Kotaku, an online gaming magazine, "Having this very burly, 40-year-old male voice coming through Piglet in virtual reality, talking about his son's disease ... was just not something I ever expected



▲ VRChat was launched in early 2017 (YOUTUBE./VRCHAT)

to encounter in video games."

The locus of the interviews is VRChat, a massive multiplayer chatroom that bears a distant resemblance to SecondLife and HabboHotel. Its developers describe it as a community that brings together people from all around the world. Judging by the videos made by its users, it is easy to see why the optimists might say that the platform effectively does succeed at achieving that goal; the clunky 3D art conceals geographic and socioeconomic factors that can stop people from coming together in day-to-day life.

The pessimists, meanwhile, would be quick to note that VRChat does not conceal everything. There remains the difference between native English speakers and non-native ones. The more fe-

male-sounding voices are still distinctly female, and scarcer than the male ones. But after seeing the interactions documented in Syrmor's videos, even these pessimists should appreciate VRChat's potential at encroaching towards the goal envisaged by the platform's developers.

In her book *It's Complicated: The Social Lives of Networked Teens* danah boyd brings attention to the early expectations of the equalizing effect of internet. Boyd, who is a renowned scholar studying the intersection between tech and society, effectively shows that this turned out to be an empty promise. Instead of social media platforms concealing the factors that contributed to inequalities in the lives of the American teenagers

“The presence of human voice seems to tone down the nastiness found elsewhere”

interviewed by boyd, they replicated the structures prevalent in the lives of teenagers outside the screen.

While it is likely that VRChat will follow the suit of other platforms in recreating the unequal structures of the more mundane reality, crucially, the presence of human voice seems to tone down the nastiness found in many other corners of the internet.

When a user was having a seizure, concerned bystanders gathered around him, advising him to drink water and contact medical professionals. When one of them started making fun of the victim, another responded: "The entire community is coming together for the betterment of this person. Don't be that one guy."



Science recap: Stories you might have missed over Easter

You probably stumbled across the first ever photograph of a black hole, which was finally released over the Easter break, but here's some other science news you may have missed:

On the 5th of April, Sydney Brenner, who was jointly awarded the Nobel Prize together with John Sulston and Robert Horvitz for his pioneering work on the nematode *C. elegans*, or roundworm, and genetics died at the age of 92. Brenner was a Senior Fellow at King's, and spent over 30 years of his career at the MRC Laboratory of Molecular Biology, where he conducted research on the then recently deciphered genetic code. He also studied the genetic basis of biological complexity, establishing *C. elegans* as a fundamental model

organism.

On the 17th of April, a publication in the scientific journal *Nature* reported the detection of helium hydride, which is widely thought to be universe's first molecule. It was detected by the Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy (SOFIA), a partnership between NASA and the German Aerospace Center consisting of a converted Boeing 747 equipped with a 2.7 metre reflecting telescope. Helium hydride is theorised to be a remnant of the Big Bang, in which primordial gas helium and hydrogen reacted to create the first chemical bond. Using a far-infrared spectrometer, scientists were able to detect and report the signature of helium hydride in a planetary nebula approximately 3000 light-years away.

On the 19th of April, a report published in the journal *Science* revealed the development of a novel method to better identify the so-called "off-target effects" resulting from gene editing by CRISPR-Cas9, an enzyme capable of cutting strands of DNA. Because this is a major focus of research aiming to make gene editing a safe and reliable tool for human application, this technology will aid scientists in better understanding how CRISPR works, and consequently how to make safe human gene editing a reality. DISCOVER-Seq, as they have termed this new tool, works by analysing the genomic location to which where DNA repair factors are recruited following the cutting of DNA strands by CRISPR-Cas9.

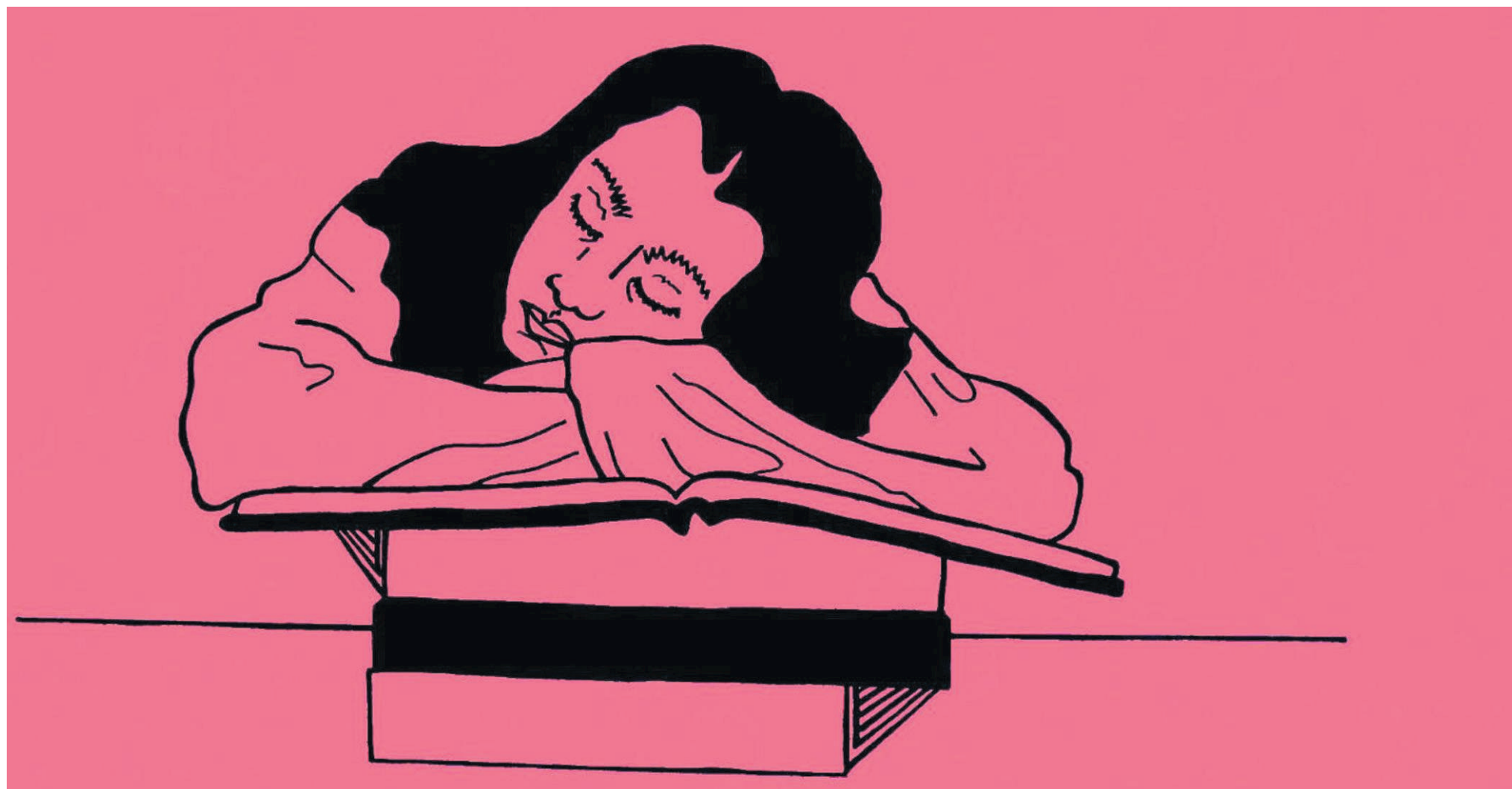
On the 24th of April, a paper published in *Nature* reported the latest advances in translating recorded brain signals into speech using a brain-computer interface. This marks a major advance in the field, because this is one of the first reports of a neural decoder producing whole sentences, compared to previous approaches which only allowed the pro-

duction of individual letters. In those who cannot speak, the device analyses the brain signals underlying lip, tongue, larynx and jaw motion. The initial results are quite promising: in test cases of individuals listening to 101 synthesized sentences, an average of 70% of words were understood.

And finally, just in case you really did manage to completely avoid all news surrounding the first photograph ever captured of a black hole, here's a quick summary: Following years of work, the image was finally released on the 10th of April. The black hole depicted measures 40 billion km in diameter, making it around three million times the size of the Earth. It is 500 million trillion km away and was photographed by the Event Horizon Telescope (EHT), a network of eight linked telescopes across the world. It is hoped that this new image will enable physicists to learn more about black holes, specifically surrounding the bright ring seen to surround the black hole, and the potential consequences of interacting with it.

Science

Getting your eight hours



*Sleep and mental health walk completely hand in hand, argues **George Milner***

Content note: this article contains discussion of issues surrounding mental illness and treatment

Treatment of mental health disorders has come a long way from the era of asylums and lobotomies. Yet it still has a considerable way to go, and has recently come under fire over questions surrounding efficacy and absence of notable progress. Better understanding of a wide range of factors impacting mental health is crucial to improving both treatment and prevention. One of these factors is sleep.

There has long been acknowledgement of a relationship between sleep and mental health, though with a firm view that issues pertaining to sleep were merely a consequence of conditions such as depression and anxiety. However, evidence now increasingly suggests strong bi-directionality in the relationship between sleep quality and mental health. Close to a third of the UK population is estimated to suffer from some degree of insomnia. Focus only on those suffering from depression, and this figure rises to three quarters, making its role in mental health disorders far from trivial.

"Having insomnia doubles your chances of developing depression and we now know that if you treat the insomnia it reduces depression", reports Daniel Freeman of the University of Oxford. Furthermore, a study at multiple

UK universities concluded that sleep treatment for students led to improvements in the cases of "depression in particular, but also anxiety, psychological wellbeing, nightmares, and perceived functioning". Although there is currently a concerted effort to reduce the stigma surrounding mental health, the cold reality remains that many are reluctant to reach out for assistance, especially early on in the development of conditions. Improving mental health via improving sleep quality may offer a more widely embraced route to both safeguarding mental health and earlier recognition of conditions. In addition, it has been shown that early intervention into poor sleep quality can not only reduce the severity of mental health issues, but also reduce the development of such issues in the first place.

So why does treating insomnia improve mental health? One hypothesis stems from evidence that inflammation is associated with both sleep deprivation and depression. Controlling sleep disruption could in turn decrease inflammation which in turn can decrease depressive symptoms, also reversing susceptibility to depression. The causal role of inflammation in depression have been championed by Edward Bullmore, Professor of Psychiatry at Cambridge University, in his recent book *The Inflamed Mind: a radical new approach to depression*.

Aside from its close association with mental health disorders, sleep quality has further roles to play in mental health. Most are aware, due to their own experience, of the effects of sleep deprivation on mood. A paper in the *Journal of*

"Close to a third of the UK population is estimated to suffer from some degree of insomnia"

Neuroscience explored how sleep deprivation can increase emotional reactivity, manifesting as "increased anxiety and stress elicited by seemingly minor triggers". Put simply, sleep deprivation significantly increases irritability, anger and aggression, even in response to otherwise neutral stimuli. To make matters worse, loss of emotional stability can feed right back into this cycle, leading to escalating stress and confrontation which can further impair sleep quality.

On the other hand, increased emotional reactivity can also take the form of more withdrawing responses and feelings of sadness. Aside from affecting enjoyment of day to day life, this can have consequences far beyond the period of sleep deprivation itself. It can place a strain on relationships, and entrench patterns of negative behaviour, damaging long-term mental health. Somewhat counterintuitively, however, sleep deprivation has also been successfully used as a rapid-onset treatment for depression. In this case, patients are intentionally kept awake for an entire night or longer. This could be especially relevant for treating depression in bipolar disorder, for which the efficacy of antidepressants is particularly contentious, alongside other forms of depression.

The rapid onset antidepressant action of sleep deprivation also shares similarities with the novel antidepressant properties of ketamine, a drug well-known in recreational use yet less well-known for its important roles as an anaesthetic and in pain management. The drug induces similar changes in activity in the sleep-

▲ **Illustration by Kate Towsey for Varsity**

ing brain as those that occur in recovery sleep following sleep deprivation therapy. It is thought that these changes in brain activity could indicate changes in connectivity in the brain which underpin the efficacy of both treatments of depression. On the other hand, the antidepressant effects of ketamine are typically sustained for 1-2 weeks in responsive patients whereas those treated with sleep deprivation frequently relapse far sooner following recovery sleep.

The rapid antidepressant action of ketamine and sleep deprivation therapy sets them aside from conventional antidepressants which normally only gain effect weeks after treatment initiation. This can prevent continued suffering from mental illness and increase patients' willingness to adhere to treatment regimes. Development of rapidly acting antidepressants could not only give clinicians an extra tool in controlling treatment-resistant depression, but also a route to control depressive symptoms more effectively at a practical level.

Overall, better understanding of the relationship between sleep and mental health should play an important role in future treatment and mitigation of mental health disorders. Further still, recognition of the important role of sleep in emotional health could serve to improve general mental wellbeing in an even wider audience. Given the high prevalence of both sleep deprivation and mental health disorders in the population as whole, effective approaches linking the two, pharmacological or not, should be welcomed.



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Violet *Poo-niversity Challenge* What I learnt from going for a shit in every college

Devarshi Lodhia shares the lessons from his journey of self-discovery

According to someone at *Vice*, Sigmund Freud once said that the three greatest pleasures in this life are eating, orgasming and shitting. I can't be bothered to properly verify that but it sounds about right to me, and more importantly, it works well for the purposes of this article. Personally, I've been fascinated by shitting for as long as I can remember. As a kid, there was legitimately a point in my life when I wanted to be a toilet inspector, just after the astronaut/dinosaur expert phase and just before the Buddhist monk one. That's why, when talking to friends about the best way to visit every college before I graduate, it dawned on me. Visiting every bar was ruled out by the fact I can't be bothered to try and make a friend at every college to sign me in. So shitting it was.

31 Colleges, 31 toilets over 31 consecutive days. The greatest journey of self discovery since Julia Roberts' gap year in *Eat Pray Love*. This is what I learnt:

Shitting in the dark when you're scared is tough:

Magdalene may well have the scariest toilet I've ever visited, and I've used public toilets in India. What I came across can only be described as the set from a low-budget horror film: a large wet room with exposed pipes and horrendous floral tiles. To make matters worse, there was no working light and the pipes were making weird noises. I can comfortably say this made for the most distressing shit of my life. The only thing that kept me going was the knowledge that former Archbishop of Canterbury and current college Master, Rowan Williams was probably nearby and can banish demons I think.

Going to an all boys school has left me with a lifelong fear of women:

Other than Magdalene, my most challenging shits were probably at the all

“Lesson
number 1:
*Shitting in
the dark
when
you’re
scared is
tough*”

nice coffee shop which I used as a cover while at Medwards I had to pretend to be interested in frighteningly large beetles. I might need to see a therapist.

I look “suspicious”:

While Medwards and Newnham have their individual attractions I could use as cover for my clandestine shitting, Lucy Cav unfortunately doesn't. This meant I had to get creative and think of a back-story to get in. Unfortunately the porter saw right through me and decided to escort me to the bar where my "friend" was "waiting for me". He told me they don't normally let men into college on their own for security reasons, especially "suspicious" looking ones. Maybe he's had a chat with my friend about my dress sense, or maybe he's a racist, who knows.

Planning your day around shitting disrupts your schedule:

In all honesty, I probably should have done more work on my dissertation. But planning and executing a shitting strategy as complicated as this is a time

consuming business. Scoping out the most convenient toilet in each college and making sure to consume a suitably high fibre diet to make sure I could shit when I needed to doesn't happen by accident - it's the result of meticulous planning and flawless execution. But with my dissertation deadline approaching, I kind of wish I had that sort of commitment to history too.

Probably best to avoid talking about shit on a first date:

Since starting my shitting odyssey, I've been on three first dates. Unfortunately, in every instance there was never a second. On one occasion, sitting in The Anchor showing one of my dates my detailed notes about each toilet, I realised this might be why I'm still single.

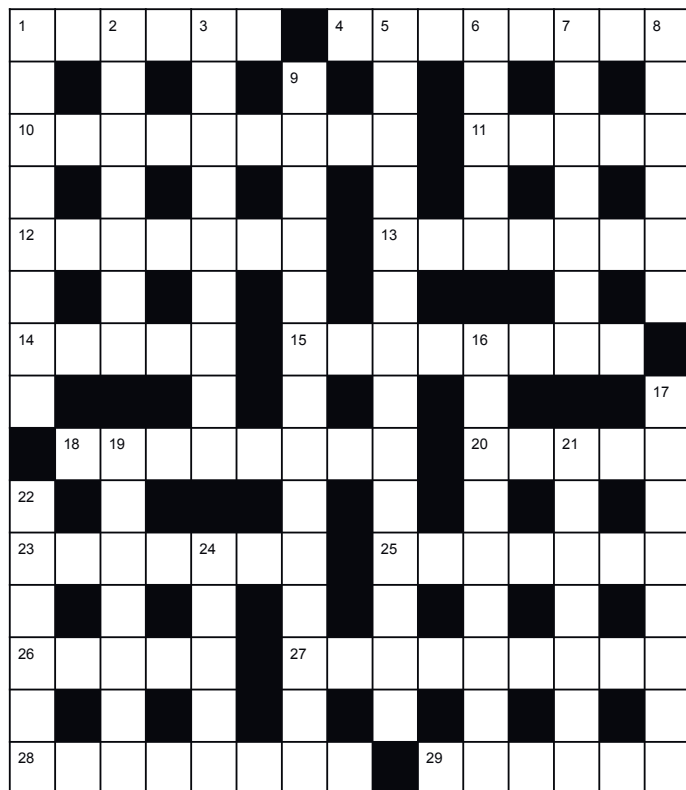
I'd like to thank everyone who supported me from day 1 and all the haters and losers told me this was a stupid idea and "not real journalism."

Find the full journey online at Violet, Varsity's online blog at www.varsity.co.uk/violet/17402.

Lesson
number 4:
Planning
your day
around
shitting
disrupts
your
schedule

Cryptic Crossword,

by Pitt*



*Pitt is a pseudonym

ACROSS

- 1 Nitpicker, after sport, starts to detect insect (6)
- 4 Musicians surround wife - they're not faithful (8)
- 10 Maiden fixed angular user interface (9)
- 11 Regularly tying bear - a beast (5)
- 12 I wear brown - Ted is blighted? (7)
- 13 Lad, good egg, opens a saga in the near future (7)
- 14 Cambridge pub fit for a king? (5)
- 15 Clean, unlike a leopard (8)
- 18 Politician returns to penniless college (8)
- 20 Gland backfiring within bred duck (5)
- 23 Second starter of beef holds partner back before lunchtime courses (7)
- 25 Warning - mind drink (5,2)
- 26 Papay priest in California gets a hot drink (5)
- 27 Refurbished Mosaic Inn - for one who can't sleep (9)
- 28 The Spanish worker holds esteemed politician hostage initially - as an animal (8)
- 29 Mate has time or backing beat (6)

DOWN

- 1 Hints for dogs (8)
- 2 Attracting success in make-up (7)
- 3 Perhaps Vinyl soon begins to tempt Pitt, say (9)
- 5 Mad search for shoelaces - I'd go West wandering (4,5,5)
- 6 Records - bits of music? (5)
- 7 Interest English friend (7)
- 8 Withdraw from quiet redhead with tattoo (6)
- 9 Tendency for terrorist spot to support soft communist (14)
- 16 Disease produced a puke a mile with no pressure (9)
- 17 Stifling Capricorn, say, beside a lake (8)
- 19 Trump connects in Estonia? (7)
- 21 Log dries so at sea? (7)
- 22 Loveless bouquet for revolutionary has personality (6)
- 24 Some saw ashtrays covered in water (5)

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Opinion: Folau's dismissal sets a positive precedent, but there is much further to go for homophobia in sport



Rugby Australia's termination of Folau's contract is hardly a victory in an industry still beset with homophobia, argues **Oliver Winters**

CN: This article contains references to homophobic abuse and suicide

Last year, Israel Folau received an official warning from Rugby Australia after a homophobic outburst on social media. Folau has since repeated this behaviour, this time writing in an Instagram post shared earlier this month that gay people would "go to hell".

He has since been dismissed by Rugby Australia subject to a 'code of conduct' hearing. In an official press release,

▲ Folau has been dismissed by RA

(DAVID MOLLOY/
WIKIMEDIA
COMMONS)

Rugby Australia stated that Folau "had committed a high-level breach of the Professional Players' Code of Conduct warranting termination of his employment contract".

The move by Rugby Australia would appear to be a positive one. Indeed, last year I held that Rugby Australia should demonstrate that homophobia has no place in sport and that while Folau has a right to his own freedom of expression, any national sporting body has an obligation to disavow anyone who propagates homophobia.

I maintain that Rugby Australia has of course made the right decision. However, the result of Folau's actions represents a victory for no one.

Firstly, Folau's actions, as a prominent member of the Pacifica community, amount to an attack by one marginalised group on another, the result of which could hit those whose identities sit at the cross-section between both groups the hardest.

It is sad that someone able to positively influence many in his own community has chosen to stand by his bigoted views. There is a deeper concern here though; his sacking runs the risk of creating a martyr for homophobic views, and if this risk should materialise in the Pacifica community, this could come at the greatest expense of the queer Pacifica community.

Second of all, that Folau's sacking occurred at the point where Rugby Australia had no choice is arguably emblematic of the wider issue of legitimising homophobia in rugby. Welsh international player Taulupe Faletau 'liked' Folau's post, and was subsequently told he would 'face further action', although this is yet to be forthcoming.

England Number 8 Billy Vunipola has faced criticism for actively defending Folau by claiming that "man was made for woman": the RFU have stated that these comments are not in the interests of the 'inclusive' nature of rugby. At the time of writing, Vunipola's post remains active on social media.

Whether or not the WRU and RFU follow Rugby Australia's lead, it appears that some see no place for homophobia within the sport. In his last two appearances for Saracens, Vunipola was booed by fans. Moreover, former England and current Harlequins prop Joe Marler and England and Northampton Saints back-row James Haskell have openly criticised Folau and Vunipola's bigotry on social media.

Rugby is one of the most progressive mainstream sports in the world: former Wales captain Gareth Thomas and Welsh international referee Nigel Owens are two prominent openly gay figures in the sport, and England internationals such as Ben Cohen and James Haskell have endeavoured to draw attention to the problem of homophobia in rugby. While this high-profile incident of homophobia has left many rugby fans outraged, in a climate where homophobia in the sport is still alive and well, it is at least commendable that Rugby Australia are taking a stand.

But with other sports still dramatically lagging behind, rugby could be seen as comparatively progressive. With recent focus in football rightly being laid on racist abuse, we should not forget that professional football still has very few openly gay players, with no openly gay players in any of the major European leagues. The only openly gay player in

“That Folau's sacking occurred at the point where Rugby Australia had no choice is emblematic of a wider issue”

▼ Welsh referee Nigel Owens has spoken often about being openly gay in rugby

(FLORIAN CHRISTOPH/
WIKIMEDIA COMMONS)

the history of Premier League was Justin Fashanu, who committed suicide eight years after coming out, having been subject to torrents of homophobic abuse. More recently, Olivier Giroud and Hector Bellerin have both stated that football is simply not ready for an openly gay player. Bellerin has admitted being subject to homophobic abuse as a result of his love of fashion.

In cricket, Joe Root was commended for standing up to West Indian bowler Shannon Gabriel's homophobic jibe during a Test Match, telling him that 'there's nothing wrong with being gay'. The ICC subsequently banned Gabriel for four matches, though many believe it should have gone further. Notably, the punishment sits uncomfortably with the fact that the Test Match took place in St. Lucia, where the punishment for same-sex activity is up to ten years imprisonment.

With the recent protests at Parkfield School over LGBT+ inclusive Sex and Relationship lessons, it is important that we reevaluate how homophobia is viewed and addressed today. Sport plays a hugely valuable role in shaping cultural ideas and perceptions, particularly among young people.

Growing up as an avid cricketer and footballer, I idolised the likes of Stuart Broad and Joe Hart as role models: no doubt coming to terms with my sexuality as a teenager would have been damaged had one of them emulated the actions of Folau. I still remember being hugely inspired by a talk given at my school by Ben Cohen concerning homophobia, bullying and his experiences in rugby.

It is hugely important that governing bodies follow Rugby Australia's lead in showing younger generations that homophobia is not legitimate within sporting communities.

But let us not assume that what has happened to Folau is a victory by any means: we can only hope that one less platform for intolerance within sport will have a positive effect on shaping the views and opinions of the generations that look up to them.



Tackling prejudice: Rugby still has a long way to go in tackling homophobia, argues Oliver Winters



Sport

Varsity victories and a boat race sweep: Looking back on another term in sport

William Ross
Sport Editor

The Boat Races, held on the 7th April on the River Thames and broadcast live to millions of viewers on the BBC, headlined a packed Lent term sporting calendar. And the Light Blues did not disappoint, winning a clean sweep of all four races – the men's Blues, the women's Blue's, the men's reserves and the women's reserves – for the second year in a row.

Indeed, there were plenty of other notable successes for Cambridge sport over the course of the term. The footballers enjoyed a glorious day at the Hive in North London for the Varsity matches, with the women Blues beating their Oxford rivals 3-1 before the men's blues won their game on penalties. The women's rugby union team, meanwhile, built on their Varsity victory in Michaelmas by winning the BUCS Midlands 1A division, finishing the season with a 100% win record.

The women's lacrosse Blues enjoyed a similarly successful season, winning the BUCS Premier South division without losing a game, and winning a thrilling Varsity match against Oxford 9-8. Special mention must also go to

the men's hockey blues, who won the Varsity match 3-2 as well as finishing top of the BUCS South B division.

There was also great success for Cambridge in some of the lesser-played sports. The men's badminton blues, for example, won the BUCS Midlands 2B division, a league also won by the male basketball blues. The boxing club, meanwhile, can be proud of their efforts this season, not only winning the inaugural "Town vs Gown" fixture but also the 112th Varsity fixture. Finally, the mixed American Football Team performed well enough in the BUCS 2A South-East division to qualify for the play-offs, but succumbed to a 22-16 defeat at the hands of Royal Holloway.

At the other end of the spectrum, the netball Blues endured a very difficult season, finishing bottom of the BUCS Midlands 1A division having failed to win a league game before losing the Varsity match 47-26. Likewise, the men's rugby league blues will be disappointed to have finished bottom of the BUCS Midlands 1A division, while they also lost the Varsity match for the tenth season in a row. The women's hockey Blues similarly have much to work on ahead of the new season, after finishing bottom of the BUCS South A division and losing the Varsity match. The male fencing blues will also

▲ **The light blues enjoyed victories across the board in Lent**
(BEN PHILLIPS)

be disappointed to have lost their Varsity match for the first time in five years.

There was no shortage of college action either, culminating in Lent Bumps. On the men's side, Lady Margaret Boat Club's stranglehold on head of the river status was finally broken, as Caius bumped their way to the head of the river. On the women's side, Newnham took over from Jesus as head of the river, ending Jesus's two-year stay at the head of the river.

Rugby and football cuppers, meanwhile, reach their conclusion at the beginning of this term, with reigning men's champions Fitzwilliam taking on Pembroke in the football final on the 10 May at Grange Road, while Caius will take on Downing in the Rugby Cuppers final on the 27th April. Grange Road will also play host to the American Football Varsity match on the 3rd May

As the football and rugby cuppers draw to a close, cricket Cuppers will begin in earnest, and Fitzwilliam will be hoping to win the competition for the fourth year running. The other big college sporting event of term is May Bumps, where Lady Margaret M1 will be out for revenge after their defeat in Lent Bumps, while the women's section will be similarly hotly-contested with Jesus and Newnham currently occupying first and second position in the May's rankings.

Inevitably, however, the term-card will be dominated by the two traditional summer sports: cricket and tennis. The 2019 Blues tennis matches will take place on the 29th and 30th of June at Moor Park Golf Club, with the men's squad hoping to retain their crown and the women's squad looking to avenge last year's defeat. Both squads can approach the Varsity games with confidence, having performed well in BUCS over the winter: the men's Blues finished second in the competitive Midlands 1A division, while the women's Blues finished third.

The cricketers, meanwhile, will also be preparing for their Varsity matches against Oxford at Lord's, while the men's first team will also be hoping for a successful season in the BUCS Midlands 3A division, starting the season on the 8th May away at Oxford Brookes. The male and female MCCU teams will also be taking part in BUCS, with the men in the National Premier Division and the women in the Midlands 1A division.

So, much to celebrate in the world of Cambridge sport and much also to look forward to as we enter the infamous Exam Term. As the term drudges on and the revision grows ever more tiresome, what better way to unwind than by heading off to watch some of Cambridge's finest athletes in action?

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The boxing club won both the inaugural “Town vs Gown” fixture and the 112th Varsity fixture
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