

Varsity Takes
Fashion to
the field
Page 26

‘Fringe was tougher
than Netflix’

Witcher actress and Caius student on the
acting world Page 25

Pitt
Club

Insider reveals
all Page 19

No.904
Friday 14th October 2022
varsity.co.uk

The Independent
Student Newspaper since 1947

VARSITY

New VC: I don't know what decolonisation is

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

Meg Byrom & Fergal Jeffreys

Anthony Freeling, Cambridge's new acting vice-chancellor, has told *Varsity* he doesn't know what decolonisation is.

In an interview in today's paper, Stephen Toope's short term replacement said that decolonisation "has been misused to such an extent that I don't think, if I'm honest, I can give an accurate definition of what is meant by it."

The admission comes at a delicate time for Freeling, who has sought in the last few weeks to balance courtesy for his controversy stricken predecessor with a recognition of the need to turn the page on culture war debates.

Toope, who previously said that decolonising the curriculum holds "a lot of value", set up the Cambridge advisory group on the legacies of slavery in 2019 which concluded last month that the University gained "significant benefits" from the slave trade.

Asked about the practice of decolonisation, Freeling said that since Cambridge is a university that is managed from the bottom up, "I cannot imagine frankly decolonisation discussion making such sense at governance level".

The new vice-chancellor also described the reading week proposal as "an over-simplified solution", but didn't rule out the university trying it temporarily. He said: "The bigger issue I think is workload".

Freeling also emphasised the impor-

tance of free speech, a point of frequent conflict during Toope's term. The right-wing press often criticised Freeling's predecessor over the issue, something Freeling alluded to himself when he said: "The *Spectator's* take on some initiatives that I thought was just unfair personally."

Freeling repeatedly said that the University should not limit its members' speech, saying: "we must make clear people are free to speak about things that are lawfully allowed," adding that "I would feel quite horrified if people felt they could not say things."

As reports of another suspected suicide at Cambridge circulate, Freeling played down his capacity to solve the increased demand in the university for mental health services, which have increased by 28%: "It's easy for amateurs like me to tell simplistic narratives of this thing that made that thing happen. That is definitely over simplified and dangerously over simplified."

"It is absolutely a priority of my time and will remain one when professor Prentice arrives."

"We need to find ways that we give our students the best opportunity to reach the help they need without the pretence that a set of amateurs can do that. We want to go to that next level, using true expertise. We are reaching out to them, not the amateurs. More to be done and we are doing it."

Full interview on pages 10-11 ►

Downing Master slams 'predatory' drinking soc

Meg Byrom
Senior News Editor

The master of Downing College has criticised the college drinking society after several female students received invitations to "an evening of drinks and merriment" which the College called "explicit".

In an email seen by *Varsity*, Alan Bookbinder said: "the group has no place in the Downing community".

After the president of the society, the Gentleman Patricians, sent the invites, the master said the College hadn't "approved and won't approve of any society called the Downing College Gentlemen Patricians, so it has no-so called President and no official members."

"A group dedicated to drinking in excess is not acceptable", he added.

The email also said that the group's behaviour had been "unacceptable." Commenting on the invites sent to young women, the email said that the group target "women they deem attractive, inducing them to drink in excess, and treating them in a misogynist and predatory way."

Despite many drinking societies being banned across Cambridge, or not formally recognised by their respective colleges, many continue to operate in secrecy. The Gentlemen Patricians, as well as Downing's other drinking societies, were involved in controversy in 2018, when the JCR abolished the position of head freshers' rep over allegations that the position was tied to drinking socs, after drinking soc members held the position for two successive years.

In previous years, Downing's drinking societies have had reputations for being particularly egregious, a source told *Varsity*.

The groups were allegedly known for disrupting meetings of the College's feminist society, the source added.

Drinking socs are a perennial problem at Cambridge. Their antics during annual pre-exam celebrations on Jesus Green regularly result in embarrassing photographs being printed in the *Daily Mail*.

As a result, the University has often criticised the groups. Stephen Toope, the former vice-chancellor, said he was "not sympathetic of any organisation where the primary purpose is to drink."

Despite the embarrassment and official disapproval, however, efforts to stamp the groups out have, thus far, been unsuccessful.

TOBIA NAVA

News

Varsity podcast with Greg Taylor

Your weekly digest of all things Cambridge. Featuring special guests and quality chat.

Hopefully,
Monday mornings.



IN THE PAPER

NEWS



New societies
From battle reanactment to salsa classes, what are the new societies on the Cambridge scene (PAGE 4)

SPORT



A different player
Joshua Korber-Hoffman interviews a deaf tennis player (PAGE 30)

CULTURE



Cambridge star
Interview with the Caius student and star of new Netflix film The Witcher (PAGE 25)

COMMENT

Socialising at Cambridge is built for rich kids

Bella Cross, page 13

Online interviews is a bad idea

Leader, page 17

IN BRIEF

Killer robots

Undergrads may be contributing to the development of autonomous weapons systems (AWS), according to a recently published report. (PAGE 4)

Piss fines

Rowing clubs have been fined £3,600 for poor behaviour including public urination during the latest May Bumps. (PAGE 6)

Star power?

Why do fans continue to support celebrities can retain supporters after committing terrible acts (PAGE 9)

Website: varsity.co.uk • Twitter: @VarsityUK
Facebook: varsityuk • Instagram: varsitycambridge

WEATHER

16 °C

FRIDAY

18 °C

TUESDAY

17 °C

SATURDAY

17 °C

WEDNESDAY

17 °C

SUNDAY

17 °C

THURSDAY

17 °C

MONDAY

18 °C

FRIDAY

UCU threatens 'unprecedented' industrial action this winter

Eric Williams

The University and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA) has offered a 3% pay rise package. However, the UCU has pointed out that with inflation at RPI 12.3%, this offer amounts to a substantial real-terms pay cut.

The ballot comes amidst the cost-of-living crisis, where people across the country are facing rising energy prices, increasing rent burdens, and projections of a historic fall in real incomes.

The Industrial Action Ballot also tackles casualization in the sector, which the UCU blames for economic insecurity, higher workloads, increased stress and greater incidence of mental health issues. The UCU's own research suggests around 39% of academic staff are on fixed-term contracts – higher than the national average.

UCU demands include a pay uplift of 2% over Retail Price Index (RPI) inflation, a framework for eliminating insecure work practices, and action addressing dangerously high workloads.

Staff at Cambridge University face a "constant squeeze", according to Rune

Nyrop, a UCU member and academic interviewed by Varsity as the UCU ballot over pay and working conditions enters its final weeks.

Rune spoke to Varsity about his experiences working at the University. "It's unrealistic to have a family in Cambridge. Half my salary goes on nursery fees alone".

"It feels like everything is coming together and hitting all at once. Rents are really high, nursery fees are really high, living expenses are really high - and they keep on rising. But salaries keep lagging behind".

Discussing the uncertainty of life in Cambridge without a permanent contract, Rune told Varsity: "I cannot guarantee to my family that we'll stay living where we are now. I'm applying for permanent positions, but if I have to move again, I will drop out of academia".

Speaking on his previous living conditions, Rune said, "it's affected my mental health quite badly. I had to take some time off and start taking antidepressants, which I'm still on".

Issues of equality are also within the pay and conditions dispute. The UCU notes substantial race, disability and

gender pay gaps, and disproportionate incidences of higher workloads and casualization. Balloting over pay and conditions is also running alongside a separate ballot on the USS pensions dispute.

Differing from past action which has used disaggregated ballots, the UCU is undertaking an aggregated ballot - despite anti-union law restrictions. Since the Cameron government's Trade Union Act of 2016, a 50% turnout has been required for ballot outcomes to be deemed valid. Whilst the UCU's decision means that the ballot will have to meet the threshold nationally, it also means that if successful, the entire sector could be brought to a halt. Cambridge would see strike action along with 150 universities across the country. The scale of potential industrial action is set to be 'unprecedented' for the UK's Higher Education sector.

UCU general secretary Jo Grady said: 'the reason for these ballots is very simple: university staff are facing the biggest cost of living crisis in a generation, yet bosses think they can get away with a massive real-terms pay cut and pension cuts that will leave our members facing poverty'.

Access scheme back in-person

Daniel Starkey

Applications to mentor as part of the SU's shadowing scheme have reopened after the scheme faced difficulties last year.

The scheme, which recruits mentors in the autumn before taking place in the spring, aims to improve the University's accessibility by inviting prospective Cambridge students from underrepresented backgrounds to shadow a current student.

This will mark the first year that the shadowing scheme runs in-person since the start of the pandemic. Last year the scheme was set to run in-person, but a surge in Covid cases over the winter led to the scheme being moved online at the last minute.

Delays in the communication of this

decision prompted the withdrawal both of multiple colleges and participating prospective and current students from the scheme, according to a report published by the SU.

So and so from Clare said: ""

While the report admits that the 2022 scheme had faced "challenges", the SU claimed that the experience of students had not been impacted by Colleges dropping out.

The SU referred Varsity to a line in the report which said: "We are pleased to see the continued trend that over a third of shadows apply to Cambridge, with an increased offer rate this year of over 1 in 3, compared to 1 in 5 of last year's applicants receiving an offer from Cambridge."

This part of the report is not referring to the 2022 scheme, however. Students

who took part in the scheme in 2022 will largely be applying to Cambridge as part of this cycle.

Participants' engagement with the scheme's content was reportedly low this year, with the online format presenting barriers to ensuring the absorption of content, as well as making asking questions more difficult.

The report nevertheless found positive outcomes from this year's scheme. In many cases, participants felt more likely to apply to Cambridge than before they attended the scheme. They also felt that they understood the application process better.

The report also stated the SU's commitment to 'focus[sing] our changes for next year', to address the difficulties faced by this year's scheme.

Colleges compete for ice cream discount

Bella Shorrocks
Deputy News Editor

Jack's Gelato, an ice-cream shop beloved of Cambridge students, has announced a new scheme which will reward the most loyal colleges with higher student discounts.

In the scheme, revealed online, each college will have a unique discount code for students to use when they place their order. At the end of each term, Jack's will calculate which college has ordered the most scoops of ice cream, and release the

results in a 'JG League Table'. The results will be adjusted for the numbers of students in each college.

Those at the top of the league table will receive an increased student discount, while those at the lower end will have a reduced discount. Jack's promised that the college at the top of the league table would "unlock all kinds of magic". The scheme is also open to students from Anglia Ruskin University, who have their own unique discount code.

The results will be recalculated at the end of each term, with colleges competing for higher places on the league table.

The ice-cream shop is already known for attracting long queues at all times of the year, and this new scheme is set to increase demand as students from different colleges vie for the top spot.

One Corpus College student told Varsity, "As a Corpuscle who lived above Jack's last year I feel we've got this one in the bag. I would feel pity for those living in further out colleges... but a discount is a discount."

Each college starts with a discount of 10%. Discount codes are currently live, and each college's individual code can be found on the Jack's Gelato social media.

Men in black?

A mysterious group have been spotted scaling the roofs of iconic University landmarks, reports **Erik Olsson**

Bizarre new footage shows hooded men dressed head-to-toe in black scaling the rooftops of Market Square and the history faculty.

Mysterious photos obtained by *Varsity* have led some to speculate that the Cambridge Nightclimbers are making a resurgence on the University scene.

One eye-witness made a comparison to the 'The Life and Death Brigade' on Gilmore Girls.

"I wondered if the Pitt Club had adopted new costumes," she told *Varsity*.

Some have even celebrated these hooded nightcrawlers for challenging sartorial orthodoxy at Sidgwick site, a runway for many of Cambridge's more aesthetically-inclined humanities students.

Neither climber was seen carrying a tote bag or warmly clutching their worn copy of De Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*.

One visibly shocked Sidge dweller told *Varsity*: "They just appeared out of nowhere. I was so excited - it's just so 'unsidgi'! They were wearing hoodies - finally somebody brave enough to challenge the crocks and corduroys."

"They started to slide down the glass of the roof and my heart dropped, I was just imagining one of them falling through. There were four of them walking past the library before, and two scaled the building."

Seeley is not the only rooftop these nightcrawlers have been seen scaling.

Varsity has also obtained footage of the group on the roofs around Market Square.

One eye-witness told *Varsity*: "Walking back from ITSU, a group of silhouettes caught our eye on the roof of Franco Manca."

"Joking about the chimney sweeps of Mary Poppins, we approached to get a better look."

"One guy in a black hoody and bandana sat with his legs dangling over the gutter. He returned my wave with two peace signs."

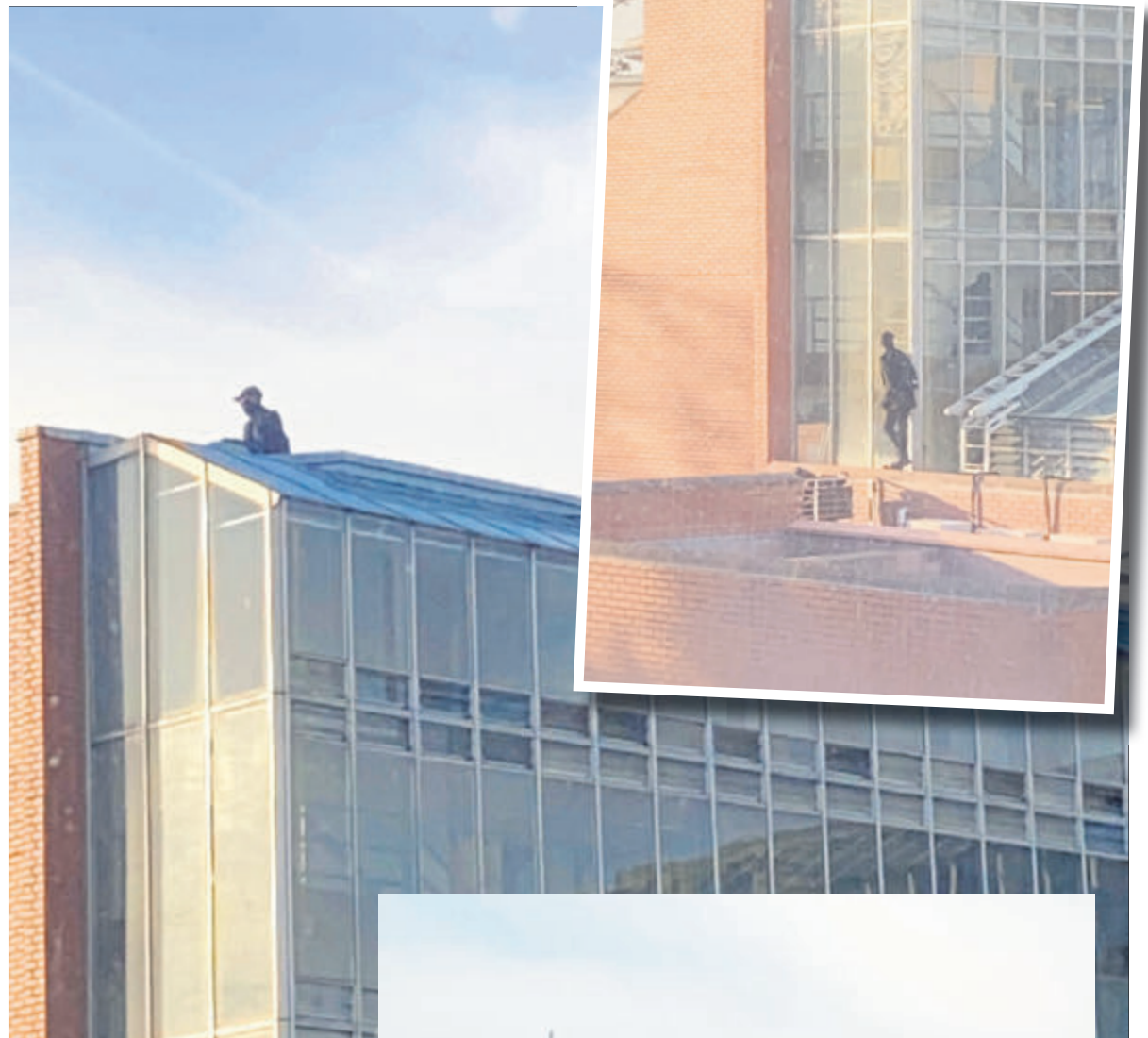
Sightings have also allegedly been reported on the roof of Gonville & Caius as well as Senate House.

One unsuspecting eyewitness told *Varsity*: "Whilst I was at Caius, I saw a flash of movement at the window of the highest floor."

"Being as high as it was, it didn't cross my mind that it was a person until the porters came into the room and asked if we had seen were the figure had run to."

Cambridge students are now left scrambling for answers, the parkour partakers still at large.

Exactly where and when the nightclimbers will strike next remains unknown.



Who are the Nightclimbers?

The so called "Nightclimbers" are a staple of the Cambridge skyline.

With their signature black hoods and balaclavas, the Nightclimbers have regularly been spotted scaling (and loitering) the roofs of iconic Cambridge landmarks.

Though their recent resurgence has taken some in the Cambridge community by surprise, the nightclimbers are known to regularly meet on 3 Thompson Lane, where they once allegedly broke a window.

It is not known how many of its members are students at the University.



▲ Mysterious figures spotted on top of the history faculty (VARSITY)

The Cambridge Student set to close down temporarily

Michael Hennessey
Deputy News Editor

Student publication *The Cambridge Student* is not currently operational, after 23 years at the heart of student journalism in Cambridge.

TCS did not hire new editors, after the previous editor failed to open a recruitment process.

The SU, which publishes the paper, said they would be advertising for a new team soon, and that they were looking forward to the paper returning in the "near-future".

The last article on the website was

published at the end of June. The publication's social media accounts have not been used since the end of May.

It is unclear if TCS will return in future terms if it is able to recruit new editors.

The 2011 co-editor of the paper, Zoah Hedges-Stocks, urged Cambridge's budding student journalists to get involved: "It's a shame that no students have stepped forward to run TCS this term. Having a plurality of news outlets is good for the student body and makes for better, more



▲ The Cambridge Student's print run ended in 2016 (LOUIS ASHWORTH)

interesting journalism. If readers don't want to get involved with TCS (or any other soc) because they think it's a bit rubbish, I would urge them to get stuck in and create the kind of content that they want to see."

TCS is owned and published by the Student Union and was founded in 1999. It previously covered news, culture, lifestyle and arts in Cambridge. The paper made

national headlines with its coverage of animal rights abuses and photography of the tuition fee protests in 2010.

In April 2016, it was announced that the paper's print edition would be cut by the Student Union, turning TCS into an online-only newspaper. Cuts took place as CUSU was in a "difficult position" financially.

At the time, the chair of the Student Publication Association, Jem Collins, said she was "totally baffled" by the decision. "Student media really is vital to both university life and democracy", she added.

News

New societies open their doors

Kareena Rippingale & Hugh Jones explore some of Cambridge's newer — and sometimes stranger — societies

Some Cambridge societies are known the world over. The Union has been hosting the nation's finest minds, and Tory MPs looking for a free lunch, for over 200 years. Some of its debates have made quite the impression — even generating national headlines. The ADC's rigorous professionalism has produced some of our greatest thespians — and of course *Varsity* has been standing for high-quality student journalism since 1947.

But in addition to these old and storied names, are the University's myriad other societies — over a 1000 in total. With freshers' fair over-running Parker's Piece last week, *Varsity* set out to interview some of the newer — and sometimes quirkier — organisations which incoming students might opt to join, if their college rowing club doesn't ensnare them first.

Cambridge Alternative Music Society (CAMS) was founded last year and defines itself as a relaxed and welcoming community. It aims to create an inclusive space for people to talk freely about alternative music through bops, socials and a discord group. A core principle of CAMS is openness. They told us: “anything that is not mainstream pop is considered alternative”, ranging from jazz to electro.

Amelia, secretary of CAMS, said: “emo halloween bop has been the main selling point this year.” Indeed, after joining CAMS, she's discovered that Cambridge has a “huge community of emos.”

Brown Girl Link Up (BGLU) was founded in December 2021 after a

group of brown girls ‘linked up’ and decided to turn their sense of shared community and safe space into a society.

Kareena Tooray, the society's vice president, told *Varsity* that her friends and her “were sitting in a room and thinking it was so nice to be surrounded by people you get on with and have cultural similarities with, and that it would be so good if everyone had that opportunity.”

BGLU is open to women and non-binary people of South Asian descent. Popular events last year included ‘Curry brunchers’ and ‘Brown Girl BBQ.’ This year, BGLU continues with the events (and puns) with ‘dressy drinks’, ‘brownminton’ and karaoke night.

Varsity asked freshers which BGLU events they were most looking forward to. Prishti from Queens' College said she was most excited for “movie night, because I love Khabi Kushi Khabhi Gham.”

Cambridge University Cuban Salsa Society was created only days before the fair opened. The president, Damian, held a number of Cuban Salsa Parties last year in Wolfson College. After the parties' popularity, he decided to turn their success into a society.

Their goal this year are simple: “to make more Cuban Salsa parties.” The society will also hold salsa lessons for beginners, so don't worry if you can't dance salsa yet!

People should join for the friendly atmosphere, the diversity of members whose nationalities span Latin America, Europe and Africa, and “be-



cause our parties are very fun”, *Varsity* was told.

Kia is co-president of roller-skating society, in which members skate around and listen to music. She founded it with her friends in June 2022 after “a group of us in Girton and King's just met up and started skating around.” Plans for this year include skate rink meetups, socials, and skating around Cambridge — including night skates.

Kia told *Varsity*: “if you're stressed and think, let's put some wheels on my feet and roll around with a bunch of people to really vibey music, why would you not?”

▲ **Larp soc at their Midsummer Common meet-ups. The group meets every other Saturday to put on costumes, get into character — and do battle** (TOM GARNETT AND KAY CHARD)

Nadia, a fresher from Catz who signed up to the society at the freshers' fair, is excited to get to know Cambridge “from a roller skating perspective”.

Varsity also went to speak to the Cambridge Live Action Role-Playing Society, or larp soc. Larping involves

attendees pretending to be part of a fantasy world. Participants invent characters with backstories, who then participate in a particular ‘system’.

While spears prove convenient for enforcing social distancing, *Varsity* was told that the society had been less active over Covid. Larp soc meets weekly in non-fantasy attire to do ‘magic’ and engage in ‘diplomacy’. They also meet on Midsummer Common once a fortnight to get fully dressed up and do battle — before heading to the pub for a pint afterwards.

Undergrads designing ‘killer robots’, claims report

Eric Williams

Cambridge undergrads may be contributing to the development of autonomous weapons systems (AWS), according to a recently published report.

The report into the “British military-university nexus” in which Cambridge is named, flagged links between the Department of Computer Science-based Prorok Lab and the development of autonomous robots with the US Army. Past projects at Prorok Lab have been funded the US Army's corporate research laboratory.

The report says that undergraduate computer science students are in-

involved in project work for the Prorok Lab “which is developing autonomous robots” alongside research groups affiliated with the US army.

The report also argued that this raised “particular concerns as the ethics teaching within Cambridge's Computer Science MSc-BSc core curriculum does not consider the military applications of computer science research.”

The investigation also found a “lack of transparency” in ethical decision-making procedures at the university. Concerns were raised over the conduct of Cambridge's Committee on Benefactions and External Legal Affairs (CBELA), which reportedly failed to provide publicly available information on research

under deliberation and the process of ethical impact consideration.

This was said to raise “questions about the university's ability to ensure that its funding sources and the potential outcome of its research fully respect and reinforce International Human Rights Law principles”. The report also writes that all projects under investigation do not necessarily “directly contribute to autonomous weapons systems”, but have the potential to do so “whether intentionally or unintentionally”

The report comes a year after Pro-Vice Chancellors condemned allegations that Cambridge contributes to the development of lethal autonomous weapons (LAWs) as a “misrepresenta-

tion” of university research projects. Pro-Vice Chancellor for Research, Professor Anne Ferguson-Smith, and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Enterprise and Business Relations, Professor Andy Neely stated at the time that research under investigation was “envisioned to address specific challenges facing society, and, as part of the University's mission, to benefit all”.

Autonomous weapons systems have been under growing international scrutiny since 2014, with 40 countries (the majority in the Global South) calling for the implementation of international laws restricting the new forms of high-tech weaponry. Opposition from major powers, including the US, Russia, India and Israel, brought negotiations to bring

these new technologies under the UN Convention on Conventional Weapons framework to a halt.

Speaking with *Varsity*, Stop Cambridge Killer Robots said, “we're asking Cambridge to establish a clear policy and commit publicly to not contributing to the development of LAWS and to ensure university staff and researchers are fully aware of what their technology may be used for and understand the possible implications of their work, and allow open discussions about any related concerns”.

Stop Cambridge Killer Robots' statement was in collaboration with Cambridge Amnesty and Cambridge Tech and Society.

The University of Cambridge was contacted for comment

Exclusive Student SIM-only deals

Get ready for freshers week
with over 50% discount



National Plus Student

15GB

~~£10~~
£3
/30 Days

Unlimited UK Minutes and Texts

100 International Minutes*

National Plan Extra Student

20GB

~~£12~~
£3.50
/30 Days

Unlimited UK Minutes and Texts

100 International Minutes*

UK Plan Super Extra Student

30GB

~~£15~~
£4.50
/30 Days

Unlimited UK Minutes and Texts

100 International Minutes*

UK Plan Mega Plus Student

100GB

~~£20~~
£6
/30 Days

Unlimited UK Minutes and Texts

100 International Minutes*



LycaMobile.co.uk/studentoffers

*For full product terms and list of included countries, see website.

Lyca

Mobile

The Lyca Mobile logo, consisting of the word 'Lyca' in a large, white, sans-serif font, with the word 'Mobile' in a smaller, grey, sans-serif font below it. To the right of the text is a graphic of two overlapping hearts, one blue and one green.

News

SU condemns Cambridge clergy over conversion therapy letter

Caredig ap Tomos & Hugh Jones

The Students' Union voted to condemn church leaders at St Andrew the Great (StAG) and Holy Trinity churches for signing an open letter written in opposition to proposals to ban the practice of conversion therapy.

The churches are popular with Cambridge Christians, with Cambridge's Inter-Collegiate Christian Union (CIC-CU) frequently hosting events at the churches.

The open letter, signed by the vicars of both churches as well as 6 other church leaders from StAG, said: "the category of 'Conversion Therapy' is one which is so broad as to be essentially meaningless".

The letter continued: "It should not be a criminal offence for us to instruct our children that God made them male and female, in his image, and has reserved sex for the marriage of one man and one woman."

The motion passed unanimously last night (10/10) at the SU's student council.

The motion also called on the SU sabbatical officers and leaders of the BME

and LGBT+ campaigns to make a guide to inclusive places of worship for all religions and denominations.

The move has upset some student attendees of those churches, with several expressing concerns about the SU's decision to weigh in on questions of faith.

One StAG attendee told *Varsity*: "I think it is unfortunate that the SU thinks itself a body capable of wading into a matter of conscience and religious conviction."

Another student said: "The religious beliefs and practices of churches, citizens and students in and around the University of Cambridge are - or should be - of no concern to the SU."

One student also raised concerns that the SU had not considered the feelings of all their constituents, saying: "has the SU taken into account the harm this could do to gay Christians wanting to live out traditional Christian sexual ethics?"

The move also caused consternation among Cambridge's more progressive Christians.

One student who is involved in efforts to make Cambridge churches more welcoming to LGBT people said:

"Though I am completely against the harmful and homophobic treatment of LGBTQ+ people in church spaces, I am concerned that SU's condemnation of HT and StAG leaders will only add to the potential alienation of students who attend these churches."

"We should be working towards inclusion, not exclusion, to create a truly safe Christian space for all students."

Other students were more defensive of the SU's move. Chang Liu, who proposed the motion, told *Varsity*: "I think it's being known in the community for a long time that these churches may not put students' welfare first".

"I do want to stress that this motion is not to ask Cambridge SU to take a stance on theological grounds, we are simply making sure students don't become the collateral damage in the theological differences", he added.

Martha Rand, another student involved in pushing for more LGBT+ inclusive churches, acknowledged: "there's ways in which [the motion] is not perfect", but said: "it is important for people to know if churches are affirming."

Rowers fined 3k for piss-poor behaviour

May Bumps, the four-days of rowing races hosted at the end of each Easter Term, is a time of giddy excitement and college rivalry, in many ways similar to the sporting chaos of a primary school sports day (Ellie Austen writes).

This year, some college boat clubs may have taken that spirit a bit too far as clubs were fined thousands of pounds for poor behaviour during the races, *Varsity* finds.

The latest May Bumps cost boat clubs a total of £3600. The races were to blame for a number of offences from safety misdemeanours to public urination.

Gonville & Caius paid the most in fines, shelling out £360 to CUCBC across the four-day races; while Trinity Hall faced a £300 fine after four instances of public urination noted in one day from a single crew. Trinity College paid £295 in fines, including £60 for foul and abusive language and £75 for dangerous clearing.

The majority of fines, however, were dealt for minor offences; £795 in total for excessive bank partying (too many supporters cycling alongside the boats during the race) and £700 for banned handheld filming of the event.

The Lent Bumps earlier in the year cost college boat clubs a similar total of £3380 in fines, with CUCBC levying £615 of fines to the worst-offending club, Emmanuel, for their behaviour throughout the races.

When rowers are found to violate of the rules, their club is punished through fines ranging from £15-50. Offences such as failing to provide a marshal are fined around £15, while larger safety hazards such as a serious failure to clear during the race face fines around £50. One of the largest individual fines levied against crews includes public urination, which suffers a £75 penalty (down from £85 in previous years).

C&G

Coach Services



37 years experience of University groups.

Vehicle sizes up to 70 seater single deckers, up to 77 seater double deckers and 16 seat minibuses.

Local Cambridge based coach company.

www.candgcoaches.co.uk

Email: info@candcoaches.co.uk

JOIN US!

Bored of your degree? Interested in student gossip? Have strong opinions?

There has never been a better time to get involved.

Varsity is the independent student newspaper for the University of Cambridge, pursuing quality journalism since 1947.

Visit varsity.co.uk/get-involved to find out more, or come along to our fortnightly socials Thursdays at 8pm at the Anchor pub, starting 14 October!

www.varsity.co.uk



▲ Unite called on Trinity College, who own the land the port sits on, to intervene over the alleged mistreatment of dockers in a protest this Wednesday (12/10) (PHOTO: UNITE)

Cancer cells ‘hijack’ their way around the body, new study finds

Orla Holt
Science Reporter

A team based at the Cambridge Institute of Cancer Research UK (CRUK) found that cancer cells “hijack” a normal cellular process to move around the body. This challenges the previous theory that metastasis, the spread of cancer cells, was achieved by cancer cells’ own machinery.

This transformative research involved the team blocking the activity of a specific protein in mice. When the protein was blocked, migration of cancer cells was triggered, strongly implicating the protein as a key driver of metastasis.

However, to the enormous surprise of the research scientists, blocking the same protein in healthy, cancer-free mice drove their healthy cells to leave their original tissue and travel around the body, just like in cancer cell metastasis. For example, healthy pancreatic cells were found to migrate to the kidney and convert into healthy kidney cells.

The group leader for the study and director of the CRUK Cambridge Cen-

tre, Professor Richard Gilbertson, commented: "These findings are among the most important to have come out of my lab for three decades. Not only have we identified one of the elusive drivers of metastasis, but we have also turned a commonly held understanding of this on its head, showing how cancer hijacks processes in healthy cells for its own gains."

Metastasis is the leading cause of death in cancer patients, such that blocking it is a central goal in the field of cancer research. The team's progress in identifying a key driver of metastasis is an enormous step towards achieving this life-saving feat.

The profound impact that this research could have for cancer patients was highlighted by CRUK's Director of Research, Dr Catherine Elliot: "Discovering that a cancer has spread is always devastating news for patients and their families and so we are delighted to have supported this incredible research which may one day allow us to prevent metastasis and turn cancer into a much more survivable disease."



WHY CONSULT WHEN YOU CAN LEAD?

Manage a multi-million pound marketing budget.
Lead a sales business worth £100 million

Omar, Assistant Brand Manager, Tampax



Alumnus of
Emmanuel College

Zoe, Sales Manager,
Febreze



Alumnus of
Robinson College

Rachel, Product Supply Start-Up
Leader, Gillette and OldSpice



Alumnus of
Pembroke College



Say do the
right thing

Responsibility is the law of tomorrow

Forensic ESG scrutiny means reputation is increasingly difficult to protect. How you adapt to changing expectations will determine your future. Are you living up to the claims you make?

Want to be part of the law of tomorrow?
Find out more at mishcon.com/graduates

Business | Disputes | Innovation | Private
Real Estate | Consultancy Services

Mishcon de Reya Group
It's business. But it's personal.

News

Magic McKellen

St Catharine's alumnus Sir Ian McKellen visited the college on Monday 5 October to open new facilities, including a new dining hall and kitchens, and speak to students. To mark the opening, McKellen, famous for playing Gandalf in *The Lord of the Rings*, "used some pyrotechnic wizardry to conjure a blazing doorway, which he then walked through - once the flames subsided", according to the college.



▲ Sir Ian McKellen (Gage Skidmore VIA WIKI-MEDIA COMMONS)

UL buys 'Victorian Kindle'

The University Library has purchased a miniature "travelling library" containing 9cm-long French books for an undisclosed price. Rare book specialist Liam Sims, described the shoebox-sized case as a "Victorian Kindle". The collection was made in the early 1800s and could have been used to transport books on long carriage journeys and was found in a UK bookseller's catalogue.

Grafton's science makeover

The new owners of The Grafton Centre have proposed a makeover of the shopping centre with an injection of science based businesses. Trinity Investment Management say it "no longer works in its current form" and plan to "revitalise" the centre with life science start ups and new labs. The number of shops in the centre will be reduced. A public consultation will take place in November.

Cam rises in uni rankings

Cambridge University has risen to joint third place in this year's *Times Higher Education World University Rankings*. The University, which was joint fifth in 2022, now shares third place with Stanford University in the United States. For the seventh year running - much to Cantab chagrin - Oxford University has claimed the top spot in the world rankings. The *Times Higher Education World University Rankings* are the only global performance tables that judge research intensive universities across all their core missions: teaching, research, knowledge transfer and international outlook. This is the first time since 2019 that Cambridge has ranked third place, having dropped to sixth place in 2021. Imperial College London is the only other UK university to have reached the top 10 in the rankings.

XR march dressed as blood droplets

Members of Extinction Rebellion (XR), dressed as blood droplets, processed from Parker's Piece to the Senate House to protest against the Schlumberger Gould Research Centre and its relationship with the university last Saturday (08/10). XR Cambridge have detailed that Schlumberger "is the biggest oilfield services company in the world" and that where "there are fossil fuels, you'll find Schlumberger's technology, helping companies like Shell and BP extract the last drops of oil and gas from the ground". They further stated that by "funding PhD scholarships, fellowships and a professorship, Schlumberger makes its activities look more legitimate." XR Cambridge have launched a campaign, 'Schlumberger Out!', calling for the university to "stop collaborating with Schlumberger" and Schlumberger to "stop profiting off planetary destruction and commit to climate reparations".



▲ XR CAMBRIDGE

Fireworks display to return to Midsummer Common

Cambridge City Council has announced that the Midsummer Common bonfire night and fireworks display will return on Saturday 5th November. The event will take place for the first time since 2019. Councillor Alex Collins said that "with everyone facing the current cost of living crisis, we understand more than ever the importance of free community events". The free event will begin at 19:00, with thousands of spectators anticipated to attend. A spokesperson for the show said to expect "some truly spectacular moments as we welcome everybody back to this traditional celebration".



**CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS
BOOKSHOP**

20% OFF*

ALL BOOKS FOR HOLDERS OF
CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY AND CAMCARDS

SIMPLY PRESENT YOUR CARD IN STORE

WE ALSO STOCK A WIDE RANGE OF CAMBRIDGE RELATED GIFTS AND SOUVENIRS



Illustration by Richard Briggs



1 Trinity Street, Cambridge CB2 1SZ

☎ 01223 333333

✉ bookshop@cambridge.org

*Offer can't be combined with other promotions

We support celebrities despite scandals, study finds

The love of YouTuber Logan Paul shows how willing fans are to forgive and forget. But why? Izzy Matear asks

It is not uncommon for public figures to retain supporters despite committing acts that prompt international condemnation, but why do these fans remain loyal?

New research from the University of Cambridge found that individuals who frequently express approval for a celebrity are more likely to support them in the event of a scandal. Previous engagement has also been linked to fewer negative emotions, and more attempts to defend the wrongdoer.

“Imagine a celebrity or a politician you greatly admire does something you consider deeply immoral and repugnant. Would you stand by them?” questioned Simon Karg, the lead author of the study.

The study analysed comments from 36,464 YouTube followers before and after a high-profile scandal involving the prominent YouTuber Logan Paul, in which he filmed the body of a suicide victim while making insensitive remarks. The notorious incident sparked public outrage, prompting Paul to release an apology video to his followers where he expressed remorse over the ‘suicide forest scandal’.

Language-processing algorithms assessed the emotions of Paul’s viewers before and after the scandal, from disgust to adoration. They analysed comments on seven Logan Paul videos prior to the scandal, and compared these with comments from the same users on the later apology video.

The researchers were able to explore the effect of the fans’ self-identity by accounting for phrases such as “logang” and “logang4life”, used to demonstrate commitment to Paul. Those who posted using this fan language and expressions of ‘social identity’ were 10% more likely to continue supporting Paul after the horrifying video.

Overall, the study found that 77% of YouTube users who had left comments on the pre-scandal videos continued their support afterwards, with only 16%

expressing anger, and 4% disgust. It also found that users who often commented positively before the scandal were 12% more likely to continue to support him, despite his shocking act.

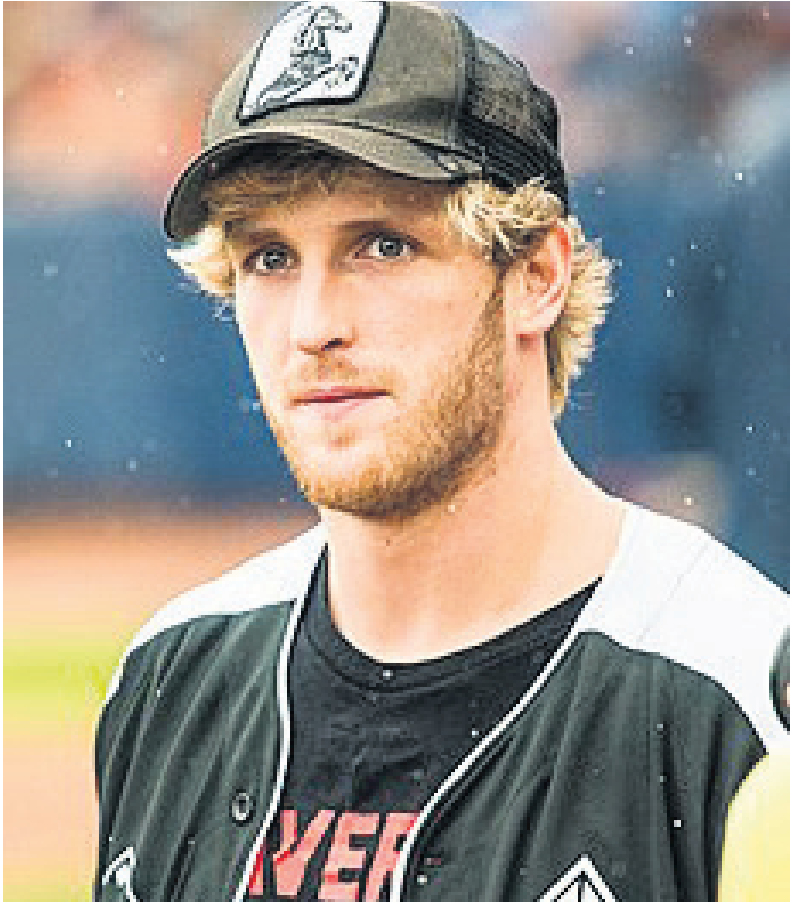
“The more important the person has been to us, the less likely we are willing to change our favourable opinion,” commented Karg.

He added that “it seems that fervent supporters will readily excuse deplorable actions by their heroes. The question is whether anything can break this spell of commitment.”

For each video a user had commented on, the likelihood that they would display ‘adoration’ for Paul after the scandal increased by 4%. Conversely, users were 5% less likely to express anger and 9% less likely to express disgust for each pre-scandal video they had commented on.

Prof Simone Schnall, the study’s senior author, explained: “People often use celebrities in the construction of their social identity. A threat to the standing of a public figure can be perceived by fans as a threat to their own self-identity – something we may feel compelled to defend.”

Perhaps the worrying query remains: how much does it take for fans to change their minds about their idol?



▲ Logan Paul caused controversy when he filmed a corpse in Japan (ERIK DROST/WIKIMEDIA COMMONS)

Work hard, play hard: the science of fun

Izzy Matear
 Science Reporter

Cambridge students are no strangers to overworking. Whether it be looming essay deadlines; upcoming supervisions; or dreaded exams, it is not surprising to find students in the library at absurd hours of the morning.

While stereotypes about Cambridge students not having any sort of social life are (in the majority of cases) wholly untrue, there is still a ‘culture of overwork’. All-nighters are commonplace and stress is a somewhat permanent feeling, making burnout seem almost inevitable.

When balancing heavy course loads with extracurricular commitments, it can often feel overwhelming to try and stay on top of things. As a result, having completely unstructured fun can be de-prioritised and pushed to the bottom of the to-do list — however, science would argue that its importance cannot be overstated.

When we feel pleasure, neurons in a part of the brain called the ventral tegmental area fire, causing the release of a neurotransmitter called dopamine that then communicates reward signals to different brain

regions. This system has evolved to reward behaviour such as eating, drinking or exercise, all of which increase the survival of the individual and the species. However, activities such as exploring, drawing or chatting with friends are also pleasurable for most people, despite having seemingly no direct impact on survival. Why then do we feel joy when doing these things?

All these activities could be seen as a form of play, which according to Patrick Bateson, who was an emeritus professor of ethology at the University of Cambridge, is “almost any activity that is not ‘serious’ or ‘work.’”

The drive to play is thought to arise in the limbic system, one of the most primitive parts of the brain, which controls memory and emotion. Yet studies show that juvenile play helps develop more complex regions of the brain, as rats barred from play struggle to have normal social interactions as adults. As a result, the evolutionary advantage of play is generally accepted to be that it allows juveniles to learn skills or tasks they will need to master as adults. Also, it’s thought that playful people are more likely to develop strategies to allow them to adapt to new



▲ A lack of play in young children has been linked to criminality, declining creativity and obesity (ADAM WHITLOCK/UNSPLASH)

situations.

It is no surprise then that a lack of play in young children has been linked to criminality, declining creativity and obesity. This means

the cost-cutting council measures of closing playgrounds and reducing spending on play are particularly concerning due to the impact they may have on the development of

children. Moreover, play is not only important in childhood. In adults, a lack of fun is also believed to be a reason for an increase in mental health problems such as anxiety and depression.

Having fun helps to reduce stress by lowering the levels of the hormone cortisol, with several studies finding that spontaneous laughter can help us to better cope with stress. It can also increase serotonin levels, a neurotransmitter that regulates processes such as sleep patterns, body temperature, memory and mood.

More fun can also increase both productivity and creativity, as well as improve memory and concentration. Furthermore, there may be a positive effect on relationships with others as a result, by allowing you to be more friendly and establish connections.

Overall, having more fun can improve almost all areas of life. So while it is difficult to devote time and energy to the things you enjoy when you are overwhelmed with work, prioritising fun may be highly beneficial. Taking some time out of a busy day to just have fun might allow you to complete the rest of your tasks more efficiently. And who knows? You might even enjoy it.

News

‘We must make clear people

Toope was under fire from students, staff and the media. How is the acting VC planning on steadying the ship before his successor arrives?

Meg Byrom
Senior News Editor

Everywhere you turn in Cambridge this Michaelmas there is a construction site, even Kings College Chapel is sitting glum behind layers of scaffolding. As I entered the office of our new acting vice-chancellor, I realised I’d found yet another, albeit without as many high vis jackets or machinery. As Dr Anthony Freeling told me about the months ahead, it seemed the struggle to both preserve the University’s past and prepare it for the future was one occurring inside and out.

In his office, the former president of Hughes Hall appears to be a reserved man, joking about his smile as our photographer’s camera snaps, conscious perhaps that the curtain has just gone up for the first time to his student audience.

Freeling is just two weeks into the role as the first acting vice-chancellor in the university’s 813 year history. Discussing the position in his annual address, Freeling invoked the metaphor of a relay race, saying he should be the intermediate between the two vice-chancellors, with Professor Deborah Prentice assuming the role in July next year.

Yet Freeling does not see his role as simply a “placeholder”, saying “I want to hand over a slightly better University than the one I took over on the 1st of October and this is where the baton change comes in, there are some programmes coming forward on mental health, on cost of living, initiatives in climate, all of those things that are happening. I want to make sure we don’t suffer a slow down that could naturally happen if there was a nine month break.”

In laying the groundwork for Prentice’s arrival, Freeling outlined some things we wouldn’t wish for her to inherit from the Toope era, including “the huge interest that *The Spectator*’s took on some initiatives, that I thought was just unfair personally”.

With Toope’s recent departure, the dust is yet to settle on his legacy, with conflicting caricatures of the vice-president as both liberal in the media and a conservative figure amongst some of his own students. Freeling’s answers seemed laced with a fear of tripping into the same narrative traps. With his director of communications sitting beside us, perhaps Freeling’s concerns were shared amongst his office.

When asked the difference between “respecting” and “tolerating” freedom of speech, a debate that sparked criticism of the university

policy in 2020, Freeling said “you can’t tell everyone to agree with everyone else- it doesn’t make any sense. I do believe very firmly in a university that people are able to say what they believe in a very respectful way”.

However, despite agreeing with the term “tolerate”, Freeling then said “I mean I would use the word respectful but in a tolerant way, in a way that is not insulting but to not panic about giving some kind of offence if people disagree.”

Freeling’s answers portrayed a civil servant rather than a prime minister. From his emphasis on procedure, the diagnosis of issues, and finding supportive data, to his refreshing honesty and transparency about his deficits, the new acting vice-chancellor seemed diligent and procedural but lacked a politician’s polish and media training.

Unlike Toope and Prentice that hail from more academic backgrounds, Freeling may know the rules of the higher education game but perhaps not its culture. When asked what decolonisation was he answered “I don’t know”, justifying the answer by saying the term has “been misused to such an extent that I don’t think if I’m honest I can give an accurate definition of what is meant by it”.

Whether intentional or not, the continuity candidate seemed to position himself away from his predecessor, who publicly addressed the issue and supported Cambridge’s own work, including a recent study into links between the University and slavery. He added when asked about the role of governance in decolonisation at the university, “I cannot imagine frankly decolonisation discussion making such sense at governance level. I don’t see that as a governance question.”

However, Freeling praised the work of his predecessor in regards to widening participation. He said “I am a very strong advocate of widening access and participation.” He also dismissed fears that the emphasis on access would cause a ‘brain drain’ of the ‘best’ privately educated students to US Ivy League Universities, saying “we do try to recruit on potential and that we have no biases against different groups of people, wherever they come from.” He also commented on his own time at the university saying “most of us wouldn’t get in because the quality is so much higher nowadays.”

On student mental health, Freeling agreed with Toope’s assessment of reading weeks as “a silver bullet” solution, adding however “that

doesn’t mean we shouldn’t try it out.”

Freeling diverged from much of the university’s previous rhetoric on mental health, saying: “I think it is the workload in some places and I’m much keener and pushing us to think about where their issues might be important. At the same time as thinking about the reading week, I am pushing people to think about the workload

and to stop that oversimplification”. In the past the university’s response has focused its mental health focus on services such as counselling and their “Reach Out” campaign, aiming to make these more accessible.

As further strike action looms, the UCU argues staff have faced real term pay cuts, in light of this, I asked how the university justifies Toope’s £475,000 salary. He said: “It was a matter for council.



are free to speak about things'



▲ The University's first acting vice-chancellor, Dr Anthony Freeling (TOBIA NAVA)

You may think it's an unreasonable amount but it's what the best vice-chancellors get and it's far less than they would get in North America. That's how it is justified. Do I like inequality, no I don't. Do I think we should get the best vice chancellor, yes, I do."

As my short amount of time with Freeling came to an end, we shook hands, and I wished

the new acting vice-chancellor good luck for the coming year. Whether the peaceful transition he envisions will arise is still to be determined. As the institutional memory of the pandemic weakens, it will surely be displaced by further challenges that will once again test our vice-chancellor.

Only Trinity College to return to in person admissions interviews

Caredig ap Tomos

Admissions interviews are to remain online this year, except for UK-based applicants to Trinity College.

Trinity has committed to return to in-person interviews this year, with international students continuing to be interviewed remotely.

Interviews first went online in 2020 due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Trinity will provide overnight accommodation for prospective students who cannot complete the trip within a day. Reimbursement of travel expenses will be available to students with a household income below £30,000.

A spokesperson for the University told *Varsity* that interviews at other colleges are to remain online for "purely practical" reasons.

The University said that Trinity will report back to the wider University after it has completed a full round of in-person interviews. The University reiterated that "no student will be disadvantaged by these decisions."

Both Trinity and the University declined to comment on the specific reasons behind the differences in policy.

The University of Oxford have also committed to online interviews for this admissions cycle, making Trinity the sole Oxbridge college conducting in-person interviews this year.

The Student Union has criticised the plans, telling *Varsity*: "giving applicants the opportunity to decide the format of their interview themselves would be the single best way to ensure the Cambridge interview process is accessible for all."

"Some people will feel more comfortable at home or school, whereas others will want the chance to come to Cambridge in person; there's no concrete evidence that proves either format is 'better'."

The SU also criticised the disparity between colleges, adding that "when a decision is made by colleges as a group, it is disappointing to see one college breaking away and providing a completely different experience to their applicants, especially in a process that should be standard and equal for all."

Freeling puts clear blue water between himself and Toope - but tries not to rock the boat

Speaking to *Varsity* yesterday (13/10), Cambridge's new acting vice-chancellor sought to show that he did not share the most controversial positions of his predecessor, Stephen Toope (Hugh Jones writes).

Toope's term ended two years early at the beginning of this month, bringing to a close five years in which he was dogged by criticism from the right-wing press, primarily over his commitment to free speech, which some commentators regarded as lukewarm.

Speaking to *Varsity*, Freeling called those criticisms unfair — but he also repeatedly emphasised his belief that Cambridge students and academics should not face limits to their free speech, provided it does not break the law.

In doing so he quietly embraced much of what Toope's critics demanded — and risked having to either break his word or infuriate students when the next free speech firestorm inevitably breaks out at Cambridge. With Gonville & Caius College set to host a number of

gender critical feminists later this term, drawing condemnation from the Students' Union, people will be watching to see how the new vice-chancellor reacts.

Yet more strikingly, Freeling was lukewarm about decolonisation, a cause célèbre for many students and academics. He said the term had been "misused", adding that it didn't make sense at a governance level. The comment is unlikely to go down well with Cambridge's activist community — but will please the *Telegraph* and *Spectator* columnists who caused so many problems for his predecessor.

Despite these moves, however, Freeling is no radical. He was careful to emphasise that he wanted to change to happen gradually — and has repeatedly underscored his status as a link between Toope and his likely successor, Deborah Prentice, rather than as a fully fledged vice-chancellor in his own right. Nonetheless, there are some who will see his words as quite explosive indeed.

EXCLUSIVE STUDENT OFFER!

Invest in your passion and
SAVE UP TO £270
on selected Canon purchases
with student cashback*

Save cash this October
when purchasing selected
Canon cameras, lenses
and printers – suitable for
capturing stills, video or
live streaming!

Click here to find out more, or visit
www.parkcameras.com/student

Offer available 12.09.22 - 23.10.22
T&Cs apply.

PARKCameras



Visit our website - updated daily
www.parkcameras.com

or call us 7 days a week
01444 23 70 90

LONDON
53-54 Rathbone Place,
LONDON, W1T 1JR

SUSSEX
York Road, BURGESS HILL,
West Sussex, RH15 9TT

All prices include VAT. All products are UK stock. Finance provided by **DEKO PAY**. See website to learn more.
E&OE. Please mention "Varsity" when ordering items from this advert.

Prices correct at time of going to press; Prices subject to change; check website for latest prices.

★ Trustpilot



The future of interviews, by Hannah Castle

Cambridge social life is built for the rich few

Socialising happens around expensive activities only open to wealthy students



Bella Cross

As a new cohort of freshers begin settling into Cambridge, I've been reflecting on my time as a first year navigating life in a new city. Immediately upon arriving I was struck by the insanely high cost of socialising, but more importantly - by how I seemed to meet so many others who were entirely unphased by these costs. As the fifth most expensive city in England to live in, even before considering the extra costs of the "Cambridge experience", it's a pricey place to be a student.

No matter how supposedly important these experiences are deemed, by orienting socialising around expensive activities and upholding this as the epitome of Cambridge culture, those who cannot afford are excluded. But what was particularly upsetting was that most of the people I spoke to just didn't quite get it.

These social circles are fostered during our time here and then maintained as they go on to become the elite politi-

cal and financial class after University. And those circles are incredibly costly to access.

Cambridge is different from many other universities because colleges essentially have a monopoly on land ownership in the city, so it's near impossible to move out into the private rental market (which is also a complete nightmare at the moment) to have a house with a lounge or even a dining table! The college spaces that exist often outright deter socialising, by creating common areas that are far too small for the student body, often dimly lit, with low ceilings.

And so, we're forced to spend evenings in spaces that revolve around the consumption of alcohol. The pub at Cambridge takes on the role that a living room or a common room might at a normal university. It's not only isolating for those that don't drink, but expensive. With the third highest average cost of a pint in the UK, in just one drink, that's the equivalent of three homemade dinners down the drain. And you're acutely aware that whilst you're drinking a £5 glass of wine, with money earned from your summer job at a pub, on the table over from you could be the child of someone who is invested in the industry or literally owns a vineyard.

And even as you sip your tepid pint, the conversation will range from arts, literature and culture that rich children get exposed to from childhood;

The average student is expected to maintain a decadent lifestyle

school connections; living in central London; and favourite skiing destinations.

Outside of day to day socialising, supposed highlights of Cambridge include the Varsity ski trip (with baseline prices around £400 students can realistically expect to pay about £800 to actually enjoy it), May balls (again, most costing over £150 a ticket), formals (£14 at my college), events (those £7 tickets add up), meals out, meals in college, £3 coffees, rowing and other sports (with club & kit fees).

The average student is expected to maintain - in contrast to students at other universities - a frivolous lifestyle. Of course, there are good initiatives by colleges, JCRs and the Cambridge bursary system to alleviate some of these burdens. But even

so, students from low-income backgrounds are acutely aware of the cost of life outside of term time, the burden of supporting family, and attempts to save what's possible for the future.

Growing up, children are not blind to wealth disparities. Yet before joining Cambridge I had never been in situations where I was so constantly surrounded by these stark differences. Living alongside people, there's no way of escaping the reminders of other people's wealth. Frankly, I was completely overwhelmed, felt isolated, and continued to feel so for much of my first year - not least because of the derogatory comments made about my accent and where I'm from.

Certainly many people were empathetic, some found my upset amusing, but many others tried to turn my testimony into a topic for a debate. One of the most deeply infuriating experiences in Cambridge is opening up about a painful experience and someone attempting to use it as an opportunity to flex their faux-intellectualism, to talk about my own experience as a sociological case study. Many people that I speak to are able to remove themselves from these debates, viewing them as a purely intellectual exercise. Yet, for those in which the realities of inequality are their lived experiences

these debates aren't something that can be left at the pub table.

The anxiety of money troubles can be all consuming. There's a guilt of enjoying life and relaxing whilst spending money whilst you know that money is needed more by your family or community. In my second year, I was exhausted by this great pressure I put on myself whilst trying to relax, and I began to work through some of these feelings in counselling. I'm thankful to have accessed free counselling sessions, but whilst this has certainly alleviated much of the guilt I felt, it's an ongoing process. Whilst the financial and social barriers of Cambridge remain, students will continue to feel like this.

So as we welcome a new group of freshers, I can't help but hope that new students are able to find good support systems, make use of the financial support available, and avoid the trauma of interacting with some of Cambridge's worst. But there remains a two tiered system of fun, that is both constructed by and constructive of class inequality at University. So, freshers who come from a background like mine should be prepared for a social scene that costs a lot a doesn't care. A little self-awareness might go a long way.

Bella Cross studies History and Politics at Selwyn College

Comment

Forget lectures, the best part of Cambridge is dinner

A fresher can't possibly imagine the extraordinary variety of Cambridge dinner. In their own way, they are each fabulous, and well worth waking up hungover for

**Thomas
Brian**



Around this time of year, a year or so ago, give or take three months or six, I was summoned back to my old school to address the Sixth Form on the subject of University admissions. What advice could I possibly have to applicants? What remarks could I make on Year 13, on A-Levels, on University Life? Was this another excuse to put on my gown during a vacation? So it's peculiar, but never the less necessary, for me to return to the world of advice, and offer the most important piece of advice to Freshers that I would have been indebted to know two years ago.

That advice is quite simple. Forget lectures – the best part of Cambridge is dinner. Order your life to this end, and you may graduate with a 2:ii, but you'll also graduate with memories, and tastes far outstripping any budget that 2:ii may gain you. You'll soon wind up down and out, scrambling for any scraps of money you haven't squandered. But you'll look fabulous, and you certainly won't be squandering

that cash on any Jamshed Rosé.

Of course, if you're to be acquainted with good dinner, you'll want to be acquainted with good wine. I have a few words on this. The premier venue for the wine trade in Cambridge – the Cambridge Wine Merchants. The wine is excellent, and you pay a fair price for excellent wine and a very good service. By all means, buy your wine here, if you're sensible about it – but be prepared to pay. Otherwise, enjoy the fruits and delights of Mainsbury's wine shelf, the long row in the deepest recesses of the shop – there are surprising delights to be found, particularly on the third shelf.

You have your wine. You have a stained suit several dinners past its best. You have a tie that you haven't ironed since late September. Where can you find dinner?

It's simple: societies. Each society will have its own annual dinner, and they are an affordable escape from college food. Call me biased, but the finest dinners are those of the Cambridge University Heraldic and Genealogical Society. You do need, however, to be able to put up with talks about heraldry and genealogy – the opposite of a problem for me, but perhaps not everyone's main interest. But still – where else in Cambridge can you dine with an imperial highness? And, if it takes your fancy, the most storied dinners are for sports clubs. I've seen

the aftermath of the Boat Club Dinner – but I really wouldn't know.

If you can sing, your college choir will have you set. At Peterhouse, we dine three times a week for free – you will get to the point where you decline the free meal as you are simply bored

There are a thousand ways to do Cambridge – don't let fear of missing out steer you down a path you don't want

of formals (writing this down I feel very, very stupid).

But best of all, roughly once a term, you are guaranteed a free place at a college feast, where the joy and pageantry of a college dinner is combined with that rarest of things: good college food.

After the student urge toward drinking and feasting, you will feel the crushing echo of every tiny noise and piercing glare of morning after sunlight. Your two options here, which

you'd do well to combine, are simple: hangover cures, which a million other men will cover for me, and religion.

Little Saint Mary's is perfect for me, with its incense, bells, processions, good music and good preaching. But in a city of churches you will find a home. Your college chapel will be very good, cannot afford to not be welcoming, and is designed to accommodate you as a student. And probably does Evensong, which is as everyone will tell you marvellous.

And before freshers enter the world, satisfactorily recovered from the night before, be careful. If you make a toasty – it is likely your college will provide toastie machines in your gyp – make the cleaning a thousand times easier by laying down greaseproof paper between the machine and the sandwich. Use butter or something similar to prevent it sticking. Oh – and don't try and rig elections.

But most importantly: there are about a thousand ways to “do” Cambridge. I can speak about maybe two or three of them. But whichever one takes your fancy, know that there will never again come a time in your life when every single opportunity you could want lies but five feet from your doorstep. Don't let fear of missing out steer you down a path you don't want, don't spend your time worrying about this trend and that one. Find the path which really is there and waiting for



▲ A formal of yesteryear (JOHN POLDING VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS)

you, and throw yourself into it as if you'll never again have the freedom, the time and the opportunity – because you won't. Cambridge will be right there for the taking for the next three years: enjoy it.

Thomas Brian studies History and Politics at Peterhouse.

Maia Livne Notebook

Godard, Gawain, and Yom Kippur

Well, we were good together, but we never had that click – my neighbour at The Locker sighs into her Chai Latte. I imagine two puzzle shaped humans clicking into one piece. Click. The English Language often lacks onomatopoeias. Not this time. Click clicks perfectly into its meaning.

When Godard died last month I thought that what fascinated me often about his films was the nonchalant indifference with which his characters would slip into their relationships; carrying throughout the films apathetically mismatched; odd and even horrible relationships without much thought about why they happen to be their in the first place. Maybe they had that click. Probably not. They just found a person and rolled along with it.

And it is a terrifying social ability to have. But it's also terrifying to lose. In an age in which dating options flicker throughout your phone, why would you linger on someone who does not

seem the perfect click? And then again, I sigh in turn into my coffee-fumed mug, I would rather be alone than with any male Godard protagonist. Maybe the death committed monogamy is not necessarily wrong.

What about the death of God?

I think the next day, trying to underline a sentence in my scribbled Sir Gawain and the Green Knight: “Sir Gawan on Godes halves”, the line breaks into a caesura. Interesting, I note, God's behalf halves the line in two.

To do something on behalf of someone sometimes breaks the unity of the self, as it morphs you to fit into your part of that idea, divine or human, makes you into a piece of something. You carry duties towards it, but it also gives you a moral gravity pull outside of yourself.

Spirituality today tends to focus once again on the self. What is *your* birth chart; what do the cards read for *you*? You become one

with something larger. A sensation I rarely feel. Maybe because of an inner apathy, or hopefully because it is a sensation history has taught us can be terribly dangerous.

But when do I feel it? I wonder, I ask my friends and their responses pleasantly vary. When cheering a football match, when playing in a team, when working on a project, when laughing together from a joke.

Groups and belonging

I find my own answer walking the street in Yom Kippur, for the first time in my life seeing cars drive on that day.

Growing up in Israel, I knew that the sense of belonging to a community brings out the most beautiful in peoples. But it also often brought them close to nation-

alism, violence, racism and a lack of empathy towards the outsiders of their specific group.

I never defined myself through groups in Israel, as I feared becoming blind to the complexities around me. But suddenly looking at a car driving by, my communal identity, lacking the shared space it usually experienced, found a very present weight in me. I started thinking of Forgiveness.

Blocking and forgiveness

People don't forgive much in my new home. And maybe it is as sign of the time. Or a sign of the place. Things are more easily documented in our days, the past is laid out for the digging. And in a culture which admires proper behaviour, the digging is severe. Whilst I do often see why we try and remove public figures who we believe have acted wrong, I started thinking of the local cancel culture that I have been seeing amongst my friends. Blocking people out, out of sight out of mind. It has its justifications, for sure, but must it become too much of a habit?

We cannot actually block people out of life (luckily). But in a world in which our virtual presence seems at least as living and breathing as us, blocking, unfollowing and muting

seem to have granted us the illusion of disinfecting life from any interaction that is unpleasant.

Why would you linger on someone who does not seem the perfect click?

And as in relationships and communities, also in friendships loyalty is not bound by law. It is fine to grow apart, and it is fine to draw boundaries. But when we eliminate people and their opinions from our lives we also deprive ourselves from seeing how those contacts might change us and them. How the mind can limber up into new ideas and new perspectives. And as we learn only to hear voices who echo are own, we find ourselves quite lonely.

“We have incurred guilt, we have betrayed, we have stolen, we have spoken falsely,” millions of Jews pray every year on Yom Kippur, listing our sins one by one. And hopefully someone forgives every year.

Maia Livne studies English at Trinity.



Cambridge's traditions still show the scars of Covid

Lockdowns accelerated transformations in student life for the worse — both at my college and everywhere



Max Swillingham

The past is an ever present part of the undergraduate experience at Cambridge. As each year succeeds the next, the transmission of traditions and cultures occurs almost unconsciously, and we are aware of centuries of history around us.

That's why the legacy of Covid still weighs so heavily in student life however — it ruptured this continuum. It is only now with a new class of students that student life is resuming 'normality', or what we think was once normality. As a second-year undergraduate, there is a sense of being trapped between past and future — caught between the Covid survivors in third year, and the first years whose university experience has been

untainted.

Gertrude Stein, in a fit of *accrochable* rage, shouted at Hemingway that 'you're a lost generation!' when her car broke down and the mechanic couldn't fix it. Are we, a century later, also a lost generation? At once, attempts to resurrect past traditions of the undergraduate experience are converging with new ideas about what undergraduate life should be about. Students may still watch *Withnail and I*, and maybe even the 1981 adaptation of *Brideshead Revisited*. But they seem to depict a foreign world.

There is no college better fitting the description of being caught between past and future than my college, Caius. On the one hand there seems to be a strong desire to bring back tradition. It has just made Formal wear for Friday Formals compulsory. In November there is a Latin mass to honour our three sixteenth-century martyrs. On the other hand, there is an impetus to forge new and original traditions, like the Caius Open Mic nights. They're both successful moves and yet they are polar opposites — the former attempting to embrace the traditional Cambridge of the past, the

latter wanting to replace it. And it was lockdowns that made it possible, by suddenly leaving students almost unsure about how to experience Cambridge.

Lockdowns have cast a long shadow in the lives of students, whether we have been aware of it or not. Prosaic things such as Formals hosted at Caius every weekday, or access for students to visit any college are lost in time. Students today don't even realise how strange it is that King's is locked to anyone except King's students, or that it is a unique occasion when you have a formal at a friend's college.

Across Cambridge, societies haven't rebuilt themselves from disruption — the Caius Politics Society is conspicuous in its absence, a peculiarity given the alumni who have had successful careers in Fleet Street, Westminster and Whitehall.

Perhaps most damagingly, lockdowns have accelerated the changing role of the don in colleges. In Waugh's *Brideshead*, Charles Ryder is advised not to treat his tutors at Oxford as headmasters or teachers but as his local priest. But the bachelor don who lives in their college set, and knows every student

in their staircase, is an almost extinct phenomenon.

In their place is the professional, the nine till five don who uses their rooms only for their formal work and little else. There has, as a result, been a strange death of college discussion societies,

The bourgeois rationalisation of the don has made them mere teachers

which dons would traditionally host in their rooms. This is the type of experience one has and can only say: 'this is what Cambridge should be about.' But it no longer is, and I doubt ever will be.

But although the old world is disappearing there is much to be optimistic about. Lecture halls are swollen, the consequence of rightly stopping the

recording of lectures. College societies and bars are mostly restored, although Caius is still lacking the most important thing — Guinness on tap.

Library dwellers and college drinking society bulldogs have been released in equal measure from the restrictions of the lockdowns. Politics continues to permeate Cambridge, but it is not the air most students breathe; rather, more of a buzzing around the ears — ironic considering the reigning monarch, Bank of England Director and Chancellor are all Cantabs and we are experiencing the most serious economic crisis in decades.

But Covid has proven that the student culture of Cambridge is not quite as resilient as one would assume a centuries-old institution is. A world can never be restored completely, and it ought to be acknowledged that we have lost some of the quintessentially Oxbridge things, like discussion societies. The lockdowns were not the cause of this but were without doubt exacerbating factors. A world restored, in part; but also a world still waiting to be made anew.

Max Swillingham studies History at Gonville & Caius

THE MAYS



We are currently seeking to appoint a student Editor-in-Chief for The Mays.

Now in its 31st year, The Mays is a book of the best of new student poetry, short stories, creative photography and art from the Universities of Cambridge and Oxford.

The Mays is credited with launching Zadie Smith's career. The publication has featured a wide range of high-profile guest editors over the years, including Kate Bush, Stephen Fry, Arlo Parks, Rupi Kaur, Nick Cave, Patti Smith, Jarvis Cocker, Ted Hughes and Oscar Murillo.

Joint applications will be considered. To apply, please send your CV(s) via email to business@varsity.co.uk together with a covering letter of no more than 600 words detailing your vision for the book.

THE APPLICATION DEADLINE IS 6pm FRIDAY 4th NOVEMBER 2022

www.themaysanthology.co.uk

SEO/LONDON
SPONSORS FOR EDUCATIONAL
OPPORTUNITY

HAVE YOU SECURED YOUR NEXT INTERNSHIP?

OPPORTUNITIES: access to internships & work experience with 130+ world class employers

SUPPORT: free training, mentoring & employment support

LIFELONG NETWORK: professional connections through our Alumni programme

GIVING BACK: volunteer & pave the way for future generations to follow

JOIN US



campus@seo-london.org
www.seo-london.org

The smoking area

The return of the night out

Tobia Nava

Ignore your guilt about unfinished supo work, the masses return to the club scene for the first Lolas of term



Trumpington

Cambridge’s diarist brings you the latest university gossip



Union and CUCA in bed again

Trumpington spied CUCA chair-elect and the Union equalities officer carousing last week. The Tory lovebirds could be the latest in a long series of CUCA-Union power couples. With the officer highly tipped to be running for Union President this term, no prizes for guessing who CUCA will endorse if and when she runs.

Tory no-show at Freshers Fair

The tiny number of young Tories in Cambridge were disappointed to see the Conservative Association’s stall completely barren during freshers’ fair. When they finally arrived, their table was bare, but for a sign up sheet and two A5 termcards. *Varsity* has previously reported on CUCA’s cashflow issues, and no doubt losing out on new freshers will be a fresh blow they can ill-afford.

So how did CUCA come to embrace austerity? Trumpington heard that they used to have a banner and a tablecloth, but an ex-chair left them in his Peterhouse room and despite four hours searching, the CUCA stash is still lost in Peterhouse. Trumpington will reward any would-be treasure hunter.

Abra-cadaver

Trumpington has heard that a seventh-year medic at Tit Hall has acquired a taste for particularly exotic meat. The mysterious medic became a bit peckish while dissecting a cadaver in their first year and allegedly snuck a bite of the body. It is still not known whether this foray into cannibalism was repeated but Trumpington will always urge caution when dealing with medics. They can bite!

Bathing in VK

Trumpington has heard that a college drinking society bathed in a VK-filled paddling pool in the sacred Little St. Mary’s Church last Thursday. The college the society belongs to and the contents of its soiree are unknown, but when a Trumpington minion headed down to spy on the scene, he said he could see blue lights turned on and voices emerging from the tucked away church. Nanamex next week lads?

Weekly Diary: Kwasi Kwarteng*

What’s the Trinity alumnus been up to?

Thursday 22nd September

I stare once more, lovingly, at my PhD certificate. A lifetime of work, of studying economic history at not just one of the best universities in the country, but one of the best colleges (editor’s note — we get it, you’re at Trinity, stop being a wanker). The Great Coinage of 1696, the dissertation that sparked a lifetime of ideas, my book, my articles, my political career. And now I could finally test them out in real life! I can’t wait; I mean really how much has economics changed since the 17th century?

Friday 23rd September

Meltdown. “The pound falls to a 37-year low against the dollar”. I don’t understand the panic. What’s £45 billion in tax cuts between friends? It’s only £400 billion extra in spending, and besides it’s going to those who need it the most. The rich. Sure, everyone has told me that trickle down economics is a bad idea, but it’s a lot like committing flatceest in Freshers’ Week: you always think that when you do it it’ll work.

I go through my dissertation again. Surely somewhere in here is the answer? I leaf through; “William III demanded an end to hammered silver coins in favour of machine-struck ones.” I break into a cold sweat. Maybe this wasn’t as well thought out as I had thought.

Saturday 24th September

God. Keir Starmer is such a dick. Who announces actual constructive policies? What an absolute nerd. It’s been a very confusing day; the whole world seems to be telling me I’m shit, from Tory MPs to the markets, to those pestering journalists with questions like: “Why did you suppress the OBR’s economic forecast?” Because they didn’t have as good of an economic education as me, obviously? I

mean for God’s sake, some of them went to John’s (watch it — ed). But then, this afternoon several of the top Tory donors had taken me out for a “champagne reception” and it seems they’d all made a terrific amount of money. They did a lot of something called “shorting the pound”, apparently. They didn’t have this in 1696 so I didn’t have much of a clue what it meant. Nor did I see what putting down dogs had to do with making money. They kept slapping me on the back and saying that I’d done exactly what they hoped, but then outside the toilets I heard them referring to me as a “useful idiot”. It was all very confusing.

Sunday 25th September

People are calling for my job!! And actual grown up people too, not just leftists. Worse still, it seems the people in Cambridge don’t even like my plan, they’ve been saying it’s an “embarrassment” for Trinity College! No, an embarrassment is what we did to Corpus Christie on University Challenge. They wouldn’t have forgotten that in a hurry.

Several people seem very upset about the champagne reception thing. They’re calling it my “let them eat cake moment”. Confusing: they’d only served biscuits.

Thursday 29th September

My PR person told me I should be wary of Truss blaming this whole fiasco on me. Huh, I’ll show her. I open my file marked “top secret information on Liz Truss” and begin filing through. “Liz Truss stopped being a Lib Dem because she didn’t know how to spell it”, “Liz Truss murdered the Queen with Novichok”, “Trinity is by far the best college and all others are pale imita-” (right you’re fired — ed).

* According to James Grimditch

NOT the NEWS

What were the stories that didn’t make the cut?

Baron of Beef set to be bankrupted by Nottingham Forest fans

A local Cambridge pub has launched a “ruinous” new promotion in which fans are given 10% off their pint if their team is losing. One inebriated Nottingham Forest fan said: “I won’t be buying a full-priced drink all season.”

Junk mail goes through the roof in wake of Freshers’ Fair

“I didn’t even go inside the tents, and I’ve somehow been added to 600 email lists,” said one fresher. “I had to start giving out fake email addresses, just do ward them off,” whimpered another.

Cambridge Union passes new emergency resolution

Off the back of their emergency resolution, “condemning Russia’s invasion of Ukraine” last year, the Union has continued to debate controversial issues, such as “Is the Pope Catholic?”, “Should I vote conservative at the next election?” and “Why does everyone hate us?”

Liz Truss continues blistering attack on Thatcherism

At the the Tory Party Conference, Liz Truss repeated that the deprivation she had witnessed in Yorkshire in the 1980s was what made her want to become a politician. This searing attack on Baroness Thatcher (1979-90) appears to be a new appeal to the Red Wall.

Disastrous budget sparks on-slaught of dad jokes

Britain is set to revive the death penalty tonight for anyone who calls themselves a “Quasi Kwasi

Kwarteng” after being bad with money, doing a sum wrong or crashing the economy. Volunteers for the firing squads are already in the millions.

Stoners not as lazy as thought cont.

A recent *Varsity* article publicised research that disproves any link between cannabis and motivation. A spokesperson for “Gonville and Kush” said: “For too long it’s been assumed that we don’t put in the same work as other Cambridge stud — holy f*** is that the time?!”

Huge uptick in lecture attendance during Liz Truss speech

“I’ve never seen anything like it,” said one lecturer, “it just goes to show that if you put something boring enough on TV, you can force students to turn up to the Sidgwick Site.”

Activists suggest Union start charging for speaking spots

The head of a climate student advocacy group has reacted in horror that Charlie Kirk, head of Turning Point and anti-net zero lobbyist, will be at the Union. One student said “Kirk is a intellectual and moral vacuum with an open disdain for British universities and absolutely nothing enriching or of value to contribute to a debate. His notoriety exists entirely due to fossil fuel groups and other bad faith actors paying for him to get on as many TV shows as possible so he can lobby on their behalf. If this is the bar for speakers, just stick the slots on eBay and be done with it”.

Leaders & letters



Ending in-person interviews is a grave mistake

By choosing to indefinitely continue online interviews, colleges (with the exception of Trinity) will make the application system less reliable, and less fair. Interviews are vital to giving fellows a holistic picture of applicants, turning them from a data file into a rounded human being. If done right, and properly invested in, they make the application process fairer and more humane. But done like this, they risk making Cambridge yet more inaccessible, despite the change being entirely unnecessary.

As an overwhelming volume of evidence about online learning during the pandemic has shown, maintaining digital interviews is contrary to equal opportunity. The University may expect applicants to have access to a stable internet connection and a quiet room, but the reality is far more complicated. Students in rural areas are likely to struggle far more than their peers; students who rely on their phone for internet access will be put at a significant disadvantage to those with laptops; students in crowded living space or without rooms of their own will be unable to perform as well in many cases, and even when they do, will be unable to focus as completely.

Making interviews online also risks making interviews open-book. For students at top schools, or those who've paid for extensive tutoring, they may be able to utilise the huge number of resources they have been given. Students replete with practice interview feedback, speaking pointers, or pre-prepared answers are even better positioned now to make the the most of them, including in the interview itself – and the only way to avoid this would be to demand ever more anti-cheating measures that involve students filming themselves, which are expensive and inaccessible.

In-person interviews were not perfect. There were huge disparities between colleges in the provision of accommodation and the funding of travel. Cambridge can well afford to provide the funding required to level opportunities – and ought to. But online interviews represent a step backward, that cause far more issues than they solve.

Equally importantly, the interview process has the potential to humanise a place that can be deeply alien to students. Making small talk with fellow interviewees in the waiting room, discussing college life with JCR helpers in the year or two years above you, are all to be replaced by the cold, blank screen of a Zoom waiting room, and a deafening silence afterwards. Many successful applicants will now arrive at their college having no idea how it looks or feels.

Approaching three years on from the start of the pandemic, colleges cannot keep abusing the excuse of the pandemic to pursue yet more destructive cost-cutting. From rent hikes to curfews, to unprecedented restrictions on visits from other students, college bureaucrats continue to use the pandemic to justify power grabs. Students, and now applicants, bear the brunt of sustained college overreach. JCRs, the SU, dons, alumni and students cannot let colleges continue to hide behind such excuses and must push for interviews to be held in person again.

No doubt, when students start applying in great numbers to Trinity, the only college now willing to fund an in-person interview process, they will reconsider. Until then, college administrators intend to embark on a path that almost every student and every fellow should be opposed to, for the sake of cost-cutting, at the price of fairness and centuries of tradition. We hope wiser heads prevail.

The SU needs more, not fewer, Right minds

A recent comment piece in this newspaper (“Who in their right minds would join the Student’s Union” 01/10) heaped criticism on the Student Union (SU), centring on the contention that SU Council is unfit for purpose.

The Council is supposed to be the democratic accountability and policy-setting arm of the SU, but is, we are told, disconnected from student opinion by the fact that some of the members on it are not nominated by JCR/MCRs.

The article highlights the presence of ‘representatives of the SU’s campaigns, various other members representing student groups and academic ‘Schools’, and the sabbs themselves’ who sit on the Council. These members supposedly insulate the body against even a ‘huge shift in student opinion’. The presence of a ‘coalition of the radical and the bored’ means the game is rigged against students who want change from their SU.

A compelling narrative for those frustrated by the SU, but a false one.

Consider the break-down of the 97 seats on the Council: 62 of those are for delegates from JCR/MCRs (two from each College). They are joined by 12 Student Academic Reps, directly elected by students in each academic school of the University. The remaining 23 seats are split between the 8 Sabbatical Officers, 4 Portfolio Officers, and 11 representatives from the SU’s student-run campaigns.

For the sake of conjecture, overlook the fact that the Sabbatical Officers are directly elected by the student body each year: overlook, too, the fact that the SU Campaigns regularly hold their own open meetings through which students can adopt policy and hold their representatives accountable. Imagine a Manichaeon division between the unresponsive SU “blob” (of 23 members) and the true heralds of ‘student opinion’, the JCR/MCR

Reps. Student opinion clearly has the “blob” outnumbered and by a margin of 3 to 1.

In truth, there is no conspiracy: the Council is not weighted against Common Room Reps. Rather, as the author noted, the real problem is apathy.

In the last year, across eight voting meetings, the mean turnout rate of the 23 members directly involved in the SU was 40%. Amongst JCR/MCR Reps, it was just 23%. It appears the author’s cheerful advice – “just give up” – has already gone well heeded.

The Council can be a powerful tool for the Sabbatical Officers, Campaign Reps, and Common Room Reps to work together and produce meaningful results. Most of them simply don’t bother coming to meetings.

So, to the question “Who in their right minds would join the Student Union?”, I propose a different answer. The SU is not institutionally broken: if you want change, the first step is turning up.

Fergus Kirman, Chair of SU council

An hall-ful error

The recent article on the Adonians at Peterhouse included an image which was quite obviously not of Peterhouse’s hall. The portrait above the high table is clearly of Lady Margaret Beaufort. Do better.

Disgusted of Peterhouse

A noteworthy death

I would like to make the case for the reinstatement of the Cambridge Pocket Diary.

Cambridge University Press’s choice to make the 2021-2022 edition of the pocket diary the very last, is a substantial loss for both the University and the world.

This particular diary was elegantly formatted and provided the perfect space for easy and precise organisation of the academic year. It also documented plenty of relevant and irrelevant University and global occasions, amusing its loyal scribblers with a solemn calendar of random informa-

tion. One’s progress (or otherwise) throughout the year was monitored by a ribbon that dangled playfully in the lap of the present week. Its meagre dimensions (perhaps two by four inches) and many thin pages made it short and stout – ample yet dainty. All of this was bound in handsome maroon leather, with “The Cambridge Pocket Diary 2021-2022” proudly stamped in gold on the front.

Nobody seems to know exactly how long this beloved breast-pocket friend has been in print, but it has certainly been considerably longer than the reign of our late sovereign, Queen Elizabeth II. It seems a pity that, as well as Her Majesty, the Cambridge Pocket Diary shall draw its last breath in 2022. How many historical icons can we afford to lose in just one year?

A large number of students, staff, and University merchandise fanatics will miss the familiar touch of this all-time favourite. Dame Mary Beard has already written an obituary in the Times Literary Supplement in which she points out that the diary is, predictably, yet another casualty of our smartphone-fuelled war on print.

Despite the feeling that the eventual extinction of printed books is inevitable, I believe that this diary cannot be among the first to go. For as long as the Cambridge Book Shop sells books, it seems good and right that it must also stock an official pocket diary for the disorganised academic, however eccentric he or she may seem.

Hamish Garratt, MAST, Cantab

Point taken

Sir, I know that Varsity prides itself on being a proper newspaper, however, any self-respecting newspaper prefixes all letters to the editor with “Sir,” (or “Madam,” or equivalent, depending on the editor). Additionally, unless strictly relevant to the letter, the author’s age should not be included after their name at the bottom of the letter. Surely this rule should also apply with regards to their Year of Matriculation as well?

Isaac Kaufmann, Fitzwilliam College

Send us a letter: letters@varsity.co.uk

EDITORS Fergal Jeffreys & Jacob Freedland editor@varsity.co.uk
DEPUTY EDITOR Lewis Andrews deputyeditor@varsity.co.uk
MAGAZINE EDITOR Sophie Macdonald magazine@varsity.co.uk
NEWS Hugh Jones & Megan Byrom (senior), Michael Hennessy, Bella Shorrocks & Louis Mian (deputy) news@varsity.co.uk
FEATURES Erik Olsson-Ferrar & Zoe Olawore features@varsity.co.uk
COMMENT Jonathan Heywood & Jack Rennie opinion@varsity.co.uk
INTERVIEWS Eleanor Mann & Hannah Gillott interviews@varsity.co.uk
SCIENCE Louis Hodgson & Joseph Steane science@varsity.co.uk
SPORT Joshua Korber-Hoffman & James Hardy sport@varsity.co.uk
ARTS Isabel Dempsey arts@varsity.co.uk
FASHION Lily Kemp & Nafisa Mahmood fashion@varsity.co.uk
FILM & TV Sarah Abbas filmandtv@varsity.co.uk

varsity.co.uk
LIFESTYLE Juliette Kendal & Jasmine Hearn lifestyle@varsity.co.uk
MUSIC Daniel Hilton music@varsity.co.uk
THEATRE Benjamin Conway theatre@varsity.co.uk
PRODUCTION Jakob Alwall, Anoushka Mazumdar
CHIEF SUB-EDITOR Suchir Salhan subeditor@varsity.co.uk
ASSOCIATE EDITORS Lotte Brundle & Bethan Moss associate@varsity.co.uk
BUSINESS MANAGER Mark Curtis business@varsity.co.uk
VARSOC PRESIDENT Fergal Jeffreys president@varsity.co.uk
VARSlTY BOARD Dr Michael Franklin (Chairman), Prof Peter Robinson, Dr Tim Harris, Michael Derringer, Mark Curtis (Company Secretary), Alan Bookbinder, Elizabeth Howcroft, Fergal Jeffreys & Nick Bartlett

Get involved!

We’re always on the look out for new talent.

If you want to start writing for a section, email a section editor. Anyone is welcome.

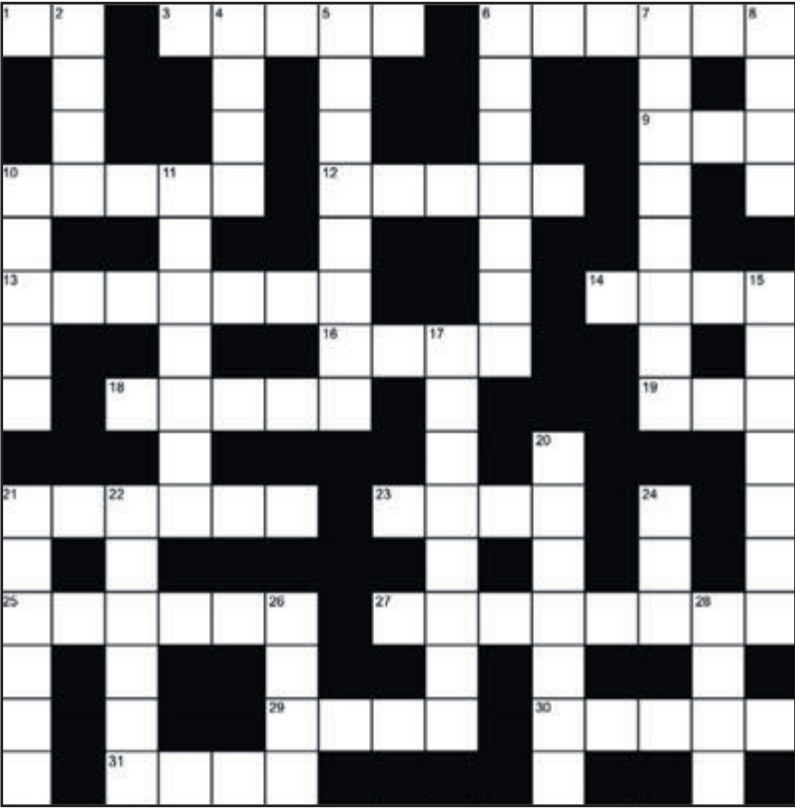
Still unconvinced? Come along to our fortnightly social at the Anchor pub: 9pm on Thursday evenings. Second trip is October 28!

© VARSlTY PUBLICATIONS LTD, 2022. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means electronic, mechanical photocopying, recording or otherwise without prior permission of the publisher. Varsity, 16 Mill Lane, Cambridge CB2 1RX. Telephone 01223 337575.

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

The smoking area

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD by Evie Burr



- Across**
1. "Nearly closed". duo heard (2)
3. Southern kid's garment (5)
6. Come up with new videos without Oscar, and add energy (6)
9. Change-up sad commercials (3)
10. New York and London material (5)
12. The French can make a language (5)
13. One more angry hwwornet follows hyena's tail (7)
14. Eric goes crazy for grass crop (4)
16. It's more than finished (4)
18. A vain organisation of birds (5)
19. Close some open doors (3)
21. One who pursues a second drink (6)
23. Alien spacecraft comes back on Tuesday for vegan food (4)
25. Keep back! Editor has looked in (6)
27. Friendly Greek, new in charge (8)
29. Eager diva is all over the place (4)
30. I do it all wrong as a fool (5)
31. Always out off, no need for safety first (4)
- Down**
2. Individual is on outskirts of Langley (4)
4. Rude estimate (4)
5. Cooking pot named Ron, so I've heard (8)
6. Send deer around alive, essentially (7)
7. Lazy invite that goes around a hundred (8)
8. Otherwise, sleep endlessly around (8)
10. Broken snare approaches (5)
11. Backward company? Stave off in intervals (7)
15. Selfless medicine treated region of illness (7)
17. Praised former lover? Do tell off (8)
20. Insta model follows student union in support (7)
21. Chirp around the start of evening, in code (6)
22. Approach a location (6)
24. Rubbish due (3)
26. Expensive, darling (4)
28. Coin represented hero (4)

SUDOKU by Sam Hudson

	3	2		6	4			
			8	9	5			3
						9		7
	5					7		1
7			4		6			9
2		9					3	
4		7						
8			3	4	9			
			5	7		8	4	

QUIZ ANSWERS

- Where in Cambridge can you find...?
1. An Equatorium

2. A plaque commemorating the table where Watson and Crick ate

3. A honey soy chicken sandwich

4. The smallest Oxbridge chapel

5. Winston Churchill's papers

6. The second most valuable wine cellars in the UK

7. The room where Wittgenstein (allegedly) threatened Popper with a fire poker

8. The first women's college

9. A college whose symbol is a medieval instrument of torture

10. The scene of an infamous Hitler impression

11. The original location of Solidarity college

12. A particularly controversial white-tie May Ball

13. Reality checkpoint

14. The UK's bike theft hotspot
- This week's answers:

1. Whipple Museum

2. Eagle pub

3. Bread and Meat

4. Trinity Hall

5. Churchill

6. Trinity

7. King's

8. Girton

9. St Catharine's

10. The Cambridge Union

11. Senate House

12. Magdalene

13. Parker's piece

14. Cambridge Station

CHESS by Gwilym Price

Cambridge University's chess year kicked off in September with the World Chess League, an online team tournament against players from across the globe. After a close 3.5-2.5 victory over the Philippines in round 1, round 2 against Hawaii finished in a nervy and well fought 6-6 draw. Puzzles for this week come from the round 2 match.



(1) quguangwang - Firethorn15, WCL 2022, Black to play and win.



(2) gerhard64 - BamBam42, WCL 2022. Black to play and gain a large advantage.

Cambridge University Chess Club meet on Monday evenings at St John's College

Varsity Scopes 14th October - 28th October 2022 by Jasmine Hearn & Lily Kemp

Libra: It's been a great week Libra! Especially since, if you took our advice, you're channelling your Zen. There's going to be a test of your New Michaelmas Mentality (NMM) this week. We predict some sensual delights – whether that's a tasty Jack's at the end of a long evening, or something a little less sweet, be prepared to laugh it off when the sun comes up.

Scorpio: Avoid Glitterbomb at all costs this week. Something disruptive lurks in those smelly, sinister corners. And if there's one thing your humble Varsity astrologers get right, it's that your energy needs protecting right now. Stay home; don't venture down those dark and menacing steps this week – or there'll be devastating consequences.

Sagittarius: I may have predicted Virgo as the Diamond of Downing Site this Autumn. However, it seems I was mistaken. Sagittarius is turning heads.

But not because of their beauty or grace. We predict a wave of relaxation overcoming the Saggs. Always trust the urge to make your life simpler. You'll feel fantastic.

Capricorn: The game is up, Capricorn - we know you're the staircase's resident sink pisser. But heed our words, this week your devious acts will go too far unless you reign it in. Someone special will come knocking on your door this



week - you don't want them to catch you with your trousers at your ankles!

Aquarius: Power kicks have always been your thing, Aquarius. But stop obsessing over that JCR member we know you've got the hots for; it's never going to happen! Stay away from those serious types. And keep your eyes peeled for a hunk of a Footlight instead - they'll be more down-to-earth to match your free spirit.

Pisces: you're shy, Pisces - a social media hermit if you will. We know you hate Facebook, we know. But now is the time to be brave and send that Crushbridge you've always wanted to post - it's a good week for a confession of love...

Aries: We know the student loan's just hit, and we know you're quitting smoking (apparently). But there's no wind-falls for you any time soon - you'd better

budget a little extra this week, because before you know it you'll be three squodkas in and popping into Mainsbury's on your walk to Mash for a packet of May-fairs yet again. Better luck next week!

Taurus: Slow down Taurus; you're feeling a lot right now. Surround yourself with people that make you feel like yourself, not like the LinkedIn version of yourself. Remind yourself who you are and get on Depop instead. Grab a garm to cheer yourself up this Michaelmas.

Gemini: Gemini, how are we back to this once again. Make up your mind! You can't do everything all the time. Only a superhero could be a blue, a choral scholar, king of the ADC and get a first. Either learn to let things go, or chill out about not making things perfect. We predict a big, scary ultimatum that will help you change how you manage your time.

Cancer: Freshers' Week is over but that

doesn't mean you have to get back to business hours right away. Let down those luscious locks and head to Sunday Lola's. We've heard you can give the dance floor a run for its money. Unleash that inner BNOC, someone's got an eye on your charming moves.

Leo: If an invitation to a hill college house party comes flying your way, grasp the chance with both hands and hop on that Voi up the hill. You never know what adventures might await you, but we have a feeling you'll be in luck...

Virgo: Take it easy babe. You're so good at finding that balance between going out and staying in. Don't worry about matching up to other feral student's social calendars. You march to the beat of your own drum; if you need a night, or even a long weekend in, do it. Take that rest and mindful time and grab it by the handle. A cup of tea goes a long way in a stressful period.

Vulture



65 year-old acting debut Page 22

Varsity takes to the sports field Page 28



‘If you really want to be a member, you probably shouldn’t be a member’

PITT CLUB INSIDER REVEALS ALL

By Erik Olsson

It’s the Pitt Club’s spring party. The theme is “The Ecstatic and The Erotic”. Organisers are making sure all phone cameras are taped over, curtailing the risk of any photos getting leaked to the press.

“Given the amount of the lingerie and religious dress on display, [this] was very much needed,” this Pitt Club insider tells me. “Brilliant night.”

For someone who recognises the Club’s reputation as “a bunch of toffs getting together and being pricks,” this former Pitt Club committee member is anything but.

Generous with his time, freewheeling with the anecdotes and good company, his unassuming character is at odds with Cambridge’s collective perception of its most famous secret society.

Founded in Michaelmas term of 1835, the Pitt Club or “Club” – as its members affectionately call it – has a client roster even London’s most

exclusive private members’ club would envy.

Past members include Tom Hiddleston, Eddie Redmayne, John Cleese, the chancellor of the exchequer and the King. “We now occupy No 11 and Buckingham Palace,” my source observes wryly.

Plagued by its association with its truant older brother in Oxford – though I’m vehemently assured they “are nothing like *them*” – the Club maintains a reputation for initiating only the privileged and publicly educated.

“They are very different beasts,” he says of his Bullingdon brothers. “We have no desire to smash things up.” Not least because they actually have their own premises in 7a Jesus Lane, albeit one they have to share with their tenants Pizza Express below.

He argues that the greatest disservice done in recent years to the Club’s Bullingdon associations was the 2014 film, *The Riot Club*. “Because I think

everyone off the back of that kind of just made the classic Bullingdon/Pitt Club association, which is a very unfortunate one.”

As for the accusation of private school elitism often levelled against the Club, his answer is considered: “like many aspects of university life there is a lot of public and private school presence, but in no way shape or form is it ever considered a criteria.”

Has the Club’s membership evolved? My source thinks so. “There is a recognition that a better club is one with a breadth and diversity of people in it,” he says. “There really has been a significant amount of change in that record.” He reckons that women now make up 40% of the Club, claiming with greater certainty that a quarter of the membership aren’t white.

This change equally extends to the highest echelons of the society. “There have been a number of people in the committee and in very senior posi-

tions in the club who do not conform at all to the stereotypical background.”

“So what is the criteria for suitability?” I ask. He pauses for thought, aware that everything he says is student journo gold dust. “I’m thinking how much I can give away here.”

Crucially, the secretive element of the club is still incredibly important. “The existence of mystery is a wonderful thing,” he explains. “As an individual at least I am a big believer in the value of ritual, mystery and symbolism, it’s a fun aspect of people’s lives.”

Admission into the Club, however, has its foundation in one simple principle: “you [should] be able to be sat next to anyone at a dinner you’ve never met before and make interesting conversation.”

Oh, and being a Blue helps. “There’s a pretty large amount of sportsmen and women in ▶

Ella Mann

Why college football is THE beautiful game



It's 10:30am on a Sunday morning. The paddock is crisp and misty as bodies sporting magenta football shirts slowly form a huddle on the pitch. There's sleepiness; giggliness; and hungover-ness in the air, as we catch up on last night's gossip whilst cones are laid out. Training draws so many in precisely because you're able to find out who got off with who at Friday Mash during just the warm up. Gossip diffuses faster in a weekend training session than on college confession pages.

But just two hours later we're a different team entirely. Rowdy cries transform Downing's paddock into the Old Trafford, as the last ten minutes of the game are fought with unrelenting passion for what can only be described as the beautiful game. Pats on the back are given, words of praise are exchanged, and spirits are high as we wander happily over to brunch. Is there any better way to spend a Sunday morning?

The beauty of football is its ability to unite people. It's indiscriminate of race, sexuality, class- even gender. Lemz, Tayo, and Frankie, for example, act as Downing College Women's Football's coaches/managers/cheerleaders, turning up to our last match in suits and handing out tangerines at half time. Our three beloved Downing studs are proof that there is no barrier to getting involved in the beautiful game.

College football is also realistic. Unlike rowing, it doesn't require you to wake up at an ungodly hour, meet several times a week, or erg until your hands have calluses. Whilst I have a lot of respect for those that choose this lifestyle, a training sesh once a week is plenty of practice to win the league, thank you. Got the lung capacity of an 80 yr old smoker? You'll be fine to

I'd never seen lacrosse in real life. Watching them run about the field in mini skirts with their curved wooden weapons could have been a scene fresh out of an Enid Blyton novel

totter about the pitch. Got nothing but Nike air forces and a grey trackie? More than expected. Got all the gear and no idea? It's okay, that's what fullbacks are for.

Other college sports require more, shall we say, elite training. Prior to Cambridge, I'd never seen lacrosse or hockey in real life. Watching them run about the field in mini skirts with their curved wooden weapons could have been a scene fresh out of an Enid Blyton novel. The same prerequisites apply to rugby. Don't get me wrong, I love watching hunky giants wrestle each other and sprint up the field as much as the next person. But rugby is rarely a sport you can pick up at your local comp. Hence it appears to me that college sports often reflect the social background of its students. Forgive me if I can't help seeing class divides everywhere at Cambridge, but football, I believe, is one of the few sports where there is little or no social barrier. And perhaps that's down to its simplicity: all you need is a ball and some

mates.

Even skill isn't necessarily a requirement. If you merely want a gossip, then join me and Kez in the midfield. There're no fanciful set positions or circles and semicircles and half courts you have to remember to stay within like netball. Just give it a boot down the other end whenever the ball comes your way.

In fact, and I speak for college-level football here, there's arguably few highbrow technicalities involved. Football allows the widest display of ability- and technique. Every player brings something different to the game. Whether it be top striking from Sarah, or pelting down the pitch with immovable ferocity like Inês, the pitch is a stage on which everyone can perform.

But don't think it's light work. I've seen formations that more closely resemble a scrum in some matches. Nails have been lost, hair has been grabbed- amongst other things. But that's the perfect way to release essay crisis frustration! Both teams can walk away from a match with no animosity, hands shaken, in the knowledge that everything was left on the pitch. And to those that accuse women's football of being less aggressive - and exciting - than men's, there are many a twisted ankle, bloodied shin, and concussed player that can prove that wrong. One DCAFC attacker, for example, even tore her ACL in our first match in an unrivalled display of dedication to the club (may we wish her a speedy recovery).

Whatever hooliganism and deeper, institutional problems may plague professional British football, they don't bother College clubs. They alone offer weekly escapism into a game where your success depends solely on the dynamics of your team. The brunches, pub trips, tours, banter and friends are added bonuses.

Roberts told *The Guardian*: "I haven't known a time when [the Pitt Club] hasn't been in severe financial difficulties [...] precariousness goes with the territory."

"I think there's an element of truth to that," he says of Roberts' statement. "We managed to survive two world wars and a pandemic, and we're still here."

"In many ways it's quite like a typical British story of bizarre old institutions continuing to survive because it has adapted, changed and found new continued purpose."

But isn't the Club's purpose similarly elitist today? "It's elitist in the sense that it wants to have good people in it [...] it's just about being an interesting, intelligent, ambitious and sociable person, in that regard we are probably elitist," he concedes.

As long as Cambridge's secret societies adapt and diversify, this Pitt club insider is hopeful that they will survive. Secret societies "speak to quite a fundamental human need and also a young person's need for excitement, social spaces and a bit of mystery. I think what we are probably just going to see is their continued transition."

QUICKFIRE

Mamma Dee is the 'club mum' at Revs and Lolas

Age: Too young to retire, too old for Only Fans

Do you accept the title of local celebrity?

I think it may be a fine line between celebrity and infamy depending on how you got to know me.

Least favourite kind of drunken student?

The rude ones.

What's your favourite club anthem?

Pump It, Despacito and Uptown Funk. Plus, any 80's/90's bangers. In truth I love me some cheese.

Who's your best friend in the Cambridge bouncer community?

The one that brings me coffee/red bull and a chair around 2am.

What will be written on your gravestone?

It is my favourite thing one of my best friends said to me. That I 'Bring out the worst which is the best in people.'

Brains or brawn?

Brains every time.

When was the last time you really made a difference to someone through your job?

I know that I have made some differences over the years. Some have been simple and some profound, but those differences are also between me and that person.

Revs or Lola's?

For me it's Revs because I go to Karaoke there and they have strawberry waffles. When Lola's also do karaoke and waffles it will be an even split.

Favourite spot in Cambridge?

Wherever my friends may be and wherever there's free parking.

What is your go-to song to perform?

'When You're Good to Mama' is my usual set opener and 'Seven Nation Army' seemed to go down well last year at the Hawks ball.

Any advice for incoming freshers?

- 1) Think before you drink.
- 2) Do not leave your friends behind. If you come as a crew, you leave as a crew.
- 3) Make sure you have an In Case of Emergency (I.C.E.) contact in your phone.
- 4) Make Sure you have your ID. No ID, no entry. Bars and clubs cannot risk their Licence because you've forgotten your IDs.

Finally, and most importantly:

- 5) Always Listen To Mama Dee. final rule it should cover you on most evenings. Even the Door Staff obey Rule 5!!!

Insta Handle: Mamma_De_Cam

Continued from page 19 ▼

the club [...] they are some of the most sociable people in the University."

Union hacks are less sought after. "Electioneering and campaigning don't mix well with nice dinner conversation," he says with a mock sense of seriousness.

"I had many dear friends in the Union," he admits. "But that is politiking and hackery in a sense that is quite anathema to what the club is."

Ultimately the club want to make sure all facets of University life are represented, it's something upon which they "pride" themselves.

But if you're desperate to attend one of those Jesus Lane parties, don't hold your breath. "If you really want to be a member, you probably shouldn't be a member," he warns. Your sense of ego and entitlement will undoubtedly be better off for it.

The Pitt Club insider is much more vague, however, about what exactly being a member entails, and he's reluctant to get into any detail. "Secret" being of course an integral component to the con-

cept of a "secret society".

But he essentially summarises the club's activities in three words: "dinners, parties, lunches." He's unprepared to comment on much else.

Of course, a consequence of the club's clandestine activities are the persistent rumours. "Every now and then you hear a story," my source tells me. He recounts an incident when he was walking down Jesus Lane and overheard two people holding a conversation about the Club.

"They looked up at the Club and said 'oh I hear if you haven't made your first million by 30 they give it to you' and I chuckled 'I fucking wish!'"

This is perhaps even more outlandish when the Club's precarious financial position is considered.

Since a lot of the society's cashflow is subsidised by its tenant Pizza Express, the bank balance was affected by the lockdown's impact on the restaurant chain. As reported in *The Guardian*, trustees sent an email to members in 2020 in order to raise £50,000.

The Pitt Club insider is nevertheless optimistic about the society's outlook. He references a remark made by another member - and historian - Andrew Roberts.

The Vamps are maturing after a two year hiatus

Touring with Taylor, meeting King Charles, and 'shit loads of alcohol': The Vamps talk to Hannah Gillott about their ten years of fame

I've let my 13-year-old self down in many ways. But not recognising Bradley Simpson might be the worst frustration of my preteen dreams yet. A mop of brown curls, a sheepish smile, and a shirt which looked like it came from a Forever 21 loosely cowboy-themed collection made Brad seem as much a student as me. It was only once sat across from him that I recognised the lead vocalist - and teenage heartthrob - of the Vamps.

Considering the Vamps' ten years in the pop industry, they're still young (Brad is 27 and James McVey, the guitarist, is 28). Gaining fame when their bassist was just 15, James describes the early years as "quite daunting". "I'd only ever been to France like three times and all of a sudden we're going to Australia", he remembers. Brad tells me that he has since built up "tolerance" for the exhaustion. In fact, he has only "hit

the rhythm more so in the past like three or four years".

He doesn't just mean musically. Brad says that "there was a period of time where there were a few people around the band who were drivers, and we were going with the momentum we had. Whereas now we're much more conscious of being happy, taking our time, and making the albums as and when it feels like the right time to". This time around, "it's more of an internal pressure than an external one".

They have a wealth of advice on how to deal with that stress. Alongside "shit loads of alcohol", as Brad jokes, James tells me they're going to Cornwall next week. He explains that "the bond between the four of us is a really amazing way to mitigate the stress, and also to unbox issues that have been lingering around in our individual lives". "It's like there's a presence and an energy between us that's almost like a therapy for me". Having been open about his struggles with body dysmorphia, fame has taken a toll on James. But he maintains that "the benefits completely outweigh the negatives". Brad agrees: although "there's a whole host

of other things that come with [the fame]," the chance "to explore the world and see all these people and places with three lovely men" makes it more than worth it.

It's not hard to put your finger on what makes the Vamps so special. In fact, they know it themselves. As Brad says, "people are so switched on now about authenticity. They can see through a lie very well". In an age of manufactured bands, like industry plants with an image as curated as their sound, the Vamps' genuine friendship has a nostalgic quality. Sitting across from the manifestation of the 2010s boy bands-with-floppy-hair hysteria, it's easy to miss it. James worries that "the way that it's going with social media, we might get to a point of no return where the art at the core of [the music industry] or the freedom to express yourself through the method of song"

- he cringes at his "wankery" expression - "is being dictated by formulated things, or statistics".

Yet they seem optimistic - or perhaps diplomatic. As McVey sees it: "in ten, twenty years there'll be another platform, and it's just about evolving and moving with it". Brad agrees: "every generation just has to

adjust," which is "neither a good or a bad thing. It just is". Saying that, he assures me that they won't let this affect their sound - they're passionate that "the art should come first". "I started writing songs because I wanted to," James says. "I was happy singing songs in pubs - that was brilliant. I think neither of us started it to be, you know, famous". For Brad, "getting into music was purely for a love of music".

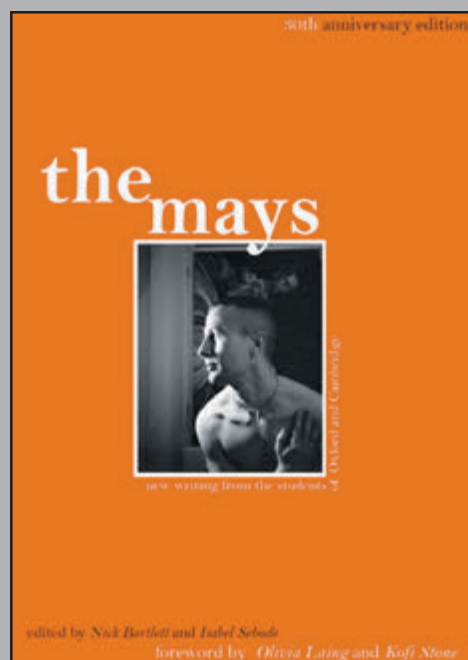
When I ask about future collaborations, James jumps in with "Taylor for me" before I can finish my sentence. Aside from his first name basis with the star, he seems as awed by her as any fan. He describes their tour with her (the Vamps supported her Red tour in 2013) as a "dream come true". "The fact that we still have very fond memories of that shows how great Taylor is because, you know, I can't remember a lot of random shows, but all of that week or whatever it was - I just remember that really well". For Brad, Pharrell is a "genius", and the Gorillaz would be a dream collaboration. It's easy to forget their fame, until James reminds Brad that "we met the now King Charles, didn't we? We did a show for them". "Very soft hands. Like silk," Simpson remembers.

Ten years of fame later, the Vamps haven't lost a shred of the authenticity they had when they shot to fame with a Youtube cover of One Direction's "Live while we're young". They assure me that they never will.



the mays 30

A book of the best new student writing and art from the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge.



Available in all good bookshops
and to order online here:
<https://shop.varsity.co.uk/shop/>

KINGSWAY CYCLES Est 1978

New and Used bikes for sale, ladies and gents available.

Also lights, locks, helmets and other accessories available too.

Please come to our store.

8 City Road, Cambridge CB11DP

Tel: 01223 355852 Email: kingswaycycles@hotmail.com

www.kingswaycycles.com

Theatre

Golden oldie in the ADC spotlight

Sophie Macdonald meets the 65 year-old languages student starring in a new production of *Wuthering Heights*

Martin Carter, a 63-year-old MML undergraduate, is Cambridge theatre's new big shot. Studying French and Italian, Martin was born on the 22 November 1958 and, despite claiming he doesn't believe "any of that jiggery-pokery," describes himself as "on the cusp of Sagittarius and Scorpio."

After an almost forty-year hiatus from education, Martin's inspiration to embark on a Cambridge degree stemmed from an ambition to speak French and Italian fluently, which has been driven by the fact him and his wife used to have a house in Italy. Replacing the Italian scene for the French, Martin and his wife bought a house in Nice, where he would like to talk about more complex things with his French friends who can't speak English.

Martin hopes to secure a spot at the University of Côte d'Azur for his year abroad next year so that he and his wife, who would come with him for his "French excursion", could spend their time in their little house near Nice.

Not every undergraduate comes to the university with a wife, but, while Martin said it is "unusual to be married alongside doing a degree", the last time he did a degree at Southampton, they got married. This isn't the first time Martin is a mature student at university: he started his first degree in Politics at 22, and was always the self-proclaimed "old git."

Before coming to Cambridge, Martin was a chancellor accountant. He described this experience as "having its moments," adding that "once every three or four months I'd have an interesting day." Never a fan of the technical side of things and "never very good at maths", Martin enjoyed the "more ambassadorial" side of his job — in other words, he "had the gift of the gab."

Martin said his first term was a "difficult" one where he had to "work [his] nuts off." Now his second Michaelmas term has begun, his wife jokes "it's like living with an alien." Despite this, Martin is still drawn to the prestige of a degree — although that has not come without its fair share of imposter syndrome. When it dawned on him all the other "wiz-kids" were also working hard he was reminded that he was a 63-year-old "freak" studying MML.

The part of the Cambridge experience Martin isn't a fan of, however, is formals. He described them as a bit "school dinner-ish" and he finds the service "quite disdainful." He doesn't enjoy the experience of suddenly having a plate "banged" in front of him, and instead prefers having it "presented to him." He claims this is just "what happens when you get old."

Although, everything is made better by his "bestie" Olivia. Martin explained that their



▲ Martin Carter (above), starring in Tuesday's (11/10) production of *Wuthering Heights* at the ADC (left) (CREDIT)

friendship "all started with a text." After finding out he also had an Italian A-Level on a Messenger group chat, Olivia, a fellow MML student at St. John's, sent Martin a text suggesting they "stick close".

Concerned that Olivia's reply to "what school does he go to?" Would have to be "he's 63" if Olivia talked to her parents about their friendship, Martin proposed that they meet up with his wife and Olivia's mum and dad to have lunch. They did exactly that in June last year, and now Olivia's mum and Martin's wife are "besties" too.

Martin is also thankful to Olivia for keeping him in the loop about plans and events. Just last weekend, Martin and Olivia, along with a group of 10 MML'ers who are trying to have brunch at every college, enjoyed some bacon and sausages at Selwyn. Olivia also made sure Martin and his wife were invited to "Eurovision night."

There is one dividing factor in their friendship, though, and it's not age. Martin, who enjoys "pubbing rather than clubbing" and makes an appearance at the Blue Ball in Grantchester most Friday nights, said "Olivia is teetotal and that doesn't really work for me." He even said his mum has tried to convince him to "introduce her

to vodka and tonics."

The "great leveller" for Martin, however, has been Cambridge theatre. He said "it doesn't matter if you're 8 or 80, when you're pulling together for the best production you can, age goes out the window." Martin, who has played Earnshaw in *Wuthering Heights* this week, has already been involved in seven productions, such as playing an old man with early onset dementia in *Small Family Business*. In fact, he said he was "already practising" his song "Posh" from "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang" for his "Treasure Island audition" and has his sights set on the Footlights.

Other than on the stage, you'll spot Martin in his Wolfson college puffer around town — he said "I got to Wolfson, I'll bloody wear the coat." One place you won't find Martin though is on Facebook, the "social commitment" it sets you up for is not a responsibility he wants. He's prepared for the stage, but he's not ready to be asked "Martin, why didn't you like my post?"

Post-graduation, Martin "doesn't have any fixed plans." The thought of writing a memoir has crossed his mind, but he'd also like to spend more time in France.

VIEW FROM THE STALLS

All student theatre is terrible. It stinks.

Greg Miller



People get all heated up about what makes a brilliant theatrical production. Naturally, all sorts of words have been spoken, ink spilled, and tempers lost on this vital topic. Is it the performances, direction, lighting, sound or the props? The dancer or the dance? Of course, each and every one of these elements plays a part, but none of them are the deciding factor which makes a show great. That, gentle readers, is money.

Yes, delicious and scrummy money. For what are the performances if they're given by actors who aren't worth much? If an actor didn't cost much, can they really be any good? Same goes for a director, a lighting designer, sound engineer, stage manager, set designer, and so on and so on. People sometimes forget that talent isn't an unquantifiable thing; it can be weighed in wages, appearance fees, the length of a talk show appearance segment and, most importantly, recognition. A lack of recognition means a lack of investment and thus, a lack of quality.

No doubt some people will balk at this position. They'll ask how an ostensible theatre critic can hold such a position. What about the small, experimental theatre productions, they'll say? The ones where set is minimal, where the actors are unknown, where the spectator is confronted with real issues, real words and real pain? I don't think these counterarguments could prove my point more. I don't want to be confronted by art. I want to sit, covered from baseball cap to sneakers in merchandise of the show I'm watching, forgetting myself entirely. I want to laugh and cry at the appropriate points, and then give a standing ovation at the end. Then I want to walk out of the theatre, exclaiming to every living body which is willing to listen that it was "the best show I have ever seen, without a doubt", before doing the exact same thing all over again a week later.

Now, that may seem ridiculous to you. But before you mock, you mockers, just think. Outside of the theatre where I'm covered head to toe in Catz merchandise, there's nothing but war, pestilence, hatred and fear. Everything is sad. And so, if I wanted to be challenged by the realities of life, I could just go and take a stroll outside my front door, something which I very often do. So, for now, I think I'd like to sit in the dark and gawk at splendour.

Of course, all this brilliant rhetoric — which no doubt has swept you along with its Ciceronian stateliness — brings me to my final resounding point, which is that all student theatre is terrible. It stinks. It reeks to high heaven. And therefore it, along with all other theatre which isn't expensive, must be eliminated. Now, such a policy may take a while to implement, but I believe with a bit of elbow grease and good old British can-do attitude, we can finally eliminate this loathsome scourge. Come on people let's do it together!

Defaced! review: a bold move for the Fitzwilliam

This new exhibition is all about what money is and who gets to control it, Isabel Dempsey writes

I've been to a fair few Fitzwilliam Museum exhibits in my time, but none as impressive as 'Defaced! Money, Conflict, Protest' – the gallery's newest exhibition this term. By far the most immersive display I've seen at the museum, it's a definite must-see for any art lovers in Cambridge.

Walking along Trumpington Street towards the museum, the exhibit made me stop in my tracks before I had even ventured inside. Garish posters for the exhibition were plastered to the imposing columns of the Fitzwilliam, physically defacing the grand classical architecture of the museum itself (and all the associations of power and wealth). The museum appeared covered with graffiti. It was stamped with the 'defaced' symbols of money and power that the building itself appears to represent – the perfect introduction to an exhibition all about protest.

Naively, I had expected this exhibit to be much like past Fitzwilliam shows I had seen, with the curated artwork somewhat awkwardly

intermingling with the Fitzwilliam's own collection. But this exhibit created a whole new space in the museum, entirely independent from the rest of the gallery.

Stepping inside, it took my eyes a moment to adjust to the concrete; graffiti; scaffolding; and plasterboard – which all vandalised the museum's white-washed walls. The grungy-looking room had been transformed into a space of resistance, with phrases like "fight fascism" spray-painted across the walls. Cries of "save our NHS" also echoed through the room from a video taken at a protest. It was a nice contrast to the hollow claps of pots and pans we experienced during lockdown.

Moving into the next room, two separate videos were projected onto opposing walls: one depicting an exploding van full of paid-off debt; the other of the organisation behind it, explaining how they helped the financially struggling pay off these high-interest loans. The now-detonated van was impressively hung from the room's ceiling by string. This radical artwork brought this exhibition into a wider social context, representing real-world change.

I think this sense of reality is what I enjoyed most about the exhibit. This 'artwork' wasn't solely art. It was a material symbol of real-world struggles. Oftentimes this gave the exhibition the joy of feeling more like an im-

mersive history lesson than an art tour.

Much of the exhibition consisted of coins and cash that had been physically marked in some way so that their re-introduction into circulation would spread a message of resistance or rebellion. These commonplace objects no longer just represented an exchange of material goods but an exchange of ideas.

Sometimes, I felt that the use of money as a medium came across as blindly privileged, while at other times it sparked interesting discussions about poverty and power. Some works were made from notes made worthless by hyperinflation. Yet, a highlight of the exhibit was Banksy's piece that featured £10 notes with Princess Diana's face embossed over the Queen's. The art made these tenners worth significantly more than their original value. How can we really place a price on slips of paper and plastic?

It was also interesting to see these more well-known artists, like Banksy, alongside mostly anonymous works. As the defaced money was often a symbol of rebellion, it was



▲ A reimagined £5 note by Wankers of the World (FITZWILLIAM MUSEUM)

important that some artists kept themselves anonymous. Although at times the endless rows of coins began to grow somewhat monotonous, when you take a moment to look at them closely and read the history behind each piece, their small defacements grow into a fascinating story.

For anyone who's ever wanted to annoy an Economics student by asking them why we can't just print more money (or even if you're the person who's rolled their eyes and sighed in response!), you must be sure to check this exhibit out. A bold new move for the Fitzwilliam, this exhibition asks brilliant questions about what money is and who gets to control it.

ADVERTISE WITH US

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

Email: business@varsity.co.uk

Telephone: 01223 337575

www.varsity.co.uk

PRANA®
INDIAN RESTAURANT



Award-winning Cuisine

• Eat In • Takeaway • Delivery Service

Takeaway 20% off online orders use **STUDENT20**.
Dine in Every Tuesday, Wednesday @ 17:30 and
@21:30 Student Banquet night £20 1 beer, starter
main with rice and Nan from selected menu.

97 Mill Road Cambridge CB1 2AW
Tel: 01223 22 99 88 info@pranarestaurant.co.uk
www.pranarestaurant.co.uk

‘There’s no Machiavellian edge to it, we just want to have a good time’

Student band Hot Content tell **Daniel Hilton** about their formation, gig preparation, and managing their supos

Bursting onto the Cambridge gig circuit, Hot Content have already made a name for themselves by performing a high-octane sold-out show at the Blue Moon at the beginning of October. What’s even more impressive is that they managed to achieve this feat just five days after they first rehearsed together. Singer Jacob, drummer Rob, bassist Louis, and trumpeter Nick talk about how the band formed, how they prepared for their gig and how they manage to balance all this on top of their supervision work.

The idea to form Hot Content was first brought up after they formed a “scraps band” for a gig in Pink Week last year. Over a pint in Churchill bar, Rob and Louis talked about how much fun it was playing “a bunch of crowd-pleasers – Bruno Mars, Taylor Swift, that lot” and thought “what if we did this but properly with charts and rehearsals?”. Leaning forward, Louis interjects “there’s such a demand for crowd-pleasers to be played, and we just had so much fun – that’s what we’re all about”. In this way, they are paying homage to bands that came before them while still carving out their own place in the scene and playing other lesser known pieces too – “there’s always more music to be made”.

When asked about how they decided on the name, the band erupted in a chorus of “oh my god” and deep sighs as I realised I might have pulled some skeletons out of the closet. Louis says “it must have taken most of the summer to come up with the name”, Jacob shouts “this took months!”, and Rob calmly says “it was by far the most painful part of the process” as they oscillated between names like ‘Dave’s Night Out’, ‘Who stole my bike lights?’, ‘Yellow panda club’ (Jacob’s personal favourite, coming out of a random name generator), and ‘Lawrence and the machine’ after their trombonist. Despite begrudgingly settling on Hot Content, Jacob managed to keep his yellow panda club alive in the band’s logo, drawn by a friend of the band during a plane layover. Rob exclaims “we had a great band, we had a great set list, the only

missing piece was the band name”.

On planning gigs, Rob says “what people don’t realise is that there’s so much demand for live music in Cambridge so I got a bunch of gigs lined up before we were even all in the same room at the same time, although that was a bit of a gamble”. “It was scary” says Jacob, “that was an intense five days” says Louis. “It was definitely a bit of a gamble to book our first gig three days after our first rehearsal,” Rob says while Jacob jokes “everyone was a bit delirious by the end of it”. Nick says he “was nervous until we met up at our first rehearsal and played Runaway Baby and it was immediately just sick – at that point I wasn’t worried anymore”.

All Hot Content’s arrangements are original, composed by various band members over the summer and about this Rob says “the most fun part was making each song our own, we didn’t want to be a band that just plays songs exactly how they are in the original arrangements”. Louis notes that “Although it was quite daunting writing the arrangements over summer by ourselves, it all just clicks when you play them in a room full of talented musicians”.

While after seeing Hot Content live you you’ll be impressed by their talent, what’s more impressive is that they’re all current and ex-Cambridge students, with many not even studying music. As such, they have to balance Hot Content not only with their other societies but also with their supo work.

While this might sound like an impossible task, Louis mentions that “the entire band plays in other ensembles so we’re all used to managing our time effectively between studying and music. Jacob and Rosie and Jas do loads of theatre so we’ve already got several gigs where people will be rushing to and from ADC shows to make it in time for the gig”. Their intense start of term rehearsals also help with this as Louis says “we won’t need to have weekly rehearsals that take up everybody’s time, instead these start of term



▲ Hot Content's Jacob Benayon and Rosie McLeish at their first gig at Blue Moon (STEVE MARKS)

rehearsals mean we have a full two hour set ready to go and we can just have a smaller rehearsal before the gig”.

When asked about the band’s big picture, the band was wholesome in saying that their main goal wasn’t fame or fortune but instead to just be a “a bunch of good friends having a lot of fun together”. In this way, Jacob mentions that “there’s no Machiavellian edge to it, we just want to have a good time”, the band just wants to have fun together and

bring that joy to their listeners.

Hot Content have an packed schedule of gigs in the near future as they solidify themselves as a great, fun, and high energy band on the Cambridge circuit, with their next appearance being at Mash’s Jukebox, Jamnesty, and other charity events throughout the year.

‘Fringe was tougher than Netflix’

Actress and Caius student Gaia Mondadori tells Sarah Abbas about the acting world

Gaia Mondadori - don't recognise the name? Get with the times, she's starred in The Witcher, Everything I Know About Love and Fake It Till You Make It at Edinburgh Fringe. I couldn't spend more than three minutes with this Education student at Michaelhouse cafe without someone coming up to say hi. BNOC. She sat with Varsity to discuss her journey in the acting industry, as well as her experience writing and starring in theatre.

Ranking third on Netflix's most-watched shows of all time, Gaia described her time on The Witcher as an "amazing experience," adding "I was so grateful for the opportunity to work with fantastic actors and a creative team". Being part of such an established show meant that "from the costume, to hair and makeup, to the set" everything was "incredible" and "such a huge learning experience for me". She looked back fondly on her experience with the show and felt "lucky to have been a part of it".

However, her roots in acting lie where many young actors find their passion for the stage: youth theatre. With like-minded talented individuals and inspiring mentors it's no surprise that she "learnt everything there". A small role in Tess of the d'Urbervilles was her first show, she found an affinity to the stage unmatched by another career. "It's so fun. It's just playing the whole time": it's clear she has a preordained talent for it.

Gaia got her start early on, but "not everyone has the opportunity" to. With the acting scene flooded with "privileged, well-connected people", Gaia shared her thoughts on the exclusivity associated with both stage and screen. She recognised the "inaccessibility of the field": she said it is "slowly changing through access schemes", but noted how "acting is a big part of my life and my peers, while for others it's a foreign field". In light of her degree, she's aware of the "disparities in the school system" with the provision of drama and recognises her privilege in the environment she grew up in.

When it comes to acting, there is, of course, the golden question: is training or talent more important? Gaia believes it's "neither". In order to survive "an industry built on rejection", the most prominent characteristic you need



▲ GAIA MONDADORI

is "a love for it". To survive the lows, "your imagination has to stretch to limitless bounds in order to keep the momentum after hardships". Time is constantly dwindling at Cambridge, but for Gaia, she utilises her degree as an aid to her acting. "What I read in my degree may come up in something I write, or give an idea for a character." Then, laughing, she admits "I also feel like I don't do that much work." Her advice: "work smart, not hard."

Just having completed a round at Edinburgh Fringe, her one-woman show: Fake It Till You Make It is moving to Camden People's Theatre. Her inspirations for writing and starring in the show were derived from the "exploration of the masks people wear to make others feel at ease and portray a certain persona and the misfiring of that". Tying it together with her "experience of being a woman in the acting industry", her aim is to show the reality of "trying to make it". "If that is the framework of your life" she asks, "what do you do when it doesn't work?"

Acting is a challenge, but what was the hardest thing for Gaia? Was it working on a hit Netflix show or bring-

ing the vision of a bestselling book to the BBC? Turns out, it's Fake It Till You Make It. "To be the only person on stage" was a daunting task for her to face but she grew to love the role and is excited to share her work. To see her vision grow from the "initial ideas, to the writing, to rehearsals and finally on stage" is something that she found to be satisfying: seeing "how the audience would react to particular scenes or changes in the script".

One of the highlights of working on her show is the all-female team. Being a young woman is complicated. Being a young woman in such a male-dominated industry is even harder. As Gaia reflected on the pressures she feels that her male counterparts "don't think twice about", one thing darts out of her mouth: "intimacy scenes". "For a lot of the roles I've had, I'm not sure if a male actor, the same age as me, would have similar content in terms of intimacy."

Big things are forecasted for this Gonville & Caius third year. Her passion for acting is tangible and mixed with a charming personality, Gaia Mondadori is bound to join the list of notable Cambridge alumni.

CLUB NIGHTS

Sophie Macdonald & Sarah Abbas

14th October Propaganda Cambridge (The Six Six Bar)

Ever fancied hearing Taylor Swift, Katie Perry and Rihanna with as alternative, pop-punk remix? Thankfully, your day has come.

15th October Channel One Sound System (Junction)

With the unique (compared to the other three or so clubs in Cambridge) venue of Junction, any music will do. However, you're in luck, Channel One will provide non-stop Dub-wise for the night.

16th October La Vida Lola's (Lola Lo)

Had a great time at Sunday Lola's last week? This week you can catch the aftermath of the drinking societies' Sidney Roundheads event. Expect big things.

17th October ARCSOC 3000 (MASH)

The theme is 3000AD. Get your best futuristic outfit on and head to MASH to enter a different dimension.

19th October Rumboogie x Varsity Trip Launch Party (Revolution)

Hyped for Varsity Ski Trip? No? Well maybe Rumboogie will get you in the mood to sell your left-kidney for a ticket.

23rd October La Vida Lola's (Lola Lo)

Yet another chance to dance the strangely decorated floors of Lola's. By now, you should have started to memorise the playlist.

23th October Slipped Disc: Mom Tudie, Grandma Groove & more (MASH)

Head to MASH to see self-taught South London music producer, Mom Tudie, as well as hearing your favourite bangers from your grandmother's collection.

26th October Rumboogie (Revolution)

This staple surely needs no introduction. If the essays haven't begun to drown you at this point, there's no better way to spend your Wednesday night.

THEATRE

Sophie Macdonald & Lewis Andrews

13th - 15th October The Odyssey Project (Leper Chapel of St Mary Magdalene)

Reading Homer's epic poem is no small task, so performing it on the stage seems a daunting task. This production promises a variety of dramatic techniques, including physical theatre, live singing and men turning into pigs. What more could you want?

18th - 22nd October In Our Veins (ADC)

Exploring an untold story of Dublin City, this production moves through 100 years of its history. The intimate portrayal of a docker's family is a study in both private and communal history.

18th - 22nd October 8 Hotels (Corpus Playroom)

Nicholas Wright is one of Britain's leading playwrights, and the personal stories in this piece bleed into larger themes. The plot follows the behind the scenes happenings of a cast performing Othello, against the backdrop of Jim-Crow America.

19th - 22nd October Tick, Tick ... Boom! (ADC)

Stop the clock. Take time out. Jonathan Larson's semi-autobiographical musical is coming to the ADC. Approaching thirty, Johnny is a struggling theatre composer who can't give up on his dream to write the next great American musical.

19th - 22nd October Cambridge Greek Play 2022: The Persians and The Cyclops (Cambridge Arts Theatre)

Every three years since 1882, The Cambridge Greek Play has invited students and alumni to perform a classic Greek play, in ancient Greek. The production will be a double bill: Aeschylus and Euripides -- and don't worry, there's subtitles.

18th - 22nd October What's Wrong With Detective Thorgil? (Corpus Playroom)

A world-renowned detective turned old man is alone in a house too big for him. But, when he finds out that he is dying of unknown causes, nothing else is on Thorgil's mind except a mystery.

Fashion

Varsity takes Varsity

Who is muscular enough, strong enough for Varsity sports? Who is rich enough, posh enough, masculine enough, virile enough? Our answer? Who cares!



Creative director: Anna Chan
Associate director: Kasia Truscott
Photography: Beth Baljak, Tobia Nava
Styling: Arianna Munoz, Beatrice Coulter, Freya Beard, Izzy Scott, Sarah Abbas, Sophie Campbell, Yen Min Ting
Set design: Phoebe Crofts
Make-up: Ruweyda Sheik-Ali
Bags: Lara Bibiana Bazzoui @bibibazz
Modelling: Ghazal Seidi, Henry Rocha, Josh Osman, Olunibe Morgan, Niamh Gregg, Sanah Kashyap

Behind the Camera with Vogue's veteran photographer

Taneesha Datta talks to Rankin on Fashion, the 90s and Kate Moss

“It’s very judgmental, the fashion industry,” says Rankin. “It takes itself very seriously, and it’s actually kind of ridiculous.”

It’s not what you’d expect to hear from a man whose work has appeared on the covers of *Vogue* and *Vanity Fair* - particularly not when he’s founded multiple fashion & culture magazines himself, including *Hunger*. “There’s a duality in it for me,” he explains. “I love how seductive it can be, but I hate how it makes me feel and how it makes other people feel.”

Rankin is from St. Albans, Glasgow. He discovered photography at 19 on a borrowed camera and rocketed to fame soon after with *Dazed & Confused*, a magazine he co-launched out of a student publication at the London College of Printing. *Dazed* captured the zeitgeist of ‘90s Britart and Britpop, and its funds came from running club nights that aligned with the magazine’s aesthetic. In conversation three decades later, Rankin is more serious than his old reputation suggests. Today, he is perhaps best known for his portraiture: Robert Downey Jr. clutching a tuba;

Hugh Grant, a naked mannequin at his side; the late Queen, pearls glinting, a smile on her lips.

Whilst he says the fashion industry is silly, in the same breath he acknowledges its “incredible ability to move people”. In the early 2000s, he gave up his “quest” to be a famous fashion photographer. “What I do with fashion now is much more fun,” he says. “I try to do stuff that’s a bit more honest around it.” That has meant a series of fashion images that handle fashion like an accessory: Rosie Huntington-Whiteley stands atop a mountain of snowy-white carcasses, hands on hips; or Kit Connor frowns at a dandelion through a pair of Louis Vuitton sunglasses; or, next to a warehouse, a Chanel-clad Winnie Harlow hovers a few inches above the ground.

His techniques are simple - so simple, he says, that people are often frustrated by his instructions. “I just really want the subject to look through the lens. I tell them to think about one audience member.” Why? “Photography isn’t a very communal thing. Your relationship with



a photograph in a magazine or newspaper or social media is quite singular, you don’t go to an exhibition with more than one or two other people. So I try to get that.”

Rankin has done a bit of everything, from a Miley Cyrus music video to an ad campaign for a James Bond movie. His photographs are striking, playful and sometimes provocative - but he thinks the thread that ties his work together lies outside of craft and aesthetic, underneath the surface. “I’m like a magpie,” he declares; “I’ve never really wanted to do just one style of photography. The thread’s in the ideas.”

How does owning or running a magazine compare with only taking photographs for one? “It’s like being in the eye of the storm, you see everything going on around you. It really makes you engage with stuff that’s not just your own echo chamber of thoughts

and feelings. When you work just as a straight photographer or director, your thought process is more narrow, more linear.”

In the three decades since he started, he tells me, everything has changed. Social media and the phone camera have democratised access and amplified the power of photography like never before: “Photography is now the air we breathe.” Is that a good thing? “It’s diminishing for the medium because it means people don’t take it as seriously.” Then he corrects himself: “That doesn’t mean it’s a bad thing, you know, in its whole. I’m not trying to be a Luddite on it. But I think making a great photograph again and again is a skill, and now it’s taken for granted that anyone can do that.”

And the problems go beyond a creative’s indignance. Technology has led to a dangerous cultural and visual shift: “In the nineties, Photoshop was a massive discussion in the media - these perfections we were creating, how people view themselves. Now, any child can do that in an app that’s easy to download on a phone, and it’s made like a game, and we just don’t talk about it. It’s like a revolution in what it means and how it interferes and how it’s affected us as a society.”

Photo by Helen Aver / CC BY-SA 4.0

Shop Varsity!

Our online store, offering a range of *Varsity* branded items is open now!

- Pack of Pens: £2.39
- Mugs: £4.99
- Facemasks: £5.79
- T-Shirts: £13.49
- Sweatshirts: £17.99
- Backpacks: £9.99
- Tote Bags: £3.99

Postal print subscriptions are now available too - get copies of *Varsity* delivered directly to your door worldwide!

All items subject to availability. Above prices exclude postage & packaging. All major credit and debit cards accepted

Haircuts

Clipper Cut	from £16
Dry Cut	from £19
Wet Cut & Dry	from £21
Flat Top	from £21
Restyle	from £23
Long Hair	from £23
Skin Fade	from £22

Beard

Trim	from £7
Shape	from £10
Wet Shave	from £18

Boys under 12

Monday to Thursday	
Dry Cut	from £15
Wet Cut & Dry	from £17

Uni Student Discount

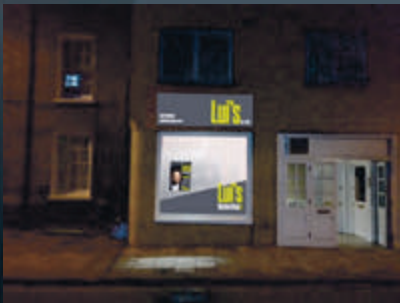
Only accepted with a valid uni or NUS card	
Monday to Thursday	from £16
Friday	from £18
Skin Fade Monday to Thursday	from £20

Senior Citizens 67+

Monday to Thursday	from £14
--------------------	----------

Price List

Lui's
Barbershop EST. 2001



01223 566663
www.luisbarbershop.co.uk
facebook: @luisbarbershop1
Instagram: luisbarbershop2001

Lifestyle

Cambridge Poo-niversity

A comprehensive guide to the best and worst of Cambridge's toilets

In my first year I shared a toilet with 7 other freshers. Far from being traumatic, being forced to use a toilet that was only 1/8th mine, and 7/8ths strangers', ended up giving me the confidence that I'd previously lacked when sharing a toilet with only my immediate family. Public toilets are no longer the arena of fire they used to be before I came to uni. I no longer shake with fear when I find myself desperate for the loo miles away from home. When you don't have an ensuite, every toilet is your ensuite. My mind and body are free. What I lost in not having my own bathroom, I gained through having the opportunity to experience some of the best (and worst) of Cambridge's facilities. And now, as a result, I can present to you the best and worst of Cambridge's toilets.

Catz plodge toilet

I hate to beat the drum of college nationalism, but the Catz plodge toilet is without a doubt one of the best toilets in the city. It comes fully equipped with foyer and leather armchair, meaning your friends can wait about comfortably and give you the applause you deserve after you emerge from the inner toilet area having done your poo-of-champions. The two lockable door system, with the sink in the foyer area, also means that if you and your willy-wielding friend are both super desperate, you can go in the toilet and your friend can (dare I suggest it) piss down the sink. It's a toilet for any occasion - if you find yourself on Trumpington Street sometime, I highly suggest you check it out.

Seeley Historical Library toilets

If there is one thing you should know about history students, it's that their digestive systems are seriously fucked. Those of you who've had the misfortune of using these toilets for a break will remember only too well the waft of ponginess



that overwhelms you as soon as you descend the stairs into this atrium of poo. Please can someone, anyone, let these historians know that gut health is just as important as (and maybe even more important than) Themes and Sources. If you ever find yourself needing the toilet in Seeley, I suggest you get a grip and hold it in.

Marks and Spencer's toilets

This toilet is Cambridge's best kept secret. I found out about it from a friend and honestly, it remains one of the best things she's ever told me. If you're not blessed with a room in town, and are bursting for a wee as you stroll about Market Square, the Marks and Spencer toilet is the perfect solution. I bet you never knew that the supermarket has three floors, a restaurant, and toilets. The toilets themselves are super clean (as no one knows they exist), spacious and comfortable. If that's not enough, perhaps the full length mirrors (perfect for a fit check) will persuade you that these remain some of the best toilets in the city.

Fitz toilets

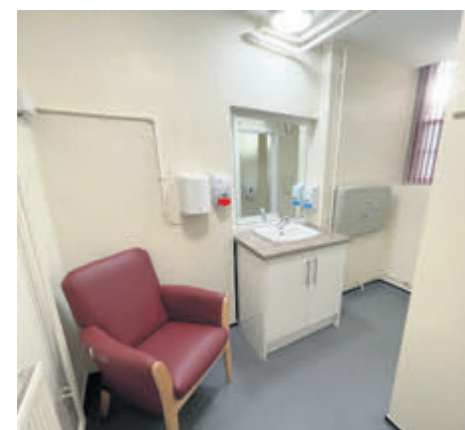
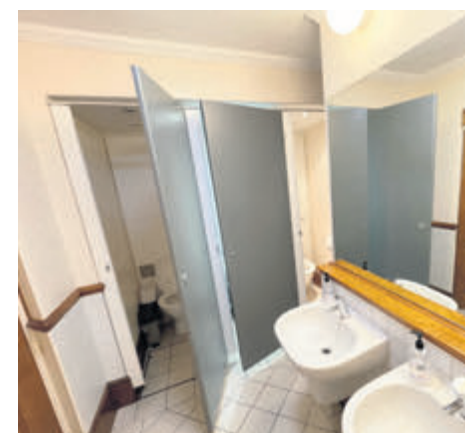
These are okay - the walls are thick and there are no cubicles, just one single toilet, which should put all you nervous public shitters at ease. One drawback is that the floors are always damp and soggy, and with no coat hook in sight you may be forced to hold your bag on your lap as you relieve yourself, making a pretty pathetic sight. If you ever find yourself needing a poo up on the hill, I suggest strolling over to Medwards for a more hygienic and pleasant experience.

Caius toilets

A big thumbs down for me. This was not the seat of salvation I needed when I got food poisoning at Caius May Ball last year. The common spaces are cramped, making for an oddly intimate excreting experience. The hand dryers are weirdly powerful and fill the small spaces with their powerful windy bellows. If I could sum up this toilet in one word it would be: 'intense' - sadly this is not a descriptor I look for when searching for the ultimate pooping spot.

Junction toilets

Scary place. Terrifying place. Many horrifying memories of the bouncer trying to knock my door down on the search for coke and ket whilst I try to do my humble wee (no doubt having broken the seal). As well as this, the floors always seem to be flooded; there's never any toilet paper (what toilet paper there is is disgustingly soggy); and the mirrors are fogged to within an inch of their lives. In short, the toilets in this place are a shit show. Still, I'd rather go to Junction than Revs.



▲ Seeley historical Library toilets (centre), Caius toilets (upper right), and Catz plodge toilets (lower right) (ANONYMOUS CONTRIBUTOR)

Ask Auntie Maddy

I've squandered my student loan, and cigarettes aren't just social any more. Is there any light at the end of the tunnel?

Fear not, you poor little things, Auntie Maddy is here to soothe your sorrows and alleviate your anxieties...



I'm a fresher. I've already spent my entire student loan for this term and college bill is next week. What do I do?

There comes a time in every student's life when one contemplates selling pictures of their feet on the internet in exchange for money, or at the very least, Tesco Clubcard vouchers. But sadly it appears that yours has reared its ugly head a little too soon. If I'm honest, I'm not even that surprised. With consumer culture all the rage these days, the youth want to live hard and fast - grabbing life by the freshly-dripped monogrammed college puffer and basking in all the revelry of life at university. We want the world, and we want it now! My only question is, what the hell did you spend it all on? A week-long bender in the Revs shisha area, splashing the cash to impress the 40 year old men in suits who dwell there constantly yet suspiciously seem in no way to be affiliated with any of the club or the students? Fine dining at Gardies for every meal, swigging back bottles of the warm rosé with Greta? A particularly rough night on the fruit machines in Spoons?

Whatever you've managed to squander your money on in the week or so since most student loans dropped, the past is the past. The present, as some would say, is a gift. And your sole concern

now should be paying for your place to live. There are multiple options available to you at this point in time. One would be the aforementioned feet hustle. But for those among us who don't want to sell their sole (or who simply can't fulfil its sky-high beauty standard), don't despair - there's a whole market of sixth formers' personal statements to be written, and like hell they're going to do it themselves. Financial advice often advocates you visit the bank of mum and dad, but nobody said it had to be yours! With all the money you make, you'll be paying for a room and another wild weekend on the Spoons-Revs-Gardies circuit before you know it. Just next time, remember to invite me!

I've discovered my flatmate is a horse girl. Not sure how to move on from this. Any advice?

Okay, sure. Your 'flatmate' is a horse girl. You know it's 2022, right? Those amongst us who are lucky enough to be able to reminisce on the golden days of the Pony Club presumably now do so with pride. And as long as you're not a full-on furry (sorry guys, I've been unfortunate enough to stumble across enough questionable Danger Mouse fan art that even I, your resident Tumblr-dweller, draw the line here), you're pretty safe now. Well, relatively speaking.

If you want to canter down King's Parade then the only somewhat formidable opponent you may encounter is the public menace that is Oshuclips and his barefooted companion (although perhaps all this time we had a fellow horse girl in our midst, embracing his natural side as his feet clip-clop over the cobblestone pavement?). And there's more than enough braying at the Union to drown out any unrestrained whinnies coming from your side.

If you're telling the truth, and the culprit really is your *neigh*-bour, perhaps the solution lies in gentle understanding rather than in overwhelming discomfort. Try leaving out some hay and a few sticks of carrot for dobbin to chow down on in the staircase kitchen to see if they're truly committed to the equine grindset. And should they fail this test, you have all the more reason to put the relationship out to pasture. Either way, keep these horsey goings-on far, far away from me.

Have a question for our agony aunt? Email it to lifestyle@varsity.co.uk or scan the QR code



BE INSPIRED

by your surroundings



Designed by Sir Robert Smirke, the architect responsible for the British Museum, the Club's impressive façade illuminates Pall Mall. Inside, a burgeoning social scene sees a host of diverse events take place each month, including Cocktail Making Masterclasses, Wine Tastings and Themed Dinners, as well as visits from highly distinguished speakers, including politicians, authors, ambassadors and academics. Members needing somewhere quieter can seek inspiration in the Club's impressive library – home to nearly 20,000 volumes – or head to its dedicated business area.

For details on membership or a tour of the Club house, please visit
www.oxfordandcambridgeclub.co.uk or call 020 7321 5103

  Oxford and Cambridge Club  @oandclub



OXFORD AND
CAMBRIDGE
— CLUB —

Sport

Deaf-defying: From surgery to British No. 1

Joshua Korber Hoffman
meets Esah Hayat, Cambridge
University's star tennis player

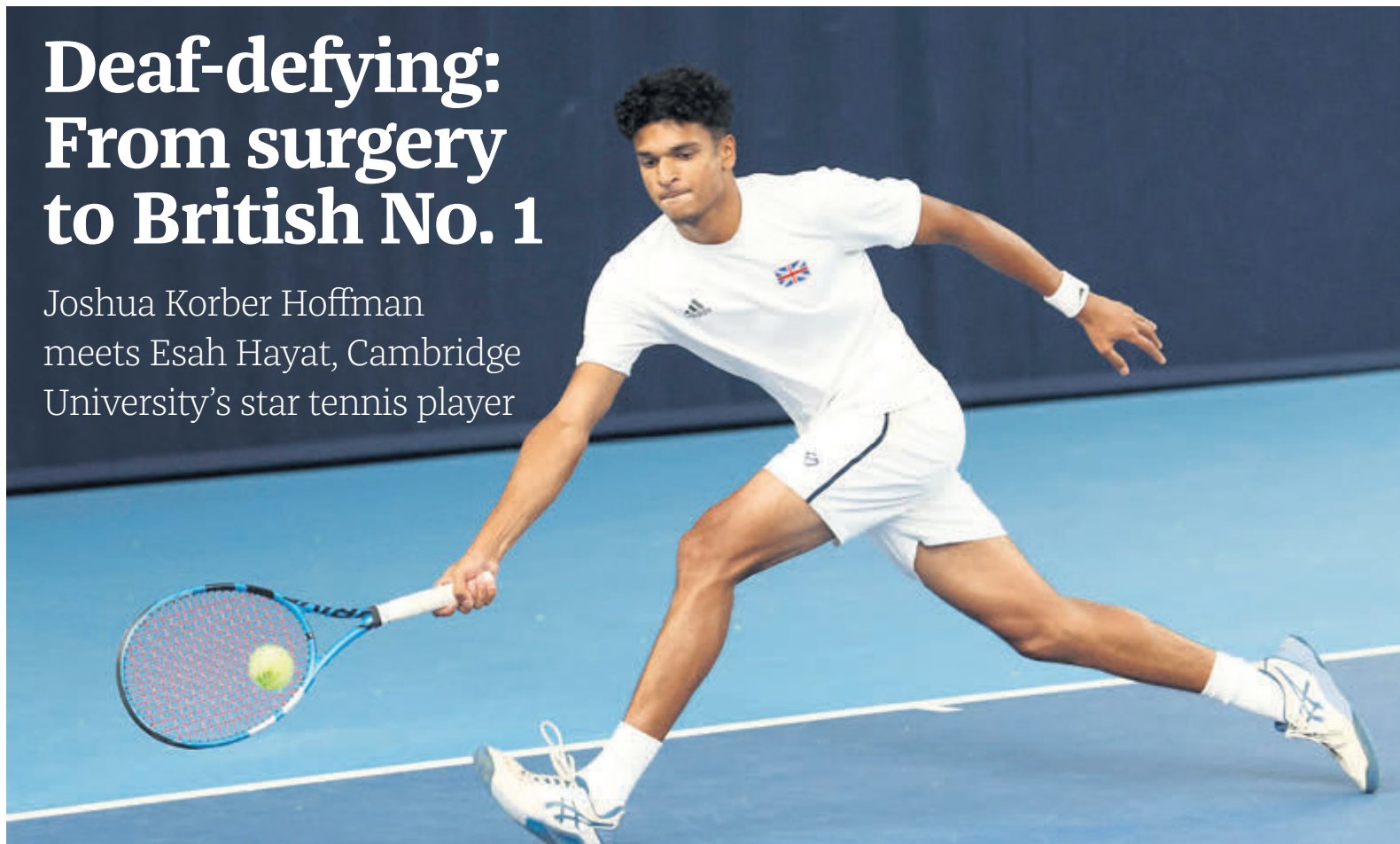


PHOTO: LTA

In between job interviews, tennis practice and his Natural Sciences degree, Esah Hayat found time to talk. Now in his third year of a Natural Sciences degree, university work has become the centre of attention, but tennis is his real passion.

All elite sportspeople have a glint in their eye when talking about playing, and Esah is no different. "One day," Esah tells me, recounting his tennis origin story, "while watching my older brother play, a flick switched in my head, and nobody could keep me off the court." That was aged eleven. Eight years earlier, aged three, Esah underwent cochlear implant surgery. "Fast forward [to now] and here I am, still trying to play every day."

Cochlear implant surgery is an operation offered to patients who are profoundly deaf in both ears. The surgery has risks; a common complication is facial nerve paralysis, an inability to move certain muscles in the face.

Although Esah will never have full hearing, his surgery was a success. Without it, Esah wouldn't be able to hear

well enough to have a speech-based conversation.

Today Hayat is the five-time British deaf tennis champion, and the poster boy for the sport in Great Britain. Last month he was part of the Cambridge team that won the Prentice Cup by beating Harvard/Yale in the US. Last summer Hayat worked for the NHS, researching the prevention of facial nerve paralysis as an outcome of cochlear implant surgery.

Esah is 20, and he has been playing tennis for over a decade. His commitment has paid off. Five years after surgery, Esah won the Boys World Deaf Tennis Championships, representing Great Britain.

Last month, he won his fifth Deaf Nationals singles title, beating the second seed convincingly, 6-2 6-0. Despite ranking number one in Britain, Esah doesn't feel the pressure. "I've never really seen my ranking as something to be nervous about," Esah tells me, "It's definitely a source of motivation for me to stay sharp on the court, but I

think there's always more to achieve, so I try to always look ahead."

He's an inspiration, too. "Being one of the top deaf players is it gives me the platform to help younger players improve and be of benefit to something beyond myself." It's true – if one looks up information on deaf tennis on the Lawn Tennis Association website, there is a photo of Esah reaching for a volley.

Playing tennis while deaf can have numerous difficulties. Some are obvious – umpires calling when the ball is out, or hearing when an opponents serve is a let. Others are more subtle – not hearing when an opponent strikes the ball, for example, slowing reaction times down by a fraction of a second due to a total reliance on sight. But these difficulties don't stop Esah competing with the Cambridge Blues. He was a vital member of the team in their dramatic win over Harvard/Yale last month, a trip that "created a lifetime of memories for us." No doubt Esah will be equally important in the Varsity match at the end of Easter.

Esah nearly did not come to Cambridge. He had an offer to study in

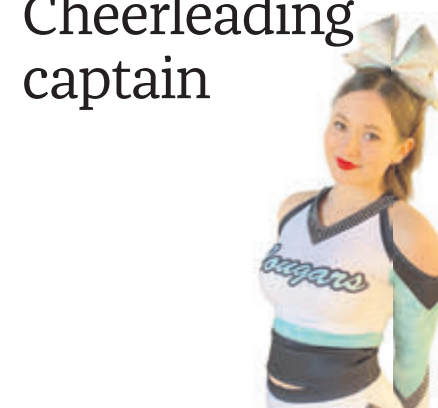
the US on a tennis scholarship, but turned it down. He doesn't regret his decision. "My experience at Cambridge has been excellent," he says, "I think the university and the people here are well-informed and adaptable to people in my position." Esah considers himself lucky, having encountered few issues during his tennis career. The issues he has encountered, he has learnt from. "My advice to others with any form of impairment would be to have the confidence to speak up about anything you need, whether it be to friends, professors or people in the sporting scene here." The onus isn't just on the athletes. "It wouldn't ever hurt for the Cambridge sporting community to be proactive in letting friends and colleagues know that too."

18 years after Esah's cochlea implant, Esah returned to the NHS, this time researching the surgery. His research was on the prevention of facial nerve paralysis, which affects 3% of patients that have the surgery. When Esah had it, "there wasn't much information given to my parents about the likelihood of me experiencing [facial nerve paralysis]." Esah has now directly contributed to improving medical care for deaf patients, and hopefully will continue to do so. At the same time, Esah remains a role model for young tennis players around the world, and anyone interested in sport.

CAPTAIN'S CORNER

Minnie Greaves

Cheerleading captain



Sporting idol?
Chloe Kelly.

Best moment?
Almost hitting zero at the Future Cheer Nationals

Worst moment?
Being 0.23 points away from Oxford in the Varsity match.

Most embarrassing moment?
Accidentally flashing from one of our flyers at a comp.

Best victory?
The growth in the cheerleading team over the last few years. It has almost doubled in size!

Worst defeat?
2022 Varsity.

Best thing about being a captain?
Getting to be a person that any member of the team can lean on for help and advice.

Worst thing about being a captain?
Comes with lots of pressure, but lots of reward too!

Why is your sport the best?
Performances are dependent on the skill of each athlete on their own, but also how they work together as a team.

Why are the Cambridge Cougars the best?
We are endlessly welcoming. The facilities are there for a dedicated beginner to become a Seconds team member; or for a dedicated intermediate to become a blue.

Who has the best chat?
Sta, for getting thirty cheerleaders into Marbella clubs for free every night.

Who receives the most fines?
Come on a swap with us and find out...

One to watch?
All the new Cougs who are joining this year.

Prediction for this year's Varsity?
A Cambridge victory. Cougs >>> Oxford Sirens.

If only X went to Cambridge, we'd win every match.
Gabi Butler.

How can we follow Cambridge fencing?
@cambridgecougars on Instagram.

What on earth is Korfball?

Thomas Woolley

Created in Holland in 1902, korfball is a blend of netball and basketball. The objective of the game is to shoot the ball into the 3.5m-high 'korf', the word for 'basket' in Dutch. A non-contact sport, korfball is played by mixed teams comprising four men and four women. It is a frantic and incredibly addictive game!

Sounds niche. It can't be very popular at Cambridge, right?
Wrong! Cambridge is actually a hotspot for korfball! The univer-

sity's first and second teams compete against five local clubs, with matches often taking place in the University Sports Centre. The teams have seven matches this Michaelmas – almost one every weekend!

What's the best thing about Korfball? How easy it is to get into it! You can start as an absolute beginner and advance quickly. Korfball is a great option for people who want to represent the university in a relaxed and merry sport. Also there's a pub trip after most sessions!

Okay, I'm interested. Are there any negatives? The worst thing about the sport is that no-one has heard of it,

and often the rules can be confusing at first. But you'll learn them quickly!

Sounds like an emerging sport. Maybe I'll just do rowing... Korfball is infinitely more enjoyable than rowing! You don't have to commit more than a couple of hours of training a week and there are massive opportunities for improvement. You also don't have to get up super early!

Alright, most important question: are we better than Oxford? Whilst Oxford placed higher than us at BUCS, Cambridge won Varsity after two wins, a loss and a draw. It's also undisputable that their socials aren't as good!

How do I get involved? Instagram: @camunikorfball

Results

Cambridge won the HEC Virtus Tournament 2022 at Roland Garros for a second year in a row last week, after a Cambridge-Oxford final.

St John's won the Cambridge Touch Rugby competition, beating Emma/Tit Hall in the final.

College football returns with a bang

Jonny Coffey

With the 22/23 season starting this weekend, *Varsity* looks ahead at the key storylines and must-watch match-ups for the upcoming season.

Women's and Non-Binary Division One

Having captured the elusive Cambridge double last season, winning both the league and Cuppers, Jesus will be confident heading into this year's competition.

Stern opposition awaits. Christs-Churchill-Lucy, last year's third-place finishers, will be gunning for the top spot. Recording the joint-highest goals scored last year (23, alongside Jesus), and the fewest goals conceded (9), they are serious contenders.

Newcomers Pembroke-Clare-Clare Hall are also looking to make a statement, bringing neon-yellow grit to a first division pitch near you. Captain Lauren Murray is intent on leading her "mentality monsters" to new heights. Limits? She's never heard of them. "Ask again when we have our hands on two shiny trophies at the end of the season."

Men's Division One

Reigning champions Fitz, having re-

tained several key players, are in a strong position to defend their men's division one title.

Favourites to lead the chase are Pembroke, last year's runners-up. With a host of new talent and a chip on their shoulder, they head into the season with lofty ambitions. Captain Ollie Reed is supremely confident, "determined to go that one step further and take the title, and hopefully the cup along with it." Watch out, Fitz.

The relegation battle promises similar drama. With only three points separating third-placed Homerton and now-relegated Corpus last year, few places in Division One are secure. With newbies Jesus and Selwyn unwilling to go down without a fight, this one will be a close call.

Men's Division Two

New rules are spicing up the competition in the men's Division Two. With a promotion play-off final set to be waged between the second and third-place finishers, only the title guarantees promotion.

With the allure of promotion to the big-time (and the attendant TV and brand deals that come with such dizzy heights), expect a nail-biting conclusion as teams scrap to clinch the title or steal



PHOTO: ANNIE HUANG

third place.

Newly relegated Corpus and Downing are favourites for the title, but they must contend with strong returning sides. Emma and St. Cat's, last year's third and fourth-place finishers, will hope for another strong campaign.

King's are *Varsity*'s dark horse for the top spot. Last season's fifth-place finish exposed a lack of consistency, not quality; two statement victories over first division opponents in last year's Cuppers affirm their potential to beat anyone on their day.

Women's and NB Division Two

With only Wolfson-Darwin-St Edmunds returning to the division, the second tier is wide open. Queens' Greens will be looking to bounce back from relegation, but it may be those rising from the division below who claim the top spots.

Securing four wins from four games on their way to the third division title, St Johns-Kings have left little doubt that they mean business.

Can they do it on a cold, rainy night in Homerton? That remains to be seen.

HIDDEN RIVALRIES

Rugby: John's vs Fitz/Sidney

Joshua Korber Hoffman
Sports Editor

As rugby rivalries go, there are few in the world more explosive than St John's and Fitzwilliam/Sidney Sussex. Consistently two of the strongest teams in the college league, John's and Fitz/Sidney faced each other in last season's Cuppers final. Fitz/Sidney were humiliated, losing 45-5.

However, fortunes may change this season, as all six Blues players, instrumental in that Cuppers victory, have now graduated from John's. Both John's and Fitz/Sidney will be vying for the league title this season, won last year by Queens'/Jesus. More important still, they will be preparing for an inevitable Cuppers match-up that will reignite the fire of last year's final. Few would want to be stuck in the middle of that scrum.

GYM OFFER 3 MONTHS STUDENT MEMBERSHIP

Offer valid until 31st October 2022

GYM MEMBERSHIP ONLY £60
GYM MEMBERSHIP TO INCLUDE
ALL CLASSES ONLY £75

- NO joining fee or contract
- Pay as you go options also available



Sport

Esah Hayat
NatSci and
Britain's
no. 1 deaf
tennis player



College
football starts
Preview of
the coming
season

Hidden
rivalries
The bitter
John's-Fitz
clash

Town no match for gown in annual rugby match



GOWN 45 - 15 TOWN

PHOTO: QING LU

Joe Wherry

Cambridge University cruised to a 40-15 victory over the city of Cambridge in this year's Town vs Gown rugby match. The university Blues came out firing, scoring four tries in the first half. Despite a spirited second half from the Town, they failed to match the university's quality. Fly-half Jamie Benson scored 15 points for the hosts, including the opening try and five conversions. The Gown could not beat their last result against the Town, a 65-7 victory in February. Nonetheless, it was still an improvement on the result of their most recent game, a 42-24 defeat to Durham University. Cambridge University's Grange Road stadium was bustling despite the driv-

ing rain, as spectators hoped to see the first win of the new season. They were not disappointed. An early try by Benson was matched by the visitors after a lineout maul, but that was as good as it got for the Town. Christian Stehlik, the Blues number



PHOTO: QING LU

eight, added to the score soon after, and his try was converted by Benson. To make matters worse for the Town, Stehlik's opposite number was sent to the sin bin. Having one more player on the pitch paid dividends for the home side, stretching their lead with a second try for Stehlik and one for tighthead prop Laurence Marwood. Benson's conversions made it 26-5 at the break. The Blues' Tim Andrew came close to an acrobatic try in the corner shortly after the restart, but the initial phases were dominated by the Town. A string of penalties was given away by the hosts, and the Town scored a try to make it 26-10. Again, the try came from a lineout maul - clearly a weakness for the Blues. The hosts responded well: substitute Fin Edwards scored the university's

fifth try, converted by Benson. The visitors then got on the scoresheet again, although the try proved to be no more than a consolation. However, Cambridge University will be worried about the origin of the third try, yet another lineout maul. As a pre-season friendly, this match will be used to learn important lessons before the season begins. While the attack looks sharp, the Blues' defence will need strengthening, especially from wide positions following line-outs. The game ended with another try for the Blues by substitute Tomos Miller. Miller, who intercepted a pass around the visitors' 22-metre line and raced away unchallenged to dive under the posts. Benson converted to bring the final score to 40-15.

Fixtures

- Saturday-Sunday:
First round of college football matches
Wednesday:
Men's football vs Warwick (H)
Women's football vs Loughborough 2 (H)
Women's basketball vs Oxford (H)
Women's netball vs Oxford (H)
Women's rugby vs Oxford (H)
Women's tennis vs Oxford (H)

This dominant display was dampened slightly by defensive frailties, but it is hard to find much to moan about after the first win of the season, on a stormy Wednesday night at Grange Road.