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VARSITY AT

70

No. 823

Friday 10th February 2017

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# VARSITY

Championing independent student journalism in Cambridge for 70 years



Senate House was lit up yesterday, as organisers prepared for the e-Luminate festival, which starts today

▲ DANIEL GAYNE

## Outrage at Queens' ballot changes

Merlyn Thomas

Senior News Correspondent

Students at Queens' College have expressed their outrage over a change to the room balloting system at the College which has left second-years feeling disadvantaged.

Under the changes, students are no longer permitted to select other people to ballot with, meaning that they cannot be assured of living with their friends. Previously, the students were allowed to ballot in groups of four, six, or eight students.

The new system has caused particular problems for second-years. Queens' offers second-year students a certain number of walk-through rooms which function as shared sets with an en suite.

Previously, all those who applied to go into shared sets for their second year were placed in a priority group, meaning they came before everyone else in the ballot. This was intended to incentivise students to choose these rooms. Those who did not receive a set were assured of a single room. As a result of the changes, however, students who apply for a shared set will be obliged to take one, regardless of its type and of who is living around it.

Many students are also unhappy with the arrangement of pairs in the room ballot. In the past, the ballot had operated by giving the pair consecutive numbers. This meant that those who did not receive a shared set could still live near their friend, but now that numbers are allocated to each person at random, they may be hundreds of places apart.

Queens' students attempting to live with their friends have also faced an additional hurdle since last year. The overall plan of room allocations is only available to view in the room when you choose, and will not be seen by students before they make their choice. No 'running list' of room choices made will be made public during the process.

Before last year, the room balloting system was supervised by the JCR. Now, however, a committee comprising the College staff supervises the choosing of the rooms.

The college warned students that

## Privacy laws threaten Class Lists

Louis Ashworth  
Editor-at-Large

After long campaigns and two referendums in which Cambridge students and Fellows opted to save them, new privacy laws may mean that Class Lists disappear after all.

EU data protection laws, which will come into effect in 2018, mean that Cambridge may have to introduce a system where students have to opt-in to having their exam results displayed.

Varsity has seen an excerpt from unconfirmed minutes of the General Board Education Committee. In it, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Graham Virgo, who led a review which called for the abolition of the Lists last year, said new rules "place greater emphasis on active consent being sought from data subjects for data collection and use, and it had been suggested that moving to an opt-in system for publication of Class Lists might consequently be necessary."

The law will not come into effect until May next year – meaning that questions over Britain's continued membership of the EU could now come into play. The University has sought legal advice, which indicated that the new rules may mean students have to give explicit permission for their results to be published.

"The University is currently considering the potential effects of this legislation," a University spokesperson told Varsity, "including the possibility that the public display of class lists may change to an opt-in system – but no decisions have yet been made."

Class Lists, bearing the names and grade classifications of students, are currently published at the end of the academic year – appearing both online, and on boards in front of Senate House. They have been the subject of some controversy, following campaigns claiming they are damaging to student welfare.

In December, fellows and senior members voted to keep the Lists, overturning a motion for abolition which

was first revealed by Varsity in April. A student campaign, 'Save The Class List' also called a referendum of the student body, which took place in November. In it, students voted to keep the current system of publication, but called for a more simplified system for students to opt out from having their results displayed.

At present, there is an opt-out system in place for students who do not wish their results to appear to opt out, but it requires several stages of approval. The student referendum's demands were based on the possibility of there being a checkbox online, which exam candidates could untick should they not wish to have their results published. If the new EU rules come into effect, this could be replaced with a system in which students instead have to explicitly confirm they want their results to be seen publicly.

Roberta Huldish, CUSU's Education Officer, said the student union is "committed to supporting class lists with

an unconditional opt out system," but added "we may need to rethink how we can honour this mandate while not breaking the law" if data protection rules change.

"Until the legal situation has been clarified," she said, "I will keep pushing



**Lists are  
published in  
front of Senate  
House at the end  
of each year**

for a review of the current opt out system to make it simpler and less restrictive for students this academic year."

The legal issue at stake, however, is not entirely clear-cut: under the terms of the new EU law, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), "explicit consent" is required for handling "special categories of personal data", but it is not clear whether exam data falls within

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# EDITORIAL

## Brexit means... what exactly?

It happened to be in Brussels on 23rd June last year – EU Referendum day. I have generally been open about having misgivings about the European Union, despite ultimately being a Remain voter. I bought into none of the ‘Take Back Control’ arguments – that well-worn refrain of the populist uprising; the same but different across the centuries – but found other, legitimate reasons for concern. I was, nonetheless, hoping for a Remain win, and, like most of the country, I was surprised by the result. Market Ward in Cambridge might have been particularly surprised (see opposite).

Walking through Brussels on 24th June was a strange experience. The discomfort I felt was all of my own making, of course, borne of an impression that passers-by both knew I was British and cared. Speaking to British colleagues in Belgium, there was a recurring theme: no one knew what to think, what to say. The confusion of that June day has barely dissipated in the seven months since, and moments where it seems we might finally be approaching some clarity rarely come through.

Wednesday of this week seemed like another of those opportunities for clarity. We’ve been told that ‘Brexit means Brexit’, but what does ‘Brexit mean Brexit’... mean? Well apparently, for now, it means triggering Article 50 – the official procedure for notifying the EU of the UK’s withdrawal, which MPs voted to approve this week by a majority of 372.

While clear in terms of outcome – it is an incontrovertible step towards leaving the European Union – who voted what and why created a whole fresh storm of controversy. Do MP’s voting loyalties lie with their constituents or with the wider population? Should they vote according to personal conscience, the will of the majority or the party whip? As Labour MPs voted en masse to trigger Article 50 on Wednesday, no one seemed to have definitive answers to any of these questions.

Daily headlines and political melodramas may suggest that Brexit is a matter just for politicians to squabble over, but the EU, and whether we are in it or out of it, has a real aimpace on our day-to-day lives. The latest news of an updated EU data protection law, coming into force in 2018, which may make class lists as we know them a thing of the past (p. 1, 7), is one such example.

The truth is that Brexit means many things – it’s confusing. But as we move ever closer to the final Big Brexit, I hope we are also approaching some clarity.

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# News

## University report

### Equality and Diversity report shows BME and disability

**Aoife Hogan**  
Deputy News Editor

The University’s Equality and Diversity Information Report, released last week, revealed an increase in representation of BME and disabled students, but showed continuing gaps between men and women amongst students and staff.

The report, published annually, revealed an increase in the number of BME undergraduates from 23.2 per cent in 2013-14 to 25.3 per cent in 2015-16. Although BME students only made up 20 per cent of all accepted university places, BME students were awarded more Firsts than their fellow students who identify as being of white ethnicity, at 24.3 per cent and 23.2 per cent respectively.

In the report, Vice-Chancellor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz commented that, “The University’s diversity plays a key role in sustaining its academic excellence. Cambridge has always thrived by seeking to maintain an open and inclusive multi-national community.” Non-UK nationalities also constituted 34.3 per cent of academic and service staff of known nationality, representing 111 nations.

Students with a disability comprised of 6.9 per cent of total confirmed students, an increase of 0.9 per cent over



the past two years. More students with disabilities sought support from University bodies in 2015-16, rising 14 per cent over the past year. This reflects efforts by the University to better represent these students and diminish “any perceived stigma around the disclosure of disability”. The University hope to make further progress as the SPACE network, which will host key internal diversity events such as the 13th Annual Disability Lecture and the Annual Race lecture, will be formally launched in 2016-17.

Furthermore, the proportion of male and female students has remained relatively even over a number of years at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Female students were more likely to be offered places at the University, making up 49.7 per cent of all admissions despite 55.4 per cent of applications coming from men. However, the percentage of undergraduate women who gained Firsts was considerably lower than their male counterparts, at 22.7 per cent compared with 31.6 per cent, showcasing a gender attainment gap of 8.9 per cent.

While the number of female undergraduates in STEM (science, technology, engineering, medicine and mathematics) subjects has risen 0.5 per cent since 2013-14, women only constitute 36.1 per cent of all STEM students,



## Market Ward had biggest Remain

**Sam Harrison**  
Senior News Editor

The BBC has revealed that Market Ward in central Cambridge delivered the highest Remain vote in the country in June’s referendum on Britain’s membership of the European Union.

The ward, which contains Corpus Christi, Christ’s, Emmanuel, Downing, Peterhouse, Pembroke, Jesus and Sidney Sussex colleges, delivered an 87.8 per cent vote for the Remain side.

Every other ward in Cambridge also voted to Remain. The largest Remain vote after Market was in Castle Ward, at 81.2 per cent, while the lowest was in King’s Hedges, at 54.8 per cent.

Cambridge as a whole returned a 73.8 per cent Remain vote, making it one of the strongest Remain-voting cities in the UK, narrowly ahead of Oxford at 70 per cent.

Speaking about the findings, Daniel Zeichner, MP for Cambridge, said: “I am very proud that Market Ward here in Cambridge turned out to be the most pro-EU in the country. I was deeply saddened that the result was not replicated across the country but at the same time we saw strong results across the city.

He added, however, that “it is important to understand why, even in Cambridge, so many people voted against our membership of the European Union.” Zeichner has had to negotiate be-

tween Cambridge’s firm vote to remain and his party’s increasingly strict policy in favour of Brexit. In Parliament he voted against the triggering of Article 50, which would set in motion the process of leaving the EU, and told *Varsity* that he intends to continue doing so: “I have argued consistently against leaving the European Union and will continue to vote against leaving.”

Dr Julian Huppert, former MP and Lib Dem candidate for the next general election, told *Varsity*: “It’s wonderful to see that every single ward in Cambridge voted to stay, and in particular that the City Centre had the highest vote to remain in the entire country.

“The people of Cambridge are well aware of the disastrous effects that Brexit could have, and this is just a reminder of why we have to keep fighting to protect their interests, and those of so many across the country.

“Despite the clear response from Cambridge, we must accept that there are people, particularly older people, who did not feel the same way. There are people who felt left behind by the way society was going, and wanted to kick the establishment. We must ensure that there is enough economic development across the country, support for our NHS, housebuilding and everything else that is needed to ensure people do feel the benefits. Sadly, the increasingly apparent harm that will come from Brexit will simply hit those worst off the hardest.”



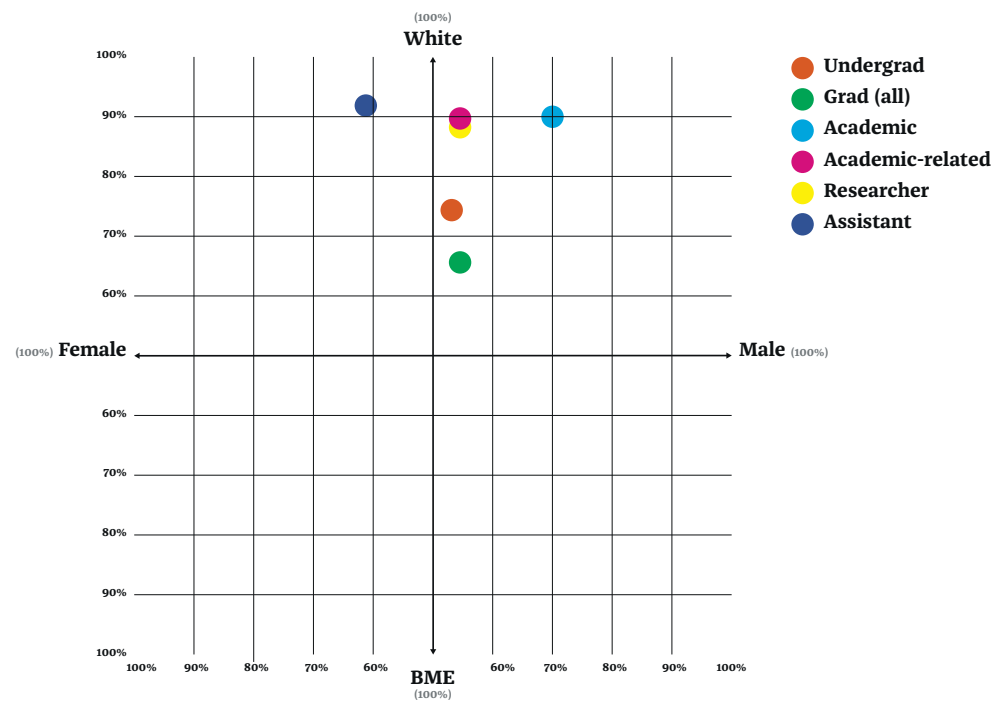
▲ Wards of central Cambridge. The yellow shading of their Remain vote (OPENSTREETMAP CONTRIBUTORS/NIL)



# reveals gender gap

progress but women found to be losing out

Visualised Ethnic and gender make-up



▲ Scale showing numbers of white vs BME people and men vs female people in University positions

## vote in the country



g is in proportion to the size  
 FANTION/MAXXL/SAM HARRISON)

### Breaking down the Remain vote

It came as no surprise that Cambridge was among the most Remain-supporting cities in the UK at the time of the referendum on EU membership last year, delivering 73.8 per cent for the pro-EU side.

Market Ward, home to a number of colleges, could have been expected to deliver a huge Remain result.

But Cambridge's Remain vote cannot necessarily be ascribed to its student population. Most students would have been leaving the city at the time of the referendum. In fact, Cambridge's year-round demographics are enough in themselves to make it a Remain stronghold.

The most likely demographics to vote Leave nationally were older voters and voters without degrees, which between them accounted for some 80 per cent of variation between the results in different wards. Younger and university-educated voters inclined towards Remain.

In 2011, the national census found that 25.4 per cent of the 'usual population' of Cambridge was between the ages of 20 and 29. Across England and Wales, that age group makes up 13.6 per cent of the population.

Meanwhile, the proportion of

Cambridge's population above the age of 50 was, at 25 per cent, substantially lower than the average for England and Wales, 34.6 per cent.

As for education, just 7.1 per cent of Cambridge residents aged 16 to 64 have no qualifications, the fourth-lowest figure in the country, while 47.3 per cent have qualifications above A Level. In England and Wales, 22.7 per cent have no qualifications and 27 per cent have qualifications above A Level.

But even if Cambridge was always likely to vote Remain, nonetheless students do seem to have made a difference. Three of the four strongest Remain-voting wards, Market, Castle, and Newnham – all of which returned over 80 per cent of their vote for the Remain side – contain Cambridge colleges, while the fourth, Petersfield, contains Anglia Ruskin University.



Cambridge market is the centre of Market Ward (LUCAS CHEBIB)

compared to 58.5 per cent in the Arts and Humanities. An admissions gap of 10.4 per cent exists between female and male applicants for STEMM subjects, in comparison to a gap of 7 per cent in the Arts and Humanities.

Professor Eilís Ferran, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Institutional and International Relations and Chair of the Equality and Diversity Committee, commented that the findings will “inform our activities to promote equality and diversity”, and foster an “inclusive environment for work and study”.

Gender disparity did not prove exclusive to students, with the proportion of women in academic rolls remaining below the average percentage for Russell Group institutions. The report expressed a “focus on developing good practice and positive interventions for female researchers and academics”, however, despite increases over the last three years and the promotion of five women to professorship roles in the last academic year, women currently represent only 35.2 per cent of University lecturers and 18.3 per cent of professors.

The report asserted that 2015/16 was “a period of consolidation to build on our progress so far”, but acknowledged the importance of “identifying new areas of focus in order to develop a high-level five-year equality strategy”.

### WONDER OF THE WORLD Digital forests

Zdravko Zahariev investigates the ecology of the future. Polly Evans looks at how our new-age travel fits into this balancing act between exploration and protection. Finally, James Alvey describes a cutting-edge technique for managing mosquito-based disease. Pages 10–11 ►

### BEND IT FOR BECKHAM Arise, Sir David?

Footballing heartthrob David Beckham got himself into a spot of bother recently when a set of leaked emails revealed some choice language when the star was denied a knighthood. Devarshi Lodhia explains why, like him or love him, David Beckham should find the highest accolade in the honour system winging its way to him soon. Page 31 ►

### EGALITARIAN AGENDA Equality must be for all

Olivia Lam argues that the celebrations over the news that more women were admitted to Cambridge than men are misplaced. We should be looking at the statistics with a broader range of focus. Race and class play an important role in determining an applicants chance of getting in. Pages 14–15 ►



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## News

# Scholars' ballot Meritocracy gone mad?

**Caitlin Smith**  
Deputy News Editor

The Governing Body of St. Catharine's College has voted to abandon the scholars' ballot, amid growing pressure from students across the University to make room allocation systems fairer.

The vote, which took place on 2nd February, means that the college's accommodation will now be allocated through a random ballot. Under the new system, students about to enter their second year will be allocated a random ranking, which will determine the order in which they can choose their rooms for the next year. The ranking is then reversed as the students enter their third year. This system is in place in the majority of colleges at the University.

Under the former scholars' ballot, however, students who received a First or high 2:1 in their exams were entered into their own separate ballot, through which they were able to choose rooms before other students.

So-called "scholars' ballots", or systems which gave preference to the most academically high-achieving students, were historically much more prevalent in Cambridge, but in recent years colleges have opted in increasing numbers to update their procedures. Contrary to reports in other newspapers, seven colleges still retain some form of academically-weighted allocation system: Christ's, Corpus Christi, Fitzwilliam, Gonville & Caius, Pembroke, Peterhouse and St John's.

The vote at St Catharine's was triggered after a student referendum in November of last year revealed that 64 per cent of voters supported the abolishment of the scholars' ballot. 40 per cent of the student body participated in the referendum.

Rachel Balmer, a fourth-year Modern and Medieval Languages student at St. Catharine's, told *Varsity* that the vote had "been a long time coming". "I'm glad the JCR and the Governing Body have decided that it is unnecessary that we create a further 'elite' group of students within the college community, solely dependent on their degree class, and have made this move towards a more democratic system."

Students at other colleges which have

“  
A First  
is not  
possible for  
everyone,  
and  
probably  
isn't the  
goal of the  
majority  
”



removed all academic weighting from their room allocation systems were also generally satisfied with the way their ballots were organised.

At Newnham, concerted efforts have been made to make the room allocation system as equitable as possible. A college spokeswoman explained: "The same rent is paid for every room within each year-group for the duration of their undergraduate careers, so cost is never a factor in room choice. As students progress through College, they get a better room each year, as they choose before the undergraduates in the years

▲ A Trinity College room that many could only dream of (LUCAS CHEBIB)

below them."

Some students at colleges still using a scholars'-ballot style system expressed dissatisfaction when speaking to *Varsity* about it. A student at Christ's said: "Everyone has worked hard to get here, no matter their background, and the University should aim to reinforce this fact, rather than risk putting students under unnecessary academic stress by teasing them with the prospect of extra echelons of domestic luxury." He added: "A First is not possible for everyone, and probably isn't the goal of the majority."

However, not every student disagreed

with the scholars' ballot. According to another Christ's student, this "unique traditional concept of Cambridge" works as "a good motivator to do well and study hard."

Speaking to *Varsity* about the scholars' ballot system at St John's, the college's JCR president, Tom Newton, commented, "the JCR recognise the arguments against scholars' ballot systems. We are working with students and the college to consider potential alternatives for the allocation of rooms at St John's."

Dr Paul Chirico, the Senior Tutor of Fitzwilliam College, defended the use

## Queens' ballot 'detrimental to welfare'

► Continued from front page

any attempt to publicise the room choices generally, or create a map of the choices, would lead to their removal from the room ballot.

The college has said that they do not want to create an environment where there are too many friendship groups living in one area, for fear of creating

"ghettos" of rowdiness.

Students have responded, however, that disruption is more commonly caused by students walking across the college to see friends, which will now become a more frequent occurrence.

The changes were introduced last year to encourage greater mixed living between the year groups. In a statement at the time, the college proposed that they would "ensure that no student feels coerced in respect of room choice" as well as "increase choice for all students" and "prevent problems that arise from clusters of students who have a detrimental effect on others".

Nor are these the only accommodation-related grievances in Queens' at this time. Rents for each room are decided by the Bursar's Office in June of every



▲ The iconic Mathematical Bridge of Queens' College (LUCAS CHEBIB)

year, meaning that students are not given prices when they are told to sign up for a room.

Many students have voiced their worries about the financial implications of the college's decisions not to provide the figures for their rooms' rent in advance.

Room layouts are not provided when students sign for rooms. As such, room numbers do not accurately indicate the floor plan, making it even harder to guess where friends may live.

One second-year Queens' student told *Varsity* of their fury at the changes. "As a second year who is not sharing this year, I don't think I can afford to be put into an expensive room next year but I don't think I have a choice."

"There's a high chance that I will be





of a scholars' ballot system as "a reward for our many students who achieve first class results, and is certainly regarded as a substantial incentive."

Speaking to *Varsity*, Sophie Buck, CUSU's Welfare and Rights Officer, expressed her support for the abolition of the scholars' ballot. "The non-randomised balloting system reinforces the notion that students' worth is dependent on the grade they attain, which is not only damaging to wellbeing but is particularly problematic in light of numerous attainment gaps between different groups of students."

completely separated from my friends, as most of them did share and even those that didn't might be very far away from me in the ballot, which I feel would be very detrimental to my welfare. The fact that college is not giving me a chance to have a voice in any of this make me extremely angry."

Speaking to *Varsity*, Queens' College JCR said: "We are disappointed in the way that the ballot has turned out for students, and understand it will inevitably be difficult during this transitional year, but at this point there is not much the JCR can do. We are aware of concerns for welfare around this issue and are working to make student opinion known to College."

*Varsity* has contacted Queens' College for comment.



Breaking news,  
around the  
clock  
[varsity.co.uk](http://varsity.co.uk)

## CUSU President calls for resignations in Oxford racism row

**Matt Gutteridge**  
Deputy News Editor

CUSU President Amatey Doku has taken to Facebook to condemn a case of alleged racial profiling in an Oxford college.

Staff at Harris Manchester College (HMC) circulated an email last week, containing a CCTV image of Femi Nylander, a prominent activist in the 'Rhodes Must Fall' decolonisation of education campaign, and a warning that "we must all do our bit to maintain vigilance against unauthorised persons in College."

The email encouraged students to report Mr Nylander to a member of college staff if seen, or even to call the Oxford University Security Services. "We are unaware of the intentions of this individual", the email continues; however, the College suggested it was unlikely there was "any level of danger, to either persons or property".

Nylander, who graduated from Regent's Park College last summer, had been working in a friend's office overnight after being inadvertently locked in to HMC the previous evening. In the morning, he was approached by college porters, with whom he had an "amenable" conversation. In a statement published in the *Telegraph*, the college said "the email made clear that the individual in the photograph was not thought to present any danger, but we felt students should be aware of the matter".

In an extended Facebook post made on Wednesday, Doku said that Nylander's experience sends "the message to all prospective and current black students, black alumni and black members of the public that these 'elite' institutions will

not welcome you."

Alongside calling for HMC to make an "unreserved apology" for the treatment of Mr Nylander, Doku said "I think someone needs to lose their job and everyone involved needs to undergo racial awareness training".

"That training should involve real cases like this one," Doku continues, "explaining the impact this has on the individual, and how this reinforces, institutional, national and even global forms of oppression."

Doku also echoed Mr Nylander's accusation that Oxford is guilty of "institutional racism". Nylander had previously been stopped and asked to prove he was a member of the university at several other colleges, including Brasenose, Magdalen, and St Hilda's Colleges.

The email in question notes that the college previously, and incorrectly, believed that Nylander was associated with All Souls College.

Last year, as part of a protest against the founder of the Codrington Library at All Souls, plantation owner Christopher Codrington, Nylander painted "All Slaves College" onto his chest, and stood outside the college wearing a chain on his neck.

Doku also used the incident to highlight a survey of Cambridge students which will take place this term, as part of the university's participation in the Race Equality Charter. "I have no doubt that similar stories will come to the surface as the result of that process", Doku said, "but for Cambridge at least, it should mark the start of a process of these institutions being forced to confront these issues and to demonstrate they are dealing with their entrenched prejudice."



## Oxfam launches on Sidgwick

**Charlotte Gifford**  
Senior News Correspondent

On Wednesday, the newly-founded Oxfam Cambridge University Society (or Oxfam) held a stall on the Sidgwick Site promoting its first campaign, 'Even it up'.

Its aim is to raise awareness for Oxfam's latest report on global inequality, which found that just eight of the world's super-rich own the same amount of wealth as the 3.6 billion people who make up the poorest half of the world. Oxfam represented this with eight students dressed as bankers, standing next to half of a globe made of papier-mâché.

According to the fliers Oxfam distributed, one in 10 people survive on less than \$2 a day. The flier also included a statement from the Executive Director of Oxfam International: "Inequality is trapping millions in poverty; it is fracturing our societies and undermining democracy."

*Varsity* spoke to the co-founders of the society: its president, Miriam Quinn, and its secretary, Emma Walsh. For them, raising awareness for global inequality in a way that was fun and engaging for students was crucial.

"We want to bring exciting campaigns to the University, and spread Oxfam's message of ending global poverty and inequality and climate change through fun, creative ways," Walsh told *Varsity*. "We're trying to get people engaged with the campaign, and with Oxfam generally."

Walsh spoke to us about the issue of global inequality which the 'Even it up' campaign was focusing on: "These people that get more wealth just accumulate more wealth at a ridiculous rate that's at the detriment to half of the world. Obviously, Bill Gates is one of the eight richest men and he does lots of stuff for charity, so we're not attacking the richest people, it's just the economy's not working if there can be that much inequality."

Quinn spoke of the advantages of having such a fresh start: "We're a brand new society, so we just sat down at the beginning of term and said, 'We've got a completely blank canvas so let's think as creatively and innovatively as we can.'"

Oxfam does have a history at Cambridge University, Quinn explained: "At some point, we haven't quite worked out when, it sort of faded away. But we were determined to bring it back and get it up and running, because we really think Oxfam is such a major and such an important charity that to not have a president of it here in Cambridge seemed like such a shame."

The Society holds weekly meetings every Sunday. They also have numerous speakers events planned: on Sunday 12th February, Pushpanath Krishnamurthy, a Global Campaigner from Oxfam India, will attend their meeting. On 27th February there will be an event featuring Dame Barbara Stocking, the president of Murray Edwards and former Chief Executive of Oxfam.



## News

# Vulnerable spots for undertaking cyclists revealed

**Charlotte Gifford**  
Deputy News Editor

Newly released police reports from the Department for Transport have revealed the areas in Cambridge in which cyclists are most likely to have an accident. Every year, between four and five cyclists are involved in such accidents in the city, according to the reports.

The accidents recorded all involved a cyclist attempting to undertake a vehicle, though none of the accidents proved fatal. Between 2010 and 2015, there were 28 cycling accidents of this nature in Cambridge.

Magdalene Street and the junction of East Road and Broad Street by Anglia Ruskin were identified as hotspots for cycling accidents in Cambridge.

These were found to be particularly hazardous areas for cyclists, with accidents occurring more frequently here than in any other area in the city. Three accidents had taken place near Magdalene Street, while four cyclists had been injured at the junction of East Road and Broad Street.

Both Magdalene Street and Broad Street are particularly narrow streets. Cyclists are vulnerable when cycling in spaces where they may be closer to other vehicles and have to make tight



manoeuvres.

The accidents in question all occurred when a cyclist was undertaking a vehicle on the road. 'Undertaking' is when a cyclist manoeuvres past traffic on the left-hand side of a vehicle.

▲ A cyclist on Magdalene Street  
(LUCAS CHEBIB)

As a move, undertaking is considered much more dangerous than overtaking, which is when a cyclist passes on the right hand side.

This is because on the left side, the passenger side, a cyclist will be least vis-

ible to the driver, which is particularly dangerous when the vehicle in question happens to be a bus or a lorry. If the vehicle turns suddenly, or even shifts slightly to the left, an accident could occur.

A cyclist is particularly likely to undertake a vehicle while 'filtering' through traffic, the name given to the practice of moving past slow or stationary vehicles.

28

**Number of accidents from undertaking in Cambridge between 2010 and 2015**

Neither undertaking nor filtering is illegal, but the Highway Code urges caution when attempting these manoeuvres.

Cyclists are advised to undertake only when certain traffic will remain stationary while they manoeuvre.

Furthermore, it is important that cyclists do not go too fast when filtering through traffic, as they should ensure that they have enough time to predict what moves to make next.

The report follows findings from a recent alcohol survey in Cambridge, which revealed that 35 per cent of students said that they had cycled while drunk.

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# New EU privacy laws may mandate opt-out

► Continued from front page

these categories.

There is also a question over whether the law will be implemented. Professor Catherine Barnard, Professor of European Union Law at Trinity College, told *Varsity* that “even with a hard Brexit, the UK has committed itself to giving effect to all EU regulations and so the GDPR would at present be included.” Yet the possibility remains that the law could be repealed if the UK exits the European Union.

It also still leaves up in the air the question of how this year’s results will be handled. Professor Graham Virgo, who led the review which initially recommended abolition, is now heading up a working group on the future of publication policies.

At CUSU Council on Monday, President Amatey Doku said that the students’ union was pressing for reform to publication of Class Lists. He told *Varsity* that he expressed support for an opt-out “at the very least.”

In a joint statement, the leaders of the ‘Save The Class List’ campaign – Jack Drury, Rajiv Shah and Nicholas Taylor – said that “speculative legal advice that



▲ Regent House faces having its decision overturned (LOUIS ASHWORTH)

contradicts the guidance of Government officials, regarding an EU regulation that is unlikely to be implemented following Brexit, should not be used to undermine the votes of majorities of students and fellows.”

They said they were “sceptical” that the new laws would mean the lists could not be published, pointing to existing guidance for schools which allows exam results to be released.

Nadine Bachelor-Hunt, one of the leaders of the ‘Our Grade, Our Choice’ campaign – which initially campaigned for an opt-out, but eventually backed abolition during the student referendum – tentatively welcomed the news.

“It is currently unclear how Brexit will affect class lists in the future”, she said “as this legislation is coming from the EU – and who even knows what Brexit means – but right now it’s good to see the University taking serious steps in changing a damaging process. I sincerely hope that the University keeps in mind how damaging and problematic class lists are to so many minority groups at the University when they make their final decision on this matter.”

The future of the lists now hangs in the balance, and the University’s hands may be tied.

DON’T STOP BELIEVIN’

## Christian Union host café in Cindies

The Cambridge Christian Union has been hosting a pop-up café in Cindies this week as part of ‘Unexpected’, a week of events discussing different aspects of the Christian faith. The café has been open between 2-4pm this week, for people to “chill out, enjoy tea, coffee and cake, and chat to friends and other guests”, according to their website. The week also features a series of talks, as well publishing stories from students discussing various aspects of their faith. The group ran a similar event last year called ‘nofilter’.

LITTER-AL CARNAGE

## Homerton student union fined after bop

Homerton students have been emailed by their student union HUS about “a huge amount of litter and significant damage done to the flower beds” during a recent bop. The union has been issued a fine of £500 in order to pay for the damage caused. It described the situation as “frustrating” and urged people to be more responsible. Last year Homerton cancelled some of its bops after excrement, vomit and urine were discovered around the college grounds. The college is hosting a Pink Week bop on Saturday.


AVIATOR ON CLOUD NINE

## Smiley face seen over Cambridge

An aeroplane drawing a smiley face in the Cambridge skies was spotted over the weekend by Katie Turner, a library assistant at Selwyn. She told Cambridge News that she had seen the plane a few times before, though not usually with the exhaust. She added “He’s excellent. I always keep an eye out for him when I hear him coming.” The photo was taken on 4th February, and since then other people have stated they have also seen the aeroplane. It is not known who the aviator is.



► Cheery skies (MATT LETTIS)



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## Interview John Boyne

“I don’t aim for cleverness. For me, the reader should put down the book and it’s been a personal experience”

● **Keir Baker** talks to *The Boy in Striped Pyjamas* author about fiction, homophobia and his new book, *The Heart’s Invisible Furies*, which traces Ireland’s story from the 1940s to the week after the Marriage Equality referendum

“I would say there are two types of writers: the intellectual writer and the emotional writer”, says John Boyne.

Having read his best-selling novel, *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*, with such regularity that my copy has become dog-eared and creased, I am confident I know in which category he falls. “I’m very much the emotional writer”, he says, proving me correct. “When I write a novel, I’m trying to draw emotions out of the reader, whether that be making them laugh or cry or scared. That kind of emotional response to a story – that’s what I want from the reader.”

It is hard to deny that the Irishman has been successful in inducing such emotions from his readers. Over the years, his novels have invariably tackled some of the most evocative of subjects and human experiences through the prism of a historical background.

I wonder if this can lead to difficulties for Boyne in regards to sacrificing historical accuracy for the purposes of telling a story, particularly in cases where his novels touch some of the most significant points of human history, such as World War One in *The Absolutist* or the Holocaust in *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*. Indeed, as Boyne admits, “there are times where you have to decide whether to stick to the actual fact or not. It’s a balancing act: working out what is important and what you can afford to play with.”

For Boyne, however, it is usually fine to “play with it”. After all, he explains, “your responsibility is ultimately to the story you’re telling, and to your audience, to make it interesting, moving and sometimes challenging.”

Yet I am keen to push him on this point. Referencing *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*, a book often studied in schools, I ask him whether the balancing act changes in the knowledge that he may not only be entertaining but also educating. But he remains unmoved from his position, telling me “I would always respond by saying ‘if you want that, go read a piece of non-fiction’. I’ve always maintained that *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* is a fable and a work of fiction, and if you write a historical novel, the reader is reading it for entertainment – and it’s up to them how they understand it.”

He continues, noting the importance of encouraging engagement with the historical event, which can mean that “even if the reader is a child, to have [the story] completely accurate is not necessarily what you want.” Backing up his point earnestly, he notes that in relation to *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*, the lesson



“It’s partly a drama, but there are some elements of comedy”

that he hopes comes from the book – justifying his description of it as a “fable” – is that “there are still fights in society against racism, sexism, homophobia and other prejudices that we need to engage in. Hopefully, children will read that book and think about prejudice and its consequences.”

Boyne’s work has often oscillated between being targeted at adults and children. With his most recent novel – entitled *The Heart’s Invisible Furies* – he has returned to the older audience in a

characteristically hard-hitting fashion. Only his second novel set in his native Ireland, the book “follows the story of Ireland for 70 years from the 1940s to the week after the Marriage Equality referendum through one person’s eyes and follows how Irish society has changed during that time.”

“It’s partly a drama, but there are some elements of comedy, too”, Boyne tells me, before explaining how the reader follows Cyril Avery, the protagonist. *The Heart’s Invisible Furies* documents his struggle

to come to terms with his homosexuality. Boyne explains that “in his younger life, [Cyril] is very frightened – mainly because he’s living in a society where homosexuality is illegal – but then, as time goes on and the country changes, he starts to come to terms with it.”

Boyne admits that Cyril’s account, which is written in seven-year jumps, does draw on “some memories and personal experiences” but denies there is any autobiographical element to it. Instead, he tells me, “it’s more interested in how [Ireland] went from a place with that prohibition [on same-sex marriage] to being a country which would be open enough to permit it”.

But while there may be an undercurrent of historical analysis, Boyne is clear that his trademark ability to produce a novel that is poignant and where thought-provoking remains uninhibited. “The thing I don’t like,” he tells me, “is when someone says ‘that book is very clever.’ I don’t aim for cleverness; for me, the reader should put the book down and it’s been a personal experience”.

Perhaps it is this drive and ambition to produce books that tug at the reader’s heartstrings that explains Boyne’s international success. Indeed, this would substantiate his theory that “all writers reflect in their work what they want it to mean to themselves”. Interestingly, however, there may be another factor to his success: his education.

After having discovered Boyne holds a degree in English Literature from Trinity College, Dublin, and continued onto the University of East Anglia, where he studied Creative Writing, I am keen to know how he views such courses: in particular, I ask him whether writing is something that can be taught, or it is more a case of a talent being refined and honed.

“I think it’s the latter,” Boyne says with conviction, observing that, “critics of those courses generally argue you can’t teach writing, but nobody ever says that when people go to art school and drama school.” He continues: “there’s never really an element of teaching in the sense of trying to get everyone to write in the same way – it’s much more of a personal experience, where you take the natural writer and hone them, and channel them, and help them find their own voice to construct stories.”

● John Boyne will be giving a reading from, signing copies of, and answering questions about his new book, *The Heart’s Invisible Furies*, at 6:30pm at Heffers bookshop on Monday 13th February. Details about the event, and how to buy tickets, can be found online.



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## Science

# Biodiversity How do we balance



## The future of the planet is in all our hands

**Zdravko Zahariev**  
Science Correspondent

The projected rise in the world's population to 10–12 billion by the end of the century, and the increasing per capita use of resources, have led to the widespread argument that we have entered the epoch of the anthropocene.

The wonders that Sir David Attenborough has been showing us over the past few months seem to be at stake, as our effects on the natural world continue to drive biodiversity losses and alter the structure of ecosystems globally.

Vital for human welfare are ways to manage the ecosystems we live alongside. They include regulating services such as the climate, pest, and disease control, as well as provisioning solutions that can bring about a potential economic reward. For example, greater

diversity in rice species grown in the Yunnan province, China, has led to better fungal pathogen resistance. This has led to increased agricultural yields in the region. Research has also shown that green space exposure decreases the incidence rates for all-time mortality by promoting mental well-being. The global value of these ecosystem services is estimated to be anywhere in the range of \$16–54 trillion per year.

It is unsurprising, therefore, that humans are having widespread effects on land and at sea. The population of the African forest elephant, for example, has declined by more than 60 per cent over a decade due to hunting. In tropical regions, we risk the realisation of empty tropical forests. At sea we remove larger-bodied, higher trophic-level species, greatly offsetting natural processes. We threaten ecosystems through climate change, oceanic acidification, eutrophication, introduction of invasive species, and habitat alteration – factors that have even a greater, unexpected impact through intricate interactions or cascading shifts.

The ecology of the future has a great risk factor attached, but it is still not

“The ecology of the future is still not firmly shaped”

► The Aldabra giant tortoise has a long history of conservation (CHILDZY)



firmly shaped and has the ability to be dynamic. Biologically bold actions attempt to restore ecological processes. Re-wilding is such an example and a major conservation challenge. It involves the introduction of non-native species to replace functionally equivalent but already extinct ones. On the Mauritian Islands, for example, giant tortoises played a key role as herbivores for the maintenance of grass flora diversity. Ecologically-equivalent species have been recently introduced and shown promising results on the Île aux Aigrettes and Round Islands.

Our ability to combat the current trends in biodiversity losses is not as negligible as many would expect. This might be achieved by administering better control on resource exploitation through active conservation of endangered ecosystems, or through advocating the increase in the resources we invest in nature management. On a personal note, key changes in our behaviour, such as shifts in everyday diet, re-building a perhaps misplaced connection with nature, and an indication of the conservation success stories worldwide can certainly offset some of the current trends.

## A case for bioengineering

**James Alvey**  
Science Editor

Hundreds of countries are afflicted by various infectious diseases that put billions of lives at risk. Two such examples are that of dengue fever and more recently, the Zika virus. The occurrences of dengue, a flu-like endemic which can cause severe complications, have been observed to increase by over 30 times in the past 50 years. Currently over 30 per

cent of the world's population is at risk according to the World Health Organisation (WHO). Both diseases are carried by the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito, the focus of current efforts.

It is unsurprising given the scale of the issue that new and innovative solutions have emerged. One such idea from a group called *Eliminate Dengue* concerns a bacteria known as *Wolbachia*. The bacteria are found in over 60 per cent of species of insect, and as such is naturally occurring in a wide range of ecosystems. The key feature of the bacteria is that, for mosquitos carrying the dengue virus, the presence of *Wolbachia* appears to inhibit the ability of the insects to transmit the disease. Unfortunately, the bacteria are



not present in the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito. The simple question remains then, how does one ensure every mosquito carries the bacteria? Rephrased, this is really a question of population dynamics.

To discuss this further, we first give a quick explanation of how the bacteria propagates. It works like this: if a female is infected with *Wolbachia*, then all her eggs will certainly be infected, irrespective of the infection status of the male. There will, however, also be fewer eggs compared to a non-infected female. If a female is not infected, but the male is, then her eggs will be infected but they won't be viable. Finally, if neither is infected, nor will the eggs be. So, we see that there is a careful balancing act be-

“New and innovative solutions have emerged”



# our exploration with our impact?



Polly Evans

## We are in a new age of exploration

In the early 19th century the invention of the steam engine revolutionised travel, allowing people to traverse the country in a matter of hours rather than days or weeks. This altered life so dramatically that time itself changed as a result, and local times became synchronised according to railway time. Britons found themselves able to leave their small villages and enter a larger, European community. Brexit aside, perhaps 21st-century technologies are the post-modern steam engine equivalent – the ability not only to fly across the world, but to do so at the click of a finger, has made the world a smaller and more interconnected place. Tools like Eurostar Snap or Skyscanner enable us to make a snap decision to swing by Paris for the weekend or jet off to the Bahamas for the week. We can book a flight on our iPad, hop on an aeroplane, and one sleeping pill and a glass of red wine later we've woken up on the other side of the world, groggy and dislocated. All we have to do is move our watches forward and somehow, we've literally travelled through time.

The way that we can zip from one country to another in a few hours has messed with our spatial and cultural awareness. We are now able to experience another cultural landscape with speed and efficiency. Going on holiday nowa-

“We are now able to experience another cultural landscape with speed and efficiency”



days has for many has changed from the simple desire to relax and take time out into a mission to find and absorb an 'authentic' cultural experience. We've become culture addicts, and technology promises to facilitate our cultural quick fixes. We can turn to blogs like *Lonely Planet* to help us wander 'off the beaten track' or urban exploration apps like *Dérive* to help us get 'lost' in a city in 'random unplanned way'. The idea that we might need help getting lost seems absurd to me, but the fact that tools like this exist point to our obsessive tendency to want to gain a 'real' cultural experience. A *Forbes* article from 2015 cites a study by Topdeck Travel that surveyed 31,000 people from 134 different countries found that 98 per cent of younger generations ranked 'eating local cuisine' as something that was very important when travelling. If you want to cut out the process of wandering past numerous restaurants until you find the right one, you can turn to apps like Zomato or Trip Advisor to do all the hard work for you.

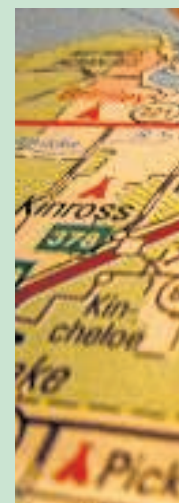
It seems ironic that we might wish to turn inwards to our iPhones to help us find an authentic external experience, but statistics show that technologies aren't just considered a useful aid to travelling, but are now integral to the process. In a survey by *New Horizons III* of over 34,000 young

travellers from 137 countries, they found that that ability to book using mobile devices is now the second biggest consideration after price.

I experienced first-hand how easy technology makes travelling when I went alone to Japan a couple of years ago. I would have been lost without it – I used Skyscanner to help me find the cheapest flight, Memrise to help me learn some basic words and phrases and Tabimoro to assist with everything from organising train times to general advice on life and culture. Would I not have been able to do the trip alone without my iPad? Of course I would have, but the difference probably would have been that I would have had to research my trip a whole lot more beforehand, and maybe spent a few months trying to learn a bit of the language first. In effect, I think I would have made more of an effort to properly engage with the culture of the country I was visiting.

There are of course many benefits to the way that technology facilitates experiencing another culture – sites like Airbnb encourage you to stay in other people's houses rather than in

◀ Halong Bay, Vietnam (SKEEZE)  
▶ Are we just looking for planned spontaneity? (KATERHA)



internationally-owned corporate hotels, bridging the gap between tourists and locals. They open doors directly into people's homes, encouraging a type of travelling that is about sharing cultural values and experiences. There's no point romanticising a lost age of travel in which everybody got lost and ate horrible food. These technologies only start to seem absurd when they try to exploit our obsession with authenticity, and maybe this is something we need to work out. A glance at Britain's colonial past reveals our long and troubling history of exploiting and commodifying cultures as we 'explore' the world, and so our obsession with capturing and recording facets of different cultures to bring back as tokens should be treated with caution. Perhaps we should stop trying to locate the 'authentic' facets of another culture as a means of satisfying our own egotistical desire to broaden our cultural horizons, and try to enjoy another country through what it has to offer to us, not what we can take from it.

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tween unhatched eggs, infected females, and the rest of the population.

Given these constraints, we can use a simple model to examine just how feasible the introduction of *Wolbachia* mosquitos may be in establishing a stable, widespread protection. It turns out that assuming enough infected are introduced, the bacteria spreads rapidly through the population.

The *Eliminate Dengue* programme has taken this model on board and put it through years of research. Collaborating with governments and communities, an integral part of the process, it has run trials across the world, including areas such as Northern Queensland in Australia, Nha Trang in Vietnam, and Rio

de Janeiro in Brazil. They have seen a great deal of success, with observations of almost 100 per cent of mosquitos in a test population carrying the inhibitor after the trial has run its course.

To conclude, it's worth comparing this to past attempts such as the DDT eradication efforts in the '40s and '50s. Then, we saw an active effort to solve the issues of vector control, in comparison to this subtler, more passive effort which aims not to eradicate, but rather modulate the behaviour. Whether this is more successful has yet to be seen, but it certainly marks a new era of bioengineering.

● For more information on the project, visit [www.eliminatedengue.com](http://www.eliminatedengue.com)

◀ Golfer Rory McIlroy pulled out of last year's Rio Olympics over Zika fears (TOUR PRO GOLF CLUBS)



# Comment

## We have lost sight of what torture is

*The film industry, politicians and history have different views on what torture actually is*



Anna Jennings is Features Editor and studies English at Clare College

Anna Jennings

Torture. A lot of the time it's a word, a practice, an idea, which we like to forget about as we go about our everyday lives, pretending it's not part of our modern world but rather something 'medieval'. But sometimes, just sometimes, it might be something we can justify.

Part of the issue surrounding torture is that it is a word which resists simplistic interpretation. Let's start by thinking about where it comes from. My trusty friend, the Oxford English Dictionary (did I mention I'm an English student?), tells me that torture derives from the Latin *tortura*, meaning twisting, wreathing, torment. That's kind of what it still means today when we describe something flippantly as 'torture' – 9am lectures, perhaps, or, finally doing the mound of washing-up which you've left until you have literally no plates, cups or saucepans out of which to eat.

But the torture the serious newsreader enunciates, speaking of some distant authoritarian government, is different. Implicit here is a sense of justification that someone, somewhere believes in.

“But sometimes just sometimes, it might be something we can justify.”

Because this isn't just endless twisting, wreathing, Beckettian torment, but rather something with a purpose, something functional. At the heart of this definition of torture, then, whether we believe in it or not, is an aim, an outcome which is its *raison d'être*. And anyone who supports or is complicit in torture operates under the assumption that this potential end (generally of information) justifies the 'inhuman' means of getting there.

We like to dismiss this kind of torture as Medieval, but on an etymological level at least this is a misconception. As an English word, torture is a Renaissance term, appearing first court documents around the 1550s. It is a Tudor concept arising with the increasingly unstable monarchy and religious division across the land – a product of a society which attempted to become increasingly 'civilised', using torture as a weapon against those who challenged these efforts to create unity of religion and rule. Torture and civilisation are not as dichotomised as we may think.

Leaders today often shy away from the term torture. Under George Bush's Presidency, 'enhanced interrogation' became the term of choice to describe CIA activities ranging from waterboarding to “threats to sexually abuse the mother of a detainee”, as if swaddling the concept in a cotton-wool blanket of fancy words

and supposed purpose can disassociate it from that lingering medievalism. It is telling that Donald Trump has latched upon the term torture as part of his pseudo-populist clampdown on terrorism. It is undoubtedly an extremely evocative word.

And yet in spite – and perhaps because of this – torture is a thing we struggle to 'see' properly. It is endlessly sensationalised and quasi-romanticised in films such as *Zero Dark Thirty* and *Sicario*, which use torture as a way to elicit a visceral response from their audiences, a plot device to turn us against those who enact the torture.

But the narrative which casts tor-

ture as 'bad' and inhuman is somewhat reductive and naïve. Torture generally in the context of Western, non-authoritarian regimes (and yes, this too, is an ideological perspective) comes from a dark, difficult place of wanting to 'fix' something, and seeing this as the last possible resort.

We can't get data on the efficiency of torture, or quantify its outputs. But it comes down to a similar debate as that of animal testing – if you can save 10, 20, 100 lives from a terrorist attack by causing one human temporary suffering, is that justifiable? Of course, it's not that simple, but sometimes it just might be.

I'm fully aware that this article has refused to form a final 'judgement' on torture as unequivocally bad or somewhat justifiable. But that's the point. Torture isn't one thing at all, but many different things at different times, to different people.

In an era of clickbait news and sensationalist politics, the mistake I fear we're making too often is to make simple judgements. That the EU, and immigration are 'bad' – or 'good'. That Donald Trump's politics are 'right' – or 'wrong'. Global decision making is infinitesimally complicated, and we need to remember once more to appreciate that nuance rather than be quick to establish binaries of opinion.



▲ SHANE T. MCCOY, U.S. NAVY

## Feeling 'other' is still a problem at Cambridge

Yukiko Lui **Pale, Stale, Male**

Cambridge wasn't built for me. The people who dreamed up the chapels and courtyards of this city lived in a different time, when minorities didn't have a say in how things were run. Cambridge wasn't built for many kinds of people and despite that, those people now roam its streets, study in its rooms and dine in its halls. But

even our best efforts to carve spaces out for ourselves and other like us haven't displaced the feeling of otherness that's still alive in the very heart of Cambridge. Things that are quintessential parts of Cambridge and underpin the wonder and mystique

surrounding the university often also serve as a reminder that we—women, nonbinary people, people of colour, state school kids—are still considered strange interlopers here.

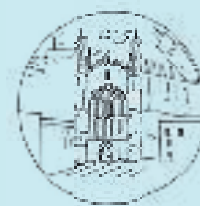
The first time I really understood what it meant to be 'other' was in Cambridge. The concept is somewhere in between exclusion and ostracisation—it means, literally, to feel like you are other, not one of the nebulous but power-wielding 'us'. I had felt othered before by media representations (or lack thereof) or by my gender in certain situations, but Cambridge is a whole other planet. Call it prestige or history, but there's something inescapable in the air and in the walls that makes this place feel like Cambridge, for better or for worse. Cantabs past and present take pride in tradition and doing things the way they've always been done, and in doing so we've become used to the eccentricities of things like formals and the use of Latin.

Wearing a gown is a novelty for anyone born in the last century, and we've

just accepted them as part of our lives as Cambridge students. But otherness doesn't have to be outwardly exclusionary, and often it's the insidious kind that takes the heaviest toll on marginalised students. It's particularly visible in our curricula. The students at SOAS asking for Asian and African philosophers to be included in their courses are highlighting a fundamental problem that many marginalised groups experience at schools and universities. Institutions like to tout their internationalism and their global outlook and reach, but without a varied curriculum those statements are empty of meaning. It's only right that in a world where both our similarities and differences have been laid bare by the internet, we recognise and validate diversity of experience. Online, public space has been made democratic, making it easier to access public forums. The other has gradually bled into the mainstream, and we are hearing marginalised voices turn from whispers into shouts.

This is what it means to be truly

“There's something inescapable that makes this place feel like Cambridge.”



▲ LIZZY O'BRIEN

forward-thinking. As students at Cambridge we are in a position to challenge the single story, as Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie put it, and we can do it without compromising the essence of our university or its traditions. We can wear our gowns and talk about Rumi or James Baldwin or Murasaki Shikibu at the same time. There is nothing inherently 'Cambridge' about a restricted reading list. But Cambridge is now made up of those who wouldn't have been let through its doors a century ago, and our traditions need to give us room to grow, not restrict us. They also need to belong to us: the students who make up the university. In a Cambridge that is, demographically, worlds away from its predecessors, this means sometimes choosing the welfare of current students instead of respecting those few traditions which try unsuccessfully to turn the clock back on diversity and all the progress we've made thus far.



# Comment

Cartoon by **Ben Brown**



## Online

**Opposition to private universities is elitist**

by James Snell



**We moan, but we'll miss Cambridge**

by Flo Sagers



**Column The death of local news**

Guy Birch *The best words*

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# Polari priest was correct to 'queer the liturgy'

*Polari, a form of gay subculture slang, was used in a service at Westcott House an anglican training college*



Millie Rietkerk studies Theology at St Catharine's College

Millie Rietkerk

When one thinks of London gay subculture, the colourful, dynamic and vibrant Pride marches are more likely to come to mind than the activities of a Cambridge theological college, nestled away in Jesus Lane. It was therefore surprising to many that at Westcott House, a Church of England (C of E) college, a service was given entirely in Polari, the language of historical London gay subculture. While the trainee priest gave the service in order to mark the beginning of LGBT History Month, the decision has been slated for its break from the permitted C of E liturgy, resulting in an apology from the college.

It is hardly surprising that such a break from tradition would cause controversy within a Church community. After all, C of E services are generally required to be delivered in line with official and approved liturgy. For some, this conservative use of material creates a sense of stability and continuity, reminding them of the Church being a traditionalist pillar at the heart of the British establishment. According to this attitude, any deviation from the normative service is unacceptable, regardless of any positive social message.

Furthermore, the radical decision to change an age-old tradition to commemorate LGBT History Month could be perceived as an imposition

of secular values upon a religious establishment. Is a historical and cultural celebration actually relevant in a spiritual ceremony or are congregation members being asked to compromise their theological integrity in order to fit with a twenty-first-century agenda?

I struggle to accept this view as it assumes that discussion of LGBT+ rights and issues has no place within spiritual and religious communities. It is exactly because it seems out of place to discuss such questions in a religious environment that they should be talked about. The service's LGBT+ theme raised awareness, making space for further thought and engagement about the relationship between sexuality and spirituality.

After all, sexuality (particularly homosexuality) is still a contentious issue within the C of E. For example, the priesthood continues to be split over whether they should have the right to bless or officiate same-sex marriages. Clearly, LGBT+ rights are far from irrelevant within the Church and by stepping away from ancient liturgy (which is inevitably influenced by its heteronormative context) even for one service, the Church had an opportunity to initiate a positive discussion about this topic.

I find that this controversy sur-

rounding LGBT+ issues within the C of E can be seen as an exemplification of the Church's internal battle between traditionalism and progressive liberalism. It seems as though they are constantly trying to find a balance between remaining true to their historical origins while remaining relevant in contemporary society. I can't help but wonder if this ecclesiastical ambiguity caused by the Church's identity crisis is at least partially responsible for the public's disillusionment with the Church.

The dwindling congregation sizes do suggest that the C of E needs to do something in order to re-engage those who have strayed. Maybe a Polari service was the kind of radical move needed? It is possible that by being anti-establishment, the Church could reaffirm their position within the establishment.

If there is any place for trying out new ideas, surely it is a theological college? The Principal of Westcott House, Reverend Canon Chris Chivers, noted that such institutions are "places of experiment and enquiry". It seems irrefutable that there is a difference between having a Polari service in an academic theological institution and a church in a sleepy rural hamlet. Theological colleges have the opportunity to pioneer the future of the Church's faith and theology. While their apology was

understandable as the service was not officially authorised by either the college or the Church, I do find it disappointing that Westcott House described the service as "hugely regrettable". Even though the manner in which the service was carried out was unauthorised, this attempt to open a discussion about LGBT+ rights should be merited. What is, in fact, regrettable is that the college did not utilise their 'mistake' in a positive manner and instead shut down the conversation completely.

What makes the C of E unique is that it is home to a spectrum of beliefs, both liberal and conservative, reflecting a similar plethora of views in wider British society. As the established religion of the country, they have an obligation to remain accessible and welcoming to all, including those in the LGBT+ community.

By engaging with and reaching out to this community, they could help demonstrate that the Church is open to a more positive relationship between faith and sexuality than they previously permitted in the past. Even though Polari services are not the only way to achieve this, such strong condemnation of an attempt to open the conversation between religion and LGBT+ rights only reinforces the historically negative relationship between the two.

“Such institutions are ‘places of experiment and enquiry’”



## Comment

# Political elites have failed us

*Politicians have failed to articulate a message outside the Westminster bubble, argues Noah Froud*



Noah Froud is Deputy Comment Editor and studies HSPS at Sidney Sussex College

What will the next generation of politicians look like? We have left behind the generation of polished professional politicians. These supposed experts, many of whom studied at Oxbridge, have paradoxically led to the popularity of outsiders such as Trump, UKIP and Corbyn, the very people these SPADs (special advisors), media managers and spin doctors were meant to protect us from. This outsourcing of political management to experts created an 'elite'. One that the masses are now fed up of.

TV shows like *The Thick of It* capture perfectly people's perception of politics, albeit in an exaggerated fashion. It shows a world of incompetent elites whose actions are, largely, meaningless. For example, policies are ditched at the beginning of an episode, then later resurrected, creating a media disaster.

Even Malcolm Tucker, the infamous profanity-using spin doctor modelled on Alistair Campbell, has no actual choice or agency. He may strike fear into the hearts of every other character in the show, but he himself has no control over the direction of policy. Constantly reacting, he demonstrates how politicians and their staffers are actually doing nothing. In attempting to stay 'in the loop', politicians fail to offer real change.

What is the point of being in politics then? What is the point of politicians, aside from claiming expenses? Thoughts like this are inherently unhealthy for our politics, for they breed populism. *The Thick of It* may be comedically exaggerated, but it still highlights the way politics was perceived. It's funny because the audience see a kernel of truth in it. Negative perceptions of the elite aren't a product of TV shows, they are a product of the media-managed bubble politics of the last few years.

While Tucker caricatures one man, Ollie Reeder is a character who represents a whole generation of politicians. Reeder, a special advisor, is an accurate caricature of the 'golden generation' of politicians who have never had a job outside politics and jumped straight from Oxford or Cambridge into Westminster. Dubbed an "Poxbridge twat" by Malcolm, Ollie demonstrates the career path of a plethora of politicians: the Miliband brothers, George Osborne, David Cameron, Ed Balls, Douglas Alexander and Yvette Cooper. Their careers have solely been spent in politics, albeit sometimes with a short stint in a city law firm beforehand.

As well as their backgrounds, they have all fallen from favour as the new populism sneaks in. It appears the age of this Oxbridge educated elite might be over.

But the opponents of the 'golden generation',

the 'populists', aren't much better. Farage was a commodity broker and Trump is the richest man to ever take office in the White House. They have hardly got 'life experience' that makes them more in touch with the average person on the street. But they successfully portrayed themselves as outsiders to the bubble of Ollie Reeder, and it was this that has allowed them to shake the old order.

The issue isn't careerist politicians in themselves. It isn't just the fact that politicians have only been politicians. It's this whole issue of a distant elite seen to live a separate existence. For example, if you've lived in Islington, Notting Hill, Cambridge and Oxford your whole life, that in itself sets you apart. You've existed in bubbles which are alien worlds to the rest of the country.

The thing that most surprised me when I first set foot in Cambridge, even with its massive problem of homelessness, was how nice everything is. If you'd lived here forever, you would be forgiven for thinking that the recession wasn't really a problem; that only a small number of people you could brand as racists were weary of immigration, and that whichever party could say "long-term economic plan" would most convincingly win every election.

What is crucial is not whether these bubbles of prosperity really exist or are as elitist and different as I'm saying. What matters is that the public perceives them to exist. The politicians of the future need to understand that. They need to understand that people want politicians who represent them and work hard for them, and won't simply jump to a nice V&A directorship when they don't seem likely to get a powerful cabinet position soon. They cannot come from the top universities and assume they are the top one per cent with an automatic ability to lead.

What matters is not how clever they are, but whether they can actually articulate what people want. If they don't do that, they deserve far worse than a bad rep from TV shows.



BBC WORLDWIDE/YOUTUBE

# Despite admissions stats,

*Recent figures mask the inequality in race and class in Cambridge, argues Olivia Lam*

Last week, news broke that for the first time in history women now receive more Cambridge offers from men. But news is a game of statistics, and before we begin preemptively celebrating this big step towards gender equality, we need to consider whether this figure actually means that all women are being treated fairly.

The discussion has celebrated gender equality based on simple numerical comparisons. It has been suggested that female students' success is predicated on university admittance, brushing over the most important issues faced by young women in education. Though it might surprise you, an offer from Oxbridge does not define the quality of education young women in this country receive.

UCAS's 2016 End of Cycle reports contain a few other worrying statistics that deserve much more attention, especially when the statistics of Cambridge are compared to the rest of the country. Across the UK, women are more likely to apply to universities than men. In England, the difference is 35%. But in Cambridge men and women have the same application rate. Could it mean that women are just less qualified than men? Offer rate statistics do not suggest so. Those young women who applied actually had a higher chance of success than their male counterparts. And the gap is widening.

This observation is coupled with extremely gendered applications by subject in Cambridge. According to the University's Undergraduate Admissions Statistics report for the 2015 cycle, applications to Economics, CompSci, Engineering and Mathematics are dominated by males, with CompSci being the most imbalanced one (87 men to 13 women). Among the sciences, not all degrees are dominated by male applicants, but those that are skewed towards females are PBS and Veterinary Medicine, science subjects that would be considered "softer" sciences or acceptable for women to study while retaining their "femininity".

These all point to an alarming conclusion. No one could actually know why some women did not end up applying, but one of the reasons can be that young female sixth-formers have less faith in

LOUIS ASHWORTH



their academic abilities, and therefore are less likely to apply to top institutions. On top of that, boys and girls alike as gender groups show obvious preferences of some subjects over others. They either never develop interests in certain subjects because of how they are brought up or educated, or they are too intimidated to apply to a course because of gendered conceptions. Research released by Princeton University, New York University and the University of Illinois last month showed the disheartening results that girls, as early as the age of six, think that they are less clever and talented than boys.

So far I have only addressed the factor of gender in university admissions,

“  
I applaud every woman that has made it into Cambridge  
”

## Who is a Jew? Miikka Jaarte 28 per cent fear

In talking about anti-Semitism and Jewish experience, it would be handy to answer who actually is a Jew. Judaism is a religion, but Jewishness is much more than that – a culture at least, maybe an ethnicity. Whether the religion, culture or ethnic parts need to be there for a Jew to be a 'real' Jew is a matter that spans a considerable academic spectrum, with nuanced arguments on all sides appealing to religious, cultural and historical sources.

Disclaimer: I am no scholar. There will be no facts and no answers. This is the rambling of someone who has a

Jewish father, is sometimes called a Jew, and sometimes calls himself a Jew.

I've never been a religious person. I went to the synagogue for the same reasons most people go to church on Sundays – your grandparents aren't gonna be around forever so you might as well do one thing to please them if you insist on not being a doctor. The first time I felt like a Jew was when a fellow eight-year-old at school told me that my parents suck. Asking him why, he explained matter-of-factly that my parents sucked because they killed Jesus. If I were to have this conversation now, I'd probably appeal to historical records which show that it

“  
Persecution is undeniably a source of identity  
”



# women are not equal



but there are multiple facets of identity that come into play here.

If the Cambridge brochure had been more realistic, it would feature 17 white students, three Asian students, 0.3 black students. 10 of them would be male and 10 of them would be female. 12 of them would be able to afford an extra coffee at Starbucks after the photoshoot, five of them would be content with eating out once in a while, three of them would struggle to pay their college bills.

The fact that women are getting more Cambridge offers than men says something good about the education girls receive in this country. I applaud every woman that has made it to Cambridge. You are reversing the centuries-old edu-

cation tradition that favours men. But above all, I applaud women of colour, women of disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds and especially women of both who have made it here. You have defied statistics.

When your application is being read by the university's admission officers, you are reduced to your name, gender, ethnicity, GCSEs and AS grades.

Application statistics fail to tell the stories of men and women alike who are told to or forced to put a check on their ambition, because of their skin colours, their gender or how much money their parents have in their bank account. They forget that they could as well be an anomaly.

was actually the Romans who were more concerned about Jesus as a revolutionary than his fellow Jews, and to the fact that my parents aren't 2,000 years old. At the time, I just hit him in the face.

Okay, maybe that's not the best way to solve your problems, and maybe there's more to being Jewish than being offended by the charge that your parents killed Jesus. Orthodox Jews maintain that someone who has a Jewish mother is a Jew, whereas many liberal Jewish scholars argue that being a Jew is merely a matter of religion. But my experience, not just with a single eight-year-old, but all the surprisingly normal, socially respectable adult anti-Semites who attacked me for the background of my parents, does point to one common



characteristic that seems to transcend both these definitions. People who are not religious or don't have Jewish mothers or don't meet other stringent criteria are still treated as Jews.

It should be quite obvious that race as the Nazis conceived it is piece of pseudoscience - there is no skull-shape or platonic form of a 'Jewish nose' which determines who is a Jew. But even though race isn't real, it can have real consequences on individuals and their identities. The fact is that all Jews were persecuted in accordance with the Nuremberg laws, which targeted anyone with at least one Jewish grandparent or a Jewish spouse. This definition, while not in line with tradition, is still often used to define Jewishness.



This understandably makes some people uneasy. It might be seen as giving up our autonomy to define ourselves and giving it to those who historically oppose us. But persecution is undeniably a source of identity, whether based on anything real or not. It certainly is for me - I happen to like Woody Allen, challah and having a beard, too, but I don't feel I could suddenly become un-Jewish, even if I wanted to. Even if I threw away my copy of *Annie Hall*, just ate regular bread and shaved, there would still be some asshole wanting to burn down my family's place of worship.

There is of course much more to being Jewish than being called names. There are (I'd hope) plenty of Jews who never have to face this kind of

persecution, and whose identities are built from different materials. It's perfectly consistent that other people feel other things make them Jews - religion, tradition, ethnicity, whatever. Anyone making a habit of telling other people they're not Jewish, on top of being rude, is erasing that person's meaningful experiences associated with their identity. For me, those experiences are largely ones of persecution - for others, they may be ones of religious clarity, culture or tradition.

I appreciate the struggle of defining what really constitutes the nature of Jewishness. But an alternative and much simpler definition seems more attractive to me: if you feel like you're a Jew, you probably are one.

# Macron: the French Trudeau?

*The French elite have found their own version of the Canadian Prime Minister, argues Simon Percelay*



Simon Percelay  
 studies HSPS at  
 St John's College

Half a year ago, no one would have believed that Emmanuel Macron would be a front-runner in the French presidential elections. And yet, he is now one of the top candidates. Having gone through a private Catholic institute, the Lycée Henri IV, Sciences Po and l'ENA, Macron is one of the most perfect examples of the French ruling elite.

Notorious for having worked for the Rothschild bank, he became President Hollande's economic advisor following his election, and later his Minister for the Economy and Industry in 2014.

Much of the criticism against him has come from the traditional left, rebuked by his elite origins and his 'volatility' between the public and private sectors. Refusing to adhere to any specific party and reiterating several times that he was not a socialist, Macron has built his political image on his independence and unapologetic liberalism. Despite his role as the architect of Hollande's economic policy, often regarded as a political failure, he has somehow managed to maintain a popular image.

In fact, Macron's campaign has been blessed with a surprising amount of luck: Hollande's renouncement to run for re-election has given him a political space for his campaign; with the tacit support of much of the media and the establishment.

▼ GOUVERNEMENT  
 FRANÇAIS



Macron has also been able to attract representatives from both centre-left and centre-right to build his own political coalition. And so, slowly, his numbers in the opinion polls started rising. As Marine Le Pen's numbers remain constant, it appears for now that the true contest of the presidential election will be about deciding who, between Macron and Fillon, gets to face Marine Le Pen in the second round of the election.

The programmes and ideas of Macron and Fillon both have their core in liberalism. Some anti-liberal, left-wing commentators might even cynically say that their political beliefs are identical, subordinated to the requests and desires of corporations.

However, to many voters, there is a

significant difference: whereas Macron incarnates the positive, punchy, energetic, and often idealistic vision of a liberal future, Fillon incarnates a more pessimistic, realistic, 'blood, toil, tears and sweat' approach.

What can we expect will happen to Macron and his campaign? His candidacy's future is as unpredictable as this presidential campaign has been so far. He has no real party structure, no mandate, little experience and small representative support. His centrist candidacy may be compromised if François Bayrou, a historical centrist figure in French politics, decides to run in the election as well. Little of his presidential programme has been revealed yet, and his numbers might decline when his campaign comes under stronger public scrutiny.

Macron is an oddball: while he essentially represents those in the elite that have led to the rise of populism, he also appears as the candidate most likely to contain it. He appears as the establishment's adaptation to the new rules of the political game: a young, modern, energetic candidate, with more style and less substance, more soundbites and fewer details.

In fact, parallels are often drawn between him and Justin Trudeau: privileged and likeable, he represents those often referred to as the 'winners of globalisation'.

Macron's main objective is to represent the political renewal of the establishment. He seeks to reorganise French politics under a progressive/populist divide.

Macron is often seen as the 'corporate' candidate of this election, and yet, he might now be the left's best chance. Still, this could play in the latter's advantage: by giving her his main opposition role, Macron has helped Le Pen in building her image as the candidate of the 'losers of globalisation', leading a French crusade against the financial and corporate forces.

French politics seem to be reorganising around new class cleavages that might underpin the political developments of the coming decades.



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# Vulture

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## Language and identity

*An intimate portrait*  
(18-19)

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## Style tribes

*Exploring the sartorial jungle of  
Cambridge nightlife*  
(p.23)

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## Battle of the Vans

*Best of Cambridge's food trailers*  
(p.24-25)



# I speak therefore I am: Identity and

## Tá Gaeilge agam. Agus tú?

**C**onas atá tú? 'Tá mé go maith, agus túsa?' 'An bhfuil cead agam dul amach go dtí an leithreas?'

There ends my knowledge of the Irish language – so far. I'm trying to learn more, however: Duolingo provides excellent procrastination fodder in the library, and I can make the excuse that it's still more mentally stimulating than watching *Parks and Recreation* (although maybe not quite as entertaining). I'm often asked whether I speak Irish, or can even read it – and met with confusion when I explain that, save for a few words found dotted on road signs and the phrase 'tíocfaidh ár lá' (google it), it may as well be Greek to me. Actually, I did Greek GCSE, so technically Greek would be better.

Unlike in the Republic of Ireland, Irish language education is not provided or required on the Northern Irish curriculum. Schools that do teach it are often divided along sectarian lines, further enforcing the idea that the Irish language is the cultural property of one community and not the other – such that the very act of speaking it or teaching it becomes tied up in identity politics.

Ah, identity politics. It's a phrase often banded about in modern political discourse, often pejoratively aimed at the 'snowflakes' of the student left by *Daily Mail* columnists with almost as much free time as they have empty space in their heads. As far as the identity politics lottery goes, I've lucked out – two possible nationalities and a sexual minority? I expect Katie Hopkins is practically frothing.

In Northern Ireland, however, identity (usually pronounced aye-den-da-dee, shouted for greater effect) is a universally recognised currency. Where do you live? Derry or Londonderry? How do you say the letter 'H'? DUP or Sinn Féinn? Catholic or Protestant? Football or GAA? There are some people in Northern Ireland who, unfortunately, can't see past these binary oppositions. You're either one or the other. One of us, or one of them'uns.

Which brings us back to me, sitting in the library, practising Irish.

I feel such a strong connection to the collection of jumbled letters on the page, which when read and pronounced properly lilt and elide into a mysterious and alluring tongue – neither Romance nor Germanic, but Celtic, a language family that can be traced back to the first millennium BC. Since deciding to try it out on a whim a few weeks ago, I've developed a strong connection to Irish. It feels mine somehow, not in a sense of property, but as part of a cultural heritage, keeping a language alive that, even in recent history, has been suppressed.

My tongue might trip over the sounds and my brain might struggle to decode the complex word order, but I keep coming back.

British, Irish, or both, the national identity of my homeland might be fought over in the Assembly or on the streets – but my personal identity is mine alone to determine. Living in a kind of limbo – too Irish to be completely British, too British to be completely Irish – my cop out was to just be both and be done with the whole thing. Recent events have changed that, however – the petty nationalism we saw pre- and post-Brexit prompted me to rethink how I consider my national identity. Am I now more Irish than British? How could I reconcile all the things I love about the UK – our NHS, love of queueing, cynical sense of humour, willingness to help those in need – with all the things I hated in the campaign to leave the EU? I found refuge in my Irish-ness, it became an escape, a refuge in a world that seems to have gone mad.

While Donald Trump was a mere rumbling in the distance, Ireland became the first country to legalise same-sex marriage by plebiscite, with a massive 60 per cent mandate. While fear, intolerance, and bigotry spread across the Western world, Irish women stood up, and are still standing up, for autonomy over their own bodies, and the tide of opinion has shifted so far that, when that barrier is finally broken down and the eighth amendment is repealed, Ireland's transition to a modern liberal democracy will be complete. From being 'the most Catholic country in the world', so much so that to greet someone in Irish is to say 'Dia duit', 'God be with you', Ireland's turnaround in the space of just 20 years has been profound.

In a world where the unthinkable seems not only thinkable, but inevitable, the instability of my nationality and my nation becomes an opportunity. When everyone else seems to be moving backwards, Ireland, both North and South, is moving forwards, slowly. So, tá Gaeilge agaibh? ●

*Ted Mackey*



**I**t's actually a pretty hard task to write an article, with words, about words. This I have discovered investigating the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, a perhaps now outdated theory which considers how our native language affects the way we think. In it, I am born into a pattern of existence laid out by the language I use.

Typically, these days, we think of language as a means of self-expression – but what if the converse were true? What does my language have to do with my identity? And why does it matter? My own language, English, is a language of saying one thing and meaning something else: a language of politeness that sometimes lacks compassion, a language that Shakespeare, Dickens and Austen share in. It is one of hesitation and meaningless fillers, one of beautiful and precise olfactory sounds, one of passive constructions and purposelessness.

It is a language that uses convolution to mask irony, which masks self-ridicule, which in turn masks a deep-reaching self-doubt. It doesn't deal often in unrealisable subjunctives and layers of conditionality. Instead, it is a language lived in the present continuous, not one that finishes, but one that is always in the process of finishing.

Do these lines explain who I am? Is this why I say 'sorry' all the time even when I'm not, why I am constantly told not to over-complicate my sentences when I write in other languages? Or do I use English to express an identity that I already have in common with other British people?

The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis doesn't always make sense to me, however. I study MML, and the idea of language is always floating about in my mind. I divide my personality – or, I am divided – between three different languages each day. When I read in translation, I know that I'm missing out on something, yet in French and in German, I feel separated from myself. Often, a thought will be trying to break out of me, but I can't vocalise it, because I lack the words. In my communications in a language not my own, my thoughts are stretched like a fine spider's web, full of the holes of things I can only express in English.

In different languages, our thoughts are pinned to the corkboard of life in different ways. Are we, then, confined to an Orwellian restriction, à la 1984, of what it is possible to think by the very fact of belonging to a nation and employing its language – "But if thoughts can corrupt language, language can also corrupt thought?"

If so, every language becomes Newspeak by its very definition. No matter how many words a language contains, or how many of them we know, there will never be enough to express all identity.

Only maybe I have more 'say' than I think. Nascent thoughts, uncapturable by language, exist. I can conceive of an idea and not know how to express it in words. Hence, we seek to define these thoughts, and ourselves, as a nation via the shared language that we employ. We infuse it with culture and make it belong to us, so that we can wave it as a banner of our distinctiveness. So, is language not something that we wield control over?

Perhaps I wear a language like the clothes



It prescribes identity: it expresses the essence of us even before we begin to use it.





# language



MML  
and I

▲ Original  
Photogra-  
phy by  
Lucas  
Chebib

I choose every morning to go to lectures in. I fit inside these clothes, but I still choose whether to wear the red jumper or the blue. In the same way, I grow into a language that has been set out for me, but the choice of how to employ it is mine.

To use my languages gives me immense pleasure. I know that I will never have complete control over them, but in this realisation, I'm halfway there.

The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis may appear outdated, but it still resonates in the current moment. In an inevitable paradox, language both opens and closes doors for us. It prescribes identity: it expresses the essence of us even before we begin to use it. However, it is also a way for us to affirm our identity. We may sometimes feel like Orwell's protagonist Winston Smith.

But, just as he writes illicitly in his diary, we speak and we write. Language is a self-reflective tool, and we have to use it. Ultimately, it is the only means that we have to analyse ourselves ●

Lydia Bunt

## Meus idiomas

As a mixed race international student in Cambridge, spending holidays in Portugal, skipping Korean school as a kid, and experiencing some other fantastic cultures along the way, I often find myself thinking about how language affects my personality. Speaking a certain language or jargon can be the key to unlocking a certain aspect of your personality. In Cambridge, when I speak English, I'm your average History student: annoyingly fast-paced, full of big words but often lacking any real coherence.

But in those few occasions when I get to speak Portuguese, be that with the Brazilian catering staff or someone from the surprisingly large Portuguese community in Cambridge, the traits are different: probably still annoying, but more informal and snarky. There is always a certain theatrical quality in these moments, almost as if I'm trying to remind myself what it's like to be in Portugal again. One could attribute this to homesickness, but in my rather (un)educated opinion, language is not only associated with a particular place. It gets associated with certain kinds of emotions.

My evidence in support of this hypothesis comes from playing sport. Three years of playing university basketball has shown me that for certain individuals, rage can only be expressed through one language. Just ask our Swedish captain to demonstrate the near-yodelling rhythm of his swearing when he's having a bad day. I seem to have developed a tendency to shout mata (literally 'kill' in Portuguese) whenever I or my teammates execute a play under high pressure.

During a pre-season trip in Belgrade, our Serbian teammate made sure we had mastered a range of different Serbian expressions. Just blurting these out in the most random instances was enough to impress the locals, who took us in and made sure we experienced real cultural immersion.

But language can also be a barrier. Learning a few words of a language as a tourist is impressive, but the expectations are much higher if one wants to be seen as a native. It's always been rather strange for me to have South Korean citizenship and not be able to speak Korean like my mother or her side of the family. Speaking Korean half-fluently makes me feel like I am only halfway in touch with a part of my identity. I know that if I went to Korea now, people would respond to me in English when hearing my Korean – fine if you're tourist, but annoying if you're looking to blend in as a native.

This is because speaking Korean is the only way you can really think like one. Korean society is Confucian, which basically means that a clear sense of social hierarchy is imbedded in our culture. Whenever speaking to someone of greater seniority, be that due to age or employment status, the suffix yo (with a Scottish rather than American pronunciation) must be added to every verb as a way of acknowledging this difference. Language does not just facilitate communication, it allows one to understand the values embedded within a particular culture.

Ultimately, being multicultural can be problematic if one yearns for a sense of belonging. Language can overcome this feeling of being 'from nowhere.' But this requires complete fluency ●

Eduardo Baptista

(Full version available online)

## The Day I Found Out that I Drunk Talk in Cantonese

*Growing up speaking only Cantonese, I am always amazed by how quickly English has taken the place of my native language in the last six years – well, not completely. I still cannot pronounce 'crisps' properly. If you envy those of us who are bilingual, don't. Instead of being able to manoeuvre between the two languages, most of the time we're stuck in the middle, not good enough for either.*

I don't think the English me and the Cantonese me get along quite well.  
Sometimes they have to speak together,  
And my sentences get muddled up  
In strange accen-s, sentence wrong structures and  
My apologetic smile.

The English me is sarcastic, spontaneous and confident,  
The Cantonese me is mild, self-disciplined and sentimental.

The Cantonese me never swears,  
But the English me does. Oh yes, she does.

The English me is a heavy drinker,  
The Cantonese me sips red wine from her dad's glass.

My Cantonese me cannot write essays,  
But my English me cannot pick a fight with her brother.

The English me mumbles when she eats her scrambled eggs wrapped in bacon,  
The Cantonese me mumbles when she chews the preserved eggs in her congee.

The Cantonese me offends her parents,  
Oh, and the English me has never met her parents.

The Cantonese me stutters,  
The English me also stutters.

Do not mistake me for being two-faced,  
I am just torn.  
Too foreign for here, too foreign for home.  
Drifting through continents,  
Through life,  
Like post-colonial Hong Kong,  
Like my lovers' tangled tongues when they pronounce my name,  
Like the bad bubble tea (too sweet and the bubbles too hard) I found  
In a rundown Chinese restaurant on the street corner  
That fails to translate yang zhou chao fan into English.

But on the day I found out that I drunk talk in Cantonese,  
I became whole.

My Drunken Consciousness,  
Mixed with my gin-flavoured vomit,  
Grows into long, long roots,  
Extending themselves across oceans and lands,  
Anchoring to the space underneath my bed at home,  
Where my mum stores all my winter clothes,  
That the English me has grown out of,  
Unknowingly by nanometers,  
When she dreams in Cantonese every night ●

Olivia Lam



# If you miss home, why did you leave?

**Jun Pang** on what being an international student has taught her, aside from academia

In Lin-Manuel Miranda's *In the Heights*, protagonist Nina sings a song called 'Breathe' which never fails to give me chills: "Hey, guys, it's me! / The biggest disappointment you know / The kid couldn't hack it, she's back and she's walkin' real slow." As the first person in her immigrant family to go to college, she returns to New York after a year on the West coast and gives voice to what I think is a feeling that many students here can probably relate to: the fear of disappointing those at home, the anxiety that comes with not living up to the expectations that come with the privilege of studying abroad.

In the wake of *The Guardian's* finding that the Home Office is considering cutting international student numbers at UK universities by nearly half, and, of course, Donald Trump's heinously xenophobic, racist, and Islamopho-

bic immigration ban, I've been thinking a lot about what it actually means to be an international student (to countries in the West especially). Because despite continually being told that we are not welcome, that we are not wanted, we keep coming back - through the feelings of displacement and discomfort, the ignorant comments, the exorbitant fees and, in some cases, the racism and xenophobia. The question, then, is why?

The cop-out answer is that every international student has a different set of reasons for going abroad. When it comes to Cambridge in particular, the answer probably includes the institution's 'prestige' (founded, ahem, on centuries of Western epistemic colonialism), and the attendant promise of academic and intellectual rigour, as well as the wealth (quite literally) of potential future opportunities. Familial and/or other types of pressure

play a role, so too does the prospect of international 'social mobility' (no matter how nebulous that term is). For some, the idea of living independently in a world away from home is a major boost; for others, coming to Cambridge means gaining or (re)claiming, access to a pool of resources (ahem, reparations) that will help them make the world a better, fairer, place. Many of us do so in light of immense privilege: we have the means, or we have sourced the means through our respective national governments or other organisations to study abroad. We can afford to leave our homes behind (not just financially but because, for example, we don't have duties of care) to pursue education elsewhere.

These reasons are less important to me when talking to other international students than how we are each navigating the in-between: how do we recount our experiences to those who might never see our university with their own eyes, never feel the weight of history that bears down on us every time we step outside? If you're lucky, you get to be 100 per cent honest with your friends and family about both the joys and pressures of university life. You get to tell them about the strangeness of formal dinners in age-old halls, and other people's sincere fascination with where you're from - whether you eat dogs, or believe unquestioningly in authoritarian dictatorship. You can be unabashed in your criticism of your institution, knowing that your loved ones accept that your existence there matters more than the institution itself.

If not, you learn to straighten your spine and smile when asked about your experiences - to describe the strange weather, the odd and polite way strangers offer you tea, instead of how much you miss home. (And, of course, home is not the same for everyone, but regardless of whether it's your ancestral home or the local noodle shop, it is always just out of reach). You don't talk about the number of evenings you spend wondering why you decided to leave in the first place. You lie by omission, for fear of being accused as ungrateful for the opportunities you've been given to spread your wings, or more often than not for fear of worrying loved ones who can't practically do anything to help you - even then, you have to time your moments of sadness to align with the appropriate time zones. You tell the partial truth so not to disappoint those who see in Cambridge something bigger than yourself, a marker of a success previously believed unattainable by people like you.

Of course, I'm not saying that this is an experience unique to international students - everyone encounters disorientation when they first enter university, and this can be even harder and persist for much longer for those who experience overlapping structures of oppression on the basis of race, class, and disability, for example. Raise the weight of this experience to the power of 10 at Cambridge, an institution originally built for a tiny subsection of the world's population, and you would still remain unable to fully articulate the experience of alienation and isolation that comes with being 'one of the only ones' of a particular identity group in your year, college, and course.

But over the last year, I've encountered people who have made the argument to me that the privilege of being able to study abroad makes up for the ignorance and oppression that international students face as they pursue their degrees. There is an overwhelming lack of understanding among the latter about the

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▲ Our personal belongings can be a key way to stay in touch with our heritage

Photos by Lucas Chebib

diverse experiences of international students. There is the startling experience of being racialised for the first time, the continual fumbling for of words to describe the process of becoming a minority to yourself, the pressure of becoming a proxy for your entire country and culture, the camaraderie that comes with meeting someone else who also went through your school system, and the joy of finding a supermarket that sells a version of your favourite comfort food. Add to that the constant self-questioning and self-rationalisation of what, if anything, makes being away worth it. In turn, there is an ignorance of or perhaps an unwillingness to engage fully with both the privileges and problematic aspects of the experience of studying as an international student. This is not a judgement so much as a recognition that in many cases it is easier to not engage, to try to survive the three-year degree and take comfort in communities that already 'get it'.

In my own experience, learning to articulate my experiences in terms of Other-ing was incredibly healing. It allowed me to understand myself not in isolation, but always in context. It taught me the importance of engaging with my communities and expressing and acting in solidarity with others who, despite not having the same experiences, made the effort to relate and to care, and whose own issues were important and in need of attention.

In this political climate, there is no better time to think of existing in the interstices as an identity that can be mobilised in recognition of both our differences but also our capacity for solidarity. This begins with acknowledging that although each of us may be forging an existence in Cambridge in our own way, we do have things in common and fights to rally behind together. Ultimately, if we learn anything of value from our time here, it's not going to come from books or lectures, but from each other ●

## COLUMN

### GABS MCGUINNESS

What makes Cambridge clubbing so cliquey?



There is a particular sort of existential moment that occurs in Cambridge clubs. It's about 2:15am and you're on the dance floor at Life but wishing you were at Gardies. Perhaps you've had one too many tequila shots and the salt has left an uncomfortable burning feeling at the back of your mouth. One of your friends is in the toilet, and you're walking through the clumps of dancing people to try and find your other friends, all set to that atrocious remix of R Kelly's 'Bump n' Grind' booming through the scratchy speakers.

You can't find them, and some lanky fresher keeps shoving into you with their overzealous and off-beat dance moves. Instead of moving away, you just freeze for a moment, absorb your surroundings, and ask yourself: "Why on earth did I agree to come here?"

Whether you're a Turf goer or a devout Wednesday Cindies follower, clubbing in Cambridge is uncomfortably image conscious. Even nights out are like job interviews or networking events for many. It's a sort of 'Cinderella shall go to the ball' moment in which the studious student beaver through their work in the day becomes a loquacious socialite by night, only to have the dream whipped away from under your feet by the unwelcome sound of the next morning's alarm and the sweaty rush to a 9am lecture.

In theory, nightlife is liberating. The techno scene or early rave culture was able to provide a space where one's identity could slip away: sexuality, gender, race, class, or religion could be forgotten for a moment. Music, or at least drugs, meant no one noticed these things. Music, drugs and booze are hardly absent from Cambridge clubbing, and yet who you are, whom you know, what you do, and what college you attend seem to make a regular appearance.

I understand that clubbing is an incredibly voyeuristic activity regardless of the location. We put a lot of effort into selecting our outfits and preening ourselves in front of a mirror because we know we will be watched. There will be club photos to feature in or snapchats to take, people to flirt and friends to dance with. This is not unique to Cambridge. But there is the added sense that the social circles that we move within are incredibly claustro-

phobic. Moments of successful escapism are rare.

Strategic conversations in smoking areas and careful groupings on the dance floor are the mainstays of Cambridge nightlife. There are different nights associated with sports teams, drinking societies, and the Union committee, and on certain nights certain colleges will invade specific areas of a club. I've found some incredible friends here who I hope to remain in close contact with for years to come, but this doesn't stop the Cambridge nightlife scene as a whole from feeling suffocating: on nights out, the conversations and friendships we have at Cambridge turn into forms of self-advertising.

Unlike my hometown where clubbing involves high heels and a lot of preparation, here anyone, regardless of gender, can just rock up to Kuda in jeans, a pair of trainers, and a T-shirt. Even this in itself is a social expectation. Flirting in most other places is pretty overt, sometimes uncomfortably so. Somehow Cambridge has managed to transform it into a subtle academic art form with its own unsettlingly self-conscious code of etiquette. I'm not exactly saying conversation transforms from an in-depth analysis of Theresa May's approach to handling Brexit to sexual innuendo, but this is not far from the truth. It is as though we spend too much time in supervisions so that the only form of communication we feel comfortable with is either intellectual or about Cambridge.

Granted, the dynamics change over the years: freshers are eager to branch outside their college friendships and spread their wings to uncharted territory. For the most part this is due to many VKs and a lot of self-consciousness. Second-years have established connection with first- and third-years while they've also got the enviable position of knowing that their grade at the end of the year is of little importance. Third year has been a nice escape from the social pressure since friendship groups are consolidated, but this in itself relies on a basis of networking over their first two years here. The whole thing is a form of self-advertisement.

Take the recent ARCSOC Cabaret night: tickets seemed to sell out faster than Glastonbury. It is a fun night, but the tickets did not disappear so quickly because the event rivals a globally famous festival. Rather, they did so because people want to be seen there. And they want to be seen wearing the most elaborate and creative fancy dress they will probably spend atrocious amounts of money on. And the photo needs to go on Facebook, ideally to be a credible profile picture. I'm as guilty of all my claims as anyone, so I feel fairly certain about making them. But it's not all bad: there's always not going, not caring, or drinking till it stops mattering ●





# Culture

## COLUMN

### WORD UP

**Georgie Thorpe discusses changes of definition over time**



I'm sure some of you will have heard the complaint being made (most likely by someone of an older generation) that using 'sick' to describe something good just doesn't make any sense. And at face value, it really doesn't. Why would a word defined as 'affected by physical or mental illness' mean 'cool'?

Words changing meaning in this way is actually a very common phenomenon, and not unique to current slang words. The idea of language being a living, breathing thing might be hackneyed, but it's essentially true: a language's ability to develop and change is what prevents it from becoming extinct or falling out of use. This means that, over time, words can come to mean even the exact opposite of what they once meant, and there are a lot of words in our vocabulary today that have done just that.

'Bully', for example, originally meant a sweetheart of either gender, and later came to mean a fine fellow. It comes from a Dutch word, 'boel', which meant 'lover'. It wasn't until the late 17th century that it took on the meaning it has today. The process of change came from the idea that a dandy gentleman might also be rather blustery and overpowering, capable of picking on people with a weaker personality, which then later developed into the notion of a bully. In North American slang, some of the old meaning is still retained, most notably in the phrase 'bully for you', meaning 'good for you'.

Another word that has drastically changed

meaning is 'nervous', which used to mean vigorous, originating from the Latin word for sinewy, 'nervosus'. It came to mean 'of the nerves', a meaning it still has in the present day, in the 1660s, which makes it seem strange that its modern meaning is to do with lacking nerve or courage. This probably comes from its 18th-century sense, which was linked with disorders of the nervous system, and so began to be associated with weakness or infirmity. Though our modern meaning has moved away from any medical connotations, we can see how this might have led to today's definitions of anxiety and fear.

Peculiarly, the word 'sad' used to mean steadfast, firm, or full (of food and drink). It comes from the Old English 'sæd' which means 'sated', and is linked to German words like 'satt', which still means full today. Over the course of time, the idea of being full changed into the idea of being too full, or fed up of something, and in the 14th century it finally came to mean unhappy, as we use it today. It wasn't until 1899, however, that it developed the slang meaning of being pathetic, quite distant from its original meaning of being fixed or tough.

Perhaps more concerning (well, concerning to some people) is the change that the word 'egregious' has undergone. These days, it's defined as meaning 'outstandingly bad or shocking', but it didn't always mean that - it used to mean outstandingly good. It comes from a Latin phrase, 'ex grege', which means 'out of the herd', and had a positive sense of standing out from others. It's not really clear how or when this word came to mean specifically something bad, but one suggestion is that it happened due to changing attitudes towards uniqueness. Over time, standing out from the crowd came to be a negative thing, especially with the rise of consumerism and a culture of advertisement that relies on being able to pigeonhole people. It was no longer good to be 'ex grege', but distinctly frowned upon, and according to this theory it was this change that led to the meaning reversing in this way.

There are even some words that have maintained their double meanings in dialect into the modern day. My mum, who grew up in the north of England, can still confuse me and my dad by announcing, "I doubt it'll rain," and then warning us to take umbrellas. To her, 'I doubt it'll rain' means 'I think it will rain', and she can't explain the difference between that and cases in which 'doubt' really does mean 'doubt'.

This meaning used to be common, and crops up in a lot of literature from the 17th through to the late 19th centuries. It probably arises from the original meaning of 'doubt', which was 'be doubtful' or 'be afraid'. When my mum says 'I doubt it'll rain', she means 'I'm afraid it'll rain', but this meaning has largely been lost in other English dialects.

So next time us millennial snowflakes are accused of butchering and distorting the English language, rest assured: it's a centuries-old phenomenon that's actually key to the development and survival of the language. And it's anybody's guess what English will look like in 100 years when even more of these changes have happened ●

## Online



Jia Yuan Loke

### Review: Love Art After Dark

by Emma Slater

## Don't Miss ►

# 1

**The Junction/  
Ahab festival**  
10th-12th February

An Arabic music festival celebrating themes of love in music and film, featuring Omar Souleyman and 'Two Sisters: An Arabic Opera', alongside various film screenings and a market (The Souk) selling products and food from the Middle East.

# 2

**Jesus College/  
John Hughes Arts Festival**

10th-12th February

Highlights of this year's arts festival at Jesus College include a poetry slam and and snapshot photography class.

# 3

**Cambridge Corn Exchange/  
Cambridge University Charity Fashion Show**

15th February, 6.30pm

Featuring headliner Princess Nokia, the Charity Fashion Show is a creative display in aid of Florida-based charity The Douglas Bader Foundation.

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# Fashion



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## ◀ Too cool to care...

Stan Smiths or Nike AF1s, baggy jumpers, leggings, messy hair and possibly a token choker – this girl has 'honestly' just come from the library. Although Cambridge nightlife is desperately lame, she must attend every Wednesday Cindies otherwise people will forget how nonchalant she is. Often attempts to attend Turf on a Thursday, but usually too hungover from a mad one the night before.

## ▶ Overdressed and Confused

Arriving at Cindies in heels and a miniskirt, clutch in hand, to be confronted with sports teams dressed as zebras and inebriated swap-goers in various states of undress. This rare breed of Cambridge club goer tends to dwindle over Michaelmas, but is occasionally seen at the beginning of Lent, when a new wave of Freshers decide to embark on their first night out.



## Ospreys

Sporting girls are probably the least self-conscious (especially compared to the previous two tribes) as to their clothing on a night out. The inevitable swap beforehand, the copious drink and, of course, the queue jump means that they are unlikely to be left shivering in a queue while dressed as a cave woman. Loud and proud, these girls don't give a hoot how they're dressed on a night out because, well, they are probably stronger than anyone who dares to insult them.

## ▼ Rugby boys

Who knew they made suits in such gargantuan proportions? It's probably lucky these burly men are allowed a queue jump, otherwise the rest of the Cindies queue might be turned to a pulp by the time they get to the first round of barriers. To their horror, by the end of the night their Cambridge Rugby Club ties have invariably been stolen by overexcited girls ("Wait – you're a Blue?"), which means another £35 will be sacrificed for a strip of fabric \*sigh\*.

## ▶ 'Road Men'

The all-important inverted commas give the game away when it comes to this ironic tribe. While dressed in all the trappings of the new Insta-skating generation – think Palace, Supreme, Carhart, Bape, Addidas, and that 'vintage' (read overpriced) North Face anorak – the vast proportion of this tribe has, in fact, never seen a skateboard in their life, let alone used one. "Far too dangerous... my invisiline only came off two years ago, bruh." Sunday means Fez, never Life, and their natural habitat is the (very edge of the) mosh-pit.



## ▶ Black tie out of context

"Why am I wearing black tie in the club, you ask? Oh, well... I had a very special 'dinner' (wink, wink) with a 'society' that doesn't exist (nudge, nudge)." To name no names, Cambridge's underground drinking societies are remarkably conspicuous for being so secret. Look out for the unmistakable drunken gentleman in a tux with bow tie undone, hair dishevelled and public school slurs slipping off his tongue while sprawled over Cindies' faux-leather sofas, like 007 has really let himself go this time. The pinnacle of sophistication ●



## Pack behaviour

**Flora Walsh** takes a tongue-in-cheek glance at the sartorial stereotypes of Cambridge's student clubbers, from 'Road Men' to Ospreys. Which style tribe would you call your own?



# Food

## The best of Cambridge food vans

Our food writer **Jess Lock** picks the best spots for street food in Cambridge

PHOTOGRAPHY BY  
LOUIS ASHWORTH



### Cambridge Crepes

**Where can I find it?** – Merging point of Sidney Street and Market Street  
**When should I eat here?** – Breakfast/brunch time  
**Best bites** – any Nutella combination

For such a small van, Cambridge Crepes really offers an incredible range of both sweet and savoury goods. Freshly made before your eyes, the wonderfully moreish scent of vanilla-y crepe batter streams from the tiny kitchen, making this van the perfect place to grab a breakfasty bite.

Peruse the huge menu to find a favourite, or if you're pressed for time, try our recommendations: the Nutella combinations come highly praised – try adding banana and strawberry for an extra-decadent treat – or grab a deliciously wholesome, warm cheese and ham crepe for a satisfying snack. Don't be afraid to try something new and experimental – we haven't encountered a disappointing flavour combo yet!

Although the tourist trap doesn't come cheap (you could find yourself paying up to £5 to eat here), for a once-in-a-while treat, no-one does it better than Cambridge Crepes.



### Taste of Cambridge

**Where can I find it?** – Market Street  
**When should I eat here?** – Lunch (and definitely before 4pm closing time)  
**Best bites** – Four Season Falafel Wrap or Roasted Vegetable Pizza Wrap

Vegetarian? Vegan? Gluten Free? Taste of Cambridge ticks all three.

Renowned for its incredible falafel wraps, Taste of Cambridge clearly takes the edge when it comes to catering for dietary requirements. At a reasonable price (around £4-£5 for a wrap), the fresh falafel, flatbread, tahini, hummus and hits of harissa make for a beautiful eating experience – and one that feels healthy and nourishing too. The staff are smiley and cope well with the long queues that stack up at peak lunch time. Take your food to the wall outside King's College which catches the sun at around midday, for a particularly lovely lunch.





# The Hot Sausage Company

**Where can I find it?** – Market Street or Fitzroy Street (mr. Grafton Centre)

**When should I eat here?** – When you want a small lunch or a decent snack

**Best bites** – Extra Large Sausage in Bun (with onions and relish)

Trading in Cambridge for 30 years, The Hot Sausage Company is a fixture of the Cambridge takeaway eatery scene, with great prices and quality meats. Delicious sausages are served hot from the griddle in fresh white rolls, and dressed with a variety of exciting sauces – from Jerk BBQ to Creole Pepper and Sweet Chilli – or extra toppings such as onions or cheese.

These aren't by any means simple American hotdogs – The Hot Sausage Company carts serve traditional English sausages but also boast a changing 'Special of the Day', which includes mouth-watering flavours such as Pork & Leek, Cajun, and Caribbean sausage.

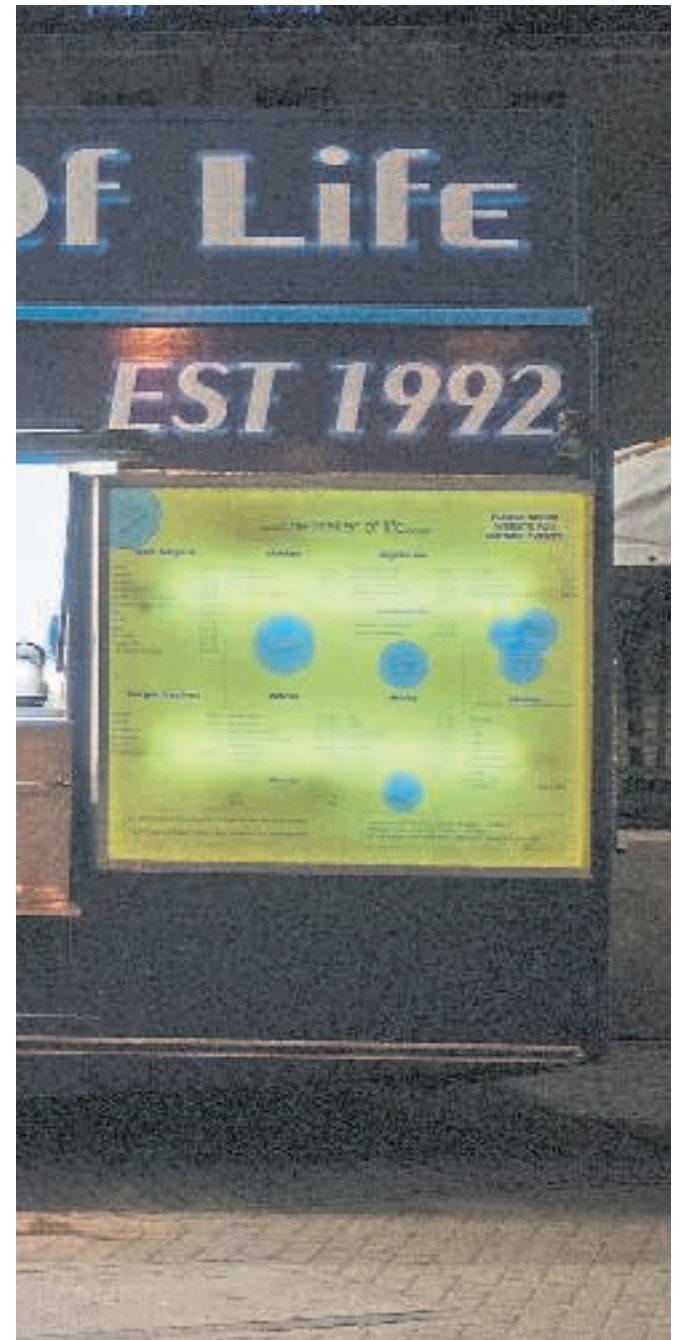


# Uncle Franks

**Where can I find it?** – Market Street, facing towards Grand Arcade  
**When should I eat here?** – Late at night  
**Best bites** – Chips, chips, and chips

Uncle Franks - or Van of Death - is the Yin to Van of Life's Yang, the cheese to their chips, the chicken to their nugget. On arrival to Cambridge, it is essential to pledge allegiance to one or the other - only infidels will happily trot between the two.

The late night food competitors, separated by mere metres at opposite sides of the Market Square, offer similar deep-fried comfort foods. Frank's takes the edge with slightly cheaper chips - crispy, fluffy, salty, and doused with sauces or toppings of your choice. Really, what more could a late night reveler want from a trailer which serves greasy, tasty, filling fast-foods? *[Bonus: Uncle Franks also does delivery from 6pm to 3am for those all-nighters which require a little greasy willpower]*



## Van of Life

**Where can I find it?** – Market Street, facing towards Rose Crescent  
**When should I eat here?** – Late at night  
**Best bites** – Classic chips, add cheese for a divine experience

Van of Life (formally The Trailer of Life) does what its namesake promises – it resurrects those who need help to walk themselves home (only for them to wake up in the morning and regret everything they’ve done the night before), and has been doing so since 1992. This van is a staple of the Cambridge experience; its warm glow in the night beckons customers with the promise of the burgers, chicken and cheesy chips, all served by those dashing chaps in their Van of Life hoodies. If chips won’t hit the spot, grab a hot batch of onion rings instead.



# Theatre



More reviews are available online at:  
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SPOTLIGHT ON RACE

## Microcosm or alma mater?



**Naomi Obeng** considers Cambridge's white-washed stages as a root of British theatre's race problem

Here we go again, right? I make no mistake in thinking I'm the first to write in *Varsity* about race and Cambridge theatre. At some point, while going through the archives, I stopped wondering about all the things that need to change, and started thinking about how to change them. This series of articles aims to get to those answers, and I propose to begin on the professional London stage. It's 2015 at the Olivier, all plush purple seats and circular stage, in the National Theatre. We're at the Act For Change Project debate: actor Kobna Holdbrook-Smith is grilling NT artistic director Rufus Norris on diversity quotas, and it's the first time I'm in a theatre audience that features people who look like me.

Stephanie Street, the co-founder of this movement, set out to address growing dissatisfaction with the scarce opportunities for BME actors, LGBTQ actors, actors with disabilities and older actors, on stage and screen. I spoke to Stephanie, actor, writer and

▲ The 2014 production of 'Behind the Beautiful Forevers' (Richard Hubert Smith)  
 ► Cantabs Josie Rourke and Tom Hiddleston (Youtube/Anna Egle)

Cambridge graduate, about her professional theatre experience, the Cambridge stage, and what prompted her to start this campaign. "It was one thing in particular that really got us all together", she tells me. "Danny [Lee Wynner, fellow actor and co-founder] posted on Facebook having seen this ITV drama trailer, which featured not a single actor of a colour, but two dead actors. There were more fucking dead people than brown people. He reached out to in the industry built from that had no agenda apart from the fact that things absolutely could not stay the way that they



## Opening in Week 4

### Tuesday 14th

*A Fool to His Folly*  
 Corpus Playroom  
 7pm  
 ('til 18th Feb)

### Wednesday 15th

*BAND*  
 ADC Theatre  
 11pm  
 ('til 18th Feb)

### Thursday 14th

*Sögur*  
 ADC Theatre  
 2pm  
 ('til 18th Feb)

### Friday 14th

*Giselle*  
 West Road Concert Hall  
 7pm  
 ('til 18th Feb)

And more...

## Online



Review:  
**London Road**  
 by Genevieve Cox

were."

The representation of ethnic minorities and culturally diverse stories is pertinent for Stephanie. She tells me about her experience acting in *Behind the Beautiful Forevers* in 2014, a play adapted by David Hare (a Cambridge graduate, of course) from Katherine Boo's book of the same name, set in Mumbai. "From the outset they did a very aggressive marketing campaign to the Asian press, inviting them to rehearsals and lots of lots of interviews. Rufus [Norris] knew that because it was a new play by David Hare, it would be from the outset an audience of people who wanted to see David Hare's new play."

This admirable perseverance to achieve diversity on stage and in the seats certainly had a demonstrable effect. "It started out with the white Hampstead middle-class audience who were astounded that the stage was full of brown people and that none of the play at any point transferred to North West London, you could tell. Lots more people left the show at the interval in the early half of the run, not many, but it was really tangible."

Despite the eventual success at diversifying this particular national audience, there is a demonstrable lack of continued interest in, and understanding of, diversity from influential figures. The writer Sir David Hare is the same man who only a few days ago claimed that European practices were "infecting" British theatre.

Lasting change is not likely to come from men adapting stories of cultures they know about from afar as a token gesture to those who have not been supported by the system as luckily as they have. Sir Trevor Nunn, of a similar influential theatre standing, uses the perennial claim of "historical accuracy" as a justification for his 2015 all-white cast of the *Wars of the Roses*. Had he done a quick search for the African people in British society as early Emperor Hadrian (though why not start with Saint Adrian, Berber abbot in Canterbury in 710AD), maybe he would have learnt a bit about Britain.

During our conversation we talked often about the 'institutions' and the 'establishment' that she had felt cut off from, referring to both London and Cambridge. She has great motivation for invoking this terminological bridge. "Unsurprisingly, the people who presided over those [Cambridge theatre] institutions are running the big institutions out in the real world now. You know, Josie Rourke was president of the ADC in my year, Simon Godwin was president of the ADC when I was a first-year. You kind of watch that path to becoming a leading light in the real world."

It would surprise me, though, if anybody involved in Cambridge theatre right now would describe themselves as part of the 'establishment'. That is perhaps why the lack of BME representation has been so hard to budge for good – no individual student really believes that they are part of the problem. The problem, however, is tangible. And so it's on the Cambridge stage that I'd like you to join me next week – where not only does exporting Cambridge theatre buoyed by those who've come before cause issues of accessibility, but importing professional London's standards and stories, with all their problems, plays a role in the discouraging scene many students of colour experience today.

Follow the rest of Naomi's investigation online. Next week: students of colour on stage ●

There were more f\*\*\*\*\* dead people than brown people



# Music



## A ballad a day The secrets of music psychology

Music pervades our daily lives. Its harmonies, rhythms and melodies have an ability to influence our psychologies and emotions in ways often unbeknownst to us: existential crises alleviated by quick doses of Pink Floyd, lovesickness cured by a Sinatra session or an (ironic) dose of James Blunt, a stressful day remedied by an evening of Einaudi. A famous statement by Bob Marley goes to the heart of the therapeutic power of music: “One good thing about music, when it hits you, you feel no pain”.

Nothing illustrates the potent psychological impact of music better than the effect that melancholy music has on our emotions. A recent study of 2500 volunteers, conducted jointly by researchers at Durham University and the University of Jyväskylä in Finland, played each person ‘sad’ music and recorded their emotional responses. Two-thirds of people tested said that they experienced pleasure or comfort during their listening. Explanations for such a result vary, but one dominant hypothesis, put forward by the psychologist Adrian North, divides the responsibility between two closely-connected academic disciplines: social psychology and cognitive neuroscience.

Central to the psychological explanation is the notion of ‘downward social comparison’, which describes how the struggles of others make us feel better about ourselves. In other words: everything will be fine because Tom Odell is having an even more torrid time than you. This is why so many artists and songwriters find relationship breakups such a fruitful subject matter: appeal to a wide audience is guaranteed and there’s strong financial potential in implicitly marketing your song as ‘post-breakup therapy’. A cynic (i.e. me) would see Adele as effectively monopolising this music-making practise with tracks such as the beautifully generic ‘Hello’.

From a more scientific standpoint, it has been argued that melancholy music is linked to the production of the hormone prolactin, a chemical associated with the curbing of grief. When listening to ‘The End’ by the Doors, for instance, your brain’s pituitary glands will release the hormone in anticipation of the traumatic event that Jim Morrison builds to – the fictional parricide. The brain is preparing you for this event actually happening. When it doesn’t, the body is left full of pleasure-inducing opiates with nowhere to go, creating a feel-

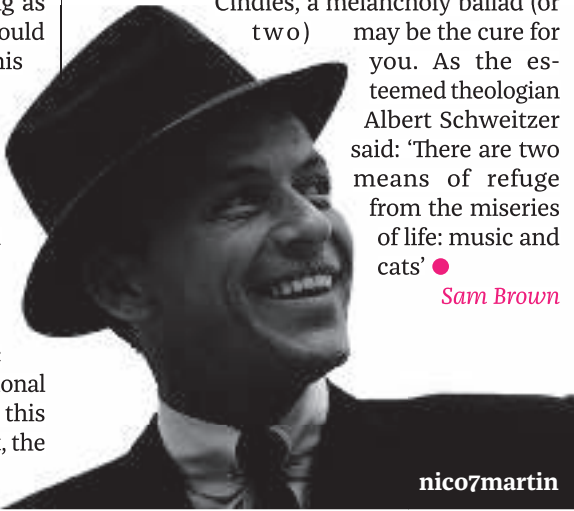
ing of elation. Similarly, listening to any type of music will cause the release of dopamine, which will induce similarly happy feelings.

Physical or biological processes are constantly at play, influencing our psychological response to a song. This is epitomised by the so-called ‘skin orgasm’, or frisson, that some experience when listening to moving music. It is often a response to a harmonic change or a sudden rise in volume – think Rachmaninov’s ‘Piano Concerto No.2’, or, on a very similar scale, the simply euphoric key change near the end of Westlife’s ‘You Raise Me Up’. The line between biological and psychological processes is blurred when it comes to listening to moving music.

It is clear when listening to popular music how knowledge of psychological response has influenced the work of artists and music producers. One only needs to listen to Ed Sheeran’s most recent release to realise how carefully artists target certain psychological or emotional responses in order to appeal to the widest possible range of people. ‘Castle on the Hill’ is a masterclass in emotional targeting: a driving rhythm is overlaid with generic coming-of-age lyrics, while the ostensibly original image of a ‘castle’ is something almost anyone can relate to in some nostalgic way. In its harmonic, tonal, and lyrical composition, this song was designed to be a popular hit.

Despite this cynical view of the state of popular music, it is fair to say that music still has immense potential to influence our psychologies and our mood states. So if you’re struggling through yet another caffeine-fuelled essay crisis, or are suffering the consequences of a particularly decadent Wednesday evening at Cindies, a melancholy ballad (or two) may be the cure for you. As the esteemed theologian Albert Schweitzer said: “There are two means of refuge from the miseries of life: music and cats” ●

Sam Brown



nico7martin



To listen to Fionn Connolly’s playlist, find our account: [musicvarsity](#)

◀ Sheeran’s ‘Castle on the Hill’ uses emotion to appeal to a wide audience (Eva Rinaldi)

## Vulture TUNES

with Fionn Connolly

Originally designed as a hangover antidote, Fionn Connolly’s playlist will serve you well as the workload gets heavy in Week 4. Favourites include Radiohead’s classic ‘Everything in its Right Place’, while tracks like ‘Talk Is Cheap’ maintain the peaceful feeling despite adding a little energy into the mix. With no rise and no fall, this playlist is all chill.



- |   |  |
|---|--|
| Cavalier<br><b>James Vincent McMorrow</b> | Nothing’s Gonna Hurt You Baby<br><b>Cigarettes After Sex</b> |
| Our Love Comes Back<br><b>James Blake</b> | Everything in its Right Place<br><b>Radiohead</b>            |
| Ghost<br><b>Lianne La Havas</b>           | Intro<br><b>.The xx</b>                                      |
| Still<br><b>The Japanese House</b>        | I Don’t Love You Anymore<br><b>ANOHI</b>                     |
| Beth/Rest<br><b>Bon Iver</b>              | Talk is Cheap<br><b>Chet Faker</b>                           |

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# Film & TV

## Meet 'Toni Erdmann': Life Coach. German Ambassador. Dad.



Dir. Maren Ade  
In cinemas now  
★★★★☆

**T**oni Erdmann is a farce told in real time. Jokes are stretched beyond their expected punchline, exacting their laughs by attrition. In a film about emotional examination and rejuvenation, this commitment to the awkward melds each joke into a probing question as well as a grasp for giggles. The space between guffaws becomes a pause for meditation and self-confrontation in a story of a father 'acting' to save his daughter, the Toni Erdmann persona designed to penetrate her existential solitude.

Naturally, a film so committed to the 'protracted' needs performances that keep the audience attentive through the lulls. Peter Simonischek and Sandra Hüller do this with aplomb. Simonischek's Winifred/Toni Erd-

“  
The sight  
of this  
hirsute  
eyesore  
is a  
semiotic  
treat  
”

mann is an exercise in geriatric eccentricity, the corner of his mouth curling to the side of his face with every tasteless joke his alter ego makes. It's a façade that marks a well of concern for his ailing daughter. Just as when the clown puts his nose on it becomes safe to laugh at him and him at you, Erdmann's false teeth and wig give Winifred license to mend, pacifying the 'distant father' in favour of the primal protector. Aghast at the subdued horrors his daughter encounters amid a toxic corporate landscape, the ironised persona allows him to manage the shock.

This transfiguration reaches its apex when Winifred acquires a Bulgarian Kukeri costume (essentially a walking clump of hair with a hairy phallus protruding out of the top) designed to ward off evil spirits. The sight of this hirsute eyesore in a spare Bucharest apartment is a semiotic treat – the archetypal protector ostentatiously intruding on the domestic.

▲▼ Erdmann  
and Ines  
navigating  
parenthood  
and Bucharest  
(Perlmutter  
Productions)



But Maren Ade's film is not about Toni. This is Hüller/Ines' film: Erdmann is merely a surrogate for our inquiry. Hüller captures the stoic suffering of the ambitious career woman, suffering everyday misogyny with a mask of rigid compliance. But this is not a victimised portrait of a woman struggling under the patriarchal pressure. Hüller's letter-box eyes flap open with quiet fury at every sexist slight she encounters, the character later exacting revenge in puerile ways traditionally associated with her male counterparts. I won't spoil anything but to say this: 'soggy petit fours'. This is not a character to be pitied but rather to be angered and sympathised with.

This is all down to Maren Ade. The writer/director subverts the male gaze, de-eroticising the female form – the body contorted in discomfort and saturated by natural light. Her deft hand allows the comedy to gently hum in tandem with the story, never overshadowing the drama. A scene where Winifred observes his daughter at dinner is shown completely from Ines's perspective: in the foreground as the character encroaches, out of focus, into the frame. Erdmann is a fiction, kept a blur, a guardian angel that only we and she can see. The scene is both funny and poignant, Ade's formal restraint trusting the action rather than drawing attention to itself.

**Toni Erdmann is a treat for anyone who likes their laughs hard-earned and true. Go watch it with your mum and dad, and be thankful for their watchful eye**

● Pany  
Heliotis



## UNKNOWN DISPLEASURES

What not to  
watch on Netflix,  
Hulu and  
Amazon Prime

Pegasus  
vs  
Chimera

**H**ere we are again, exploring the depths of the Netflix archives. Sit yourselves down and buckle up for the fun of *Pegasus vs Chimera*: you'd be safer than the actors were on that flying horse, no buckling was done there.

*Pegasus vs Chimera* was a film made for TV in 2012 yet, aside from the CGI beasts, you could be forgiven for assuming it was much older. The CGI itself was not bad, it just didn't fit with the rest of the film, obviously fake against the drab background of the live action. Fight scenes produced disproportionate amounts of blood relative to injuries, yet lacked any real gusto. The characters' swords barely made contact with each other, yet the combatants come out awfully bloodied – some simply died without actually being stabbed. Equally, the Chimera managed to utterly dismember its victims with a flick of its horns. Oh, and dead bodies either completely disappeared or ended up in a state that would be physically impossible.

► Chimera's  
out for  
revenge  
(Perlmutter  
Productions)

Chimera's opponent, Pegasus, is meant to be a majestic winged beast from the heavens, but, as Belleros says, "it's just a horse". Seriously, it's just a white horse, which magically acquires wings and armour. They even recycle the same shot of its hooves hitting the ground every time it transforms back into the said horse. It's a good job every fight scene took place in equally indistinct clearings.

One of the (many) peculiarities of the film is the fact that nobody ever changes their clothes. Belleros appeared to be the only character who aged. What's more, he ages into somebody who looked nothing like his younger self. To be fair, this lack of ageing was explained – by magic, no less – but the lack of laundering wasn't. Equally questionable was the outfit choices: the only aspect of the film that remotely evoked Ancient Greece were the particularly short togas, although, to quote my friend: "a white dress in a forest environment is a mistake" regarding Princess Philony's outfit.

Honestly, the best shot of the entire film was a wide angle of a waterfall, without any of the characters or beasts involved. It lasted a whole three seconds, which is coincidentally how long it took for Belleros to cut himself free from the ropes which detained him several hours before.

Nothing about this film makes sense, least of all the strange feeling that the sound and action were recorded separately and then laid over each other. As well as having oddly disembodied voices, the

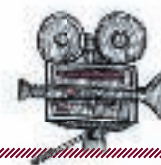
characters seem to have the ability to teleport within milliseconds. If you ever need an example of poor continuity, watch this film.

If you ever need a giggle at the expense of poor actors and an even poorer production, this one's for you. Otherwise, don't bother ●

Sarah Taylor







To read more about film & TV, go to:  
[varsity.co.uk/film-and-tv](http://varsity.co.uk/film-and-tv)



## VISCOURSE

# The adultification of children's literature

Pursuing a universally agreed-upon definition of children's literature is tricky. Is it a literature defined by the youth of those who read it? If so, all of us simply must have lost interest in J. K. Rowling or Philip Pullman upon waking up on our eighteenth birthdays and finding ourselves magically transformed into adults (in the legal sense, at least). Is it a literature defined by the youth of its protagonists? If that's the case, then why is Uzodinma Iweala's story of child soldiers in *Beasts of No Nation* not available in the children's section? For the purposes of this discussion, I am proposing that children's literature and children's film are literature and film predominantly (but not solely) marketed to a readership under the age of eighteen. *Alice in Wonderland*, *Mary Poppins*, *Jumanji*, *Twilight*, *The Hunger Games* and, of course, the *Harry Potter* series all began life as books marketed to younger readers. However, they were all given further chances to capture audiences' attention in on-screen adaptations.

Book-to-screen adaptations are often treated with caution, if not scepticism. George Bluestone surveys the relationship between literature and film as being both "overtly compatible" and "secretly hostile". This compatibility lies in the lure of trying to capture the reader's imaginings onto celluloid: the hostility is provoked when realising that these attempts may never please everyone. Deborah Cartmell argues "there will be higher demands on fidelity" when it comes to children's literature adaptations. However, these higher demands on fidelity have not discouraged filmmakers in their attempts to cast children's literature onto the big screen. Out of the top hundred grossing films worldwide in 2016, nearly one out of four were children's films. Furthermore, a third of those films were adaptations.

When contemplating the popularity of screen adaptations of children's literature, it is tempting to look at the possible 'adultification' of the source texts. As parents are often the ones buying cinema tickets for their children, studios must be making their adaptations as appealing as possible. However, to suggest that filmmakers always try to augment or 'adultify' children's literature to better suit a

▲ Voldemort as seen in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows, Part II* (Warner Bros)

cinematic audience of all ages is to overlook the complexities already present in children's books. As an experiment, reread some of the books that you read at school. Do not be surprised if you find a lot of them to be written in a dual address that you did not notice before, with content to please a child but in a style and with a wink that interests the adult. After all, the text may have been written for children or teenagers but it was written by an adult. Book-to-screen adaptations often simply extract this dual address with its complexities and make them more apparent. Therefore, the 'adultification' of children's books into film pertains less to making children's literature more sophisticated but, rather, encourages a wider audience to recognise the value of children's literature as a whole.

However, as the generation who experienced *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*

as 11-year-olds in 1997 turn 31 this year, perhaps they and subsequent generations need fewer reminders of the importance of children's literature. Love it or loathe it, Rowling's creation was a watershed moment in the

“Love it or loathe it, Rowling's creation was a watershed moment in the appreciation and understanding of children's literature”

appreciation and understanding of children's literature. The return and popularity of the wizarding world in both *The Cursed Child* and *Fantastic Beasts* last year spoke to the fact that fans may age, but

they do not necessarily lose interest. Nostalgia is inherent in this popularity but it is not its sole function. On-screen adaptations can perpetuate or inspire this interest: I dare say that many of us have introduced younger family members to the Potter universe through the inevitable Christmas reruns of the films. With the generations who have grown up with a proliferation of newly published children's literature and the commercial rise of young adult literature, filmmakers are increasingly likely to find audiences willing to pay to watch adaptations.

The recent long-form TV adaptation of Lemnony Snicket's *A Series of Unfortunate Events* is a testament to this evolving demographic. As those who queued for the midnight release of *The Deathly Hallows* grow older and their disposable income grows larger, studios and filmmakers are catering to these changes. Aside from Snicket, the adaptations of children's or young adult literature already released this year or scheduled for release this year include: *A Monster Calls*, *Wonder*, *An Ember in the Ashes*, *A Wrinkle in Time* and Netflix's adaptation of *13 Reasons Why*. This does not mean that audiences are remaining childlike in their tastes, nor are filmmakers simply 'adultifying' simplistic texts. Rather, screen culture is becoming better at recognising the intricacies of books often segregated to the back walls of bookshops and is keen to broadcast these overlooked complexities ●

Danielle Cameron

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## Sport

# High-flying RAF leave Cambridge grounded

Cambridge

7

RAF

19

Imran Marashli  
Sport Reporter

● Cambridge University Rugby Union Football Club, Grange Road

Cambridge University Rugby Union Football Club (CURUFC) succumbed 7-19 to a high-flying RAF outfit after a hard-fought and tactically engrossing game of rugby on Wednesday evening at Grange Road.

Having lost 17-39 to an Army team in January, Cambridge were looking to build on a 31-28 triumph over the Penguins last week, naming no less than 12 Blues in their starting line-up in this traditional annual fixture against the three branches of the armed forces.

However, it was their visiting opponents whose game was the quickest to take off. Some lightning-quick running and interchange between full-back Matt Clarke and wingers Sean Webber and Dave Ellis burst through some Light Blue tackles and brought the RAF to the threshold of the try line. One powerful maul later, the RAF opened the scoring through Andrew Stobbs, with the try converted by Mike Robinson for a 0-7 advantage.

The RAF's early offensive play was too hot for Cambridge to handle, as more penalties were conceded on the right-hand flank. From the scrum, the RAF manoeuvred the ball expertly out wide to the left, with Sean Webber creating an overload that presented Robinson with the opportunity to score the RAF's second try in clinical fashion.

Cambridge refused to be cowed by these back-to-back blows, and responded in resounding style, with RAF skipper Rob Bell later conceding that his side lost their focus. "I think we got a lead too early, if that's possible, and we relaxed too much", he said, as the RAF were lulled into playing what he called "champagne rugby".

Cambridge then hit back straight away as their opponents dropped off. The impressive Ed Loftus combined well with Tim Bond down the Cambridge right wing and was hauled down inches from the posts.

The resultant scrum allowed Cambridge to give the RAF a taste of their own medicine: an overload was manufactured on the right, and Loftus proceeded to exploit the space to get the Light Blues on the scoreboard, which was followed by a superb conversion from a tight angle by fly-half Michael Phillips.

The rest of the half remained even. Despite the occasional inroads made by individual runners, particularly the elusive Lee Queeley, Cambridge remained resolute in defence, counter-rucking effectively and winning penalties to cut short RAF possession and territory.

The majority of the second half picked up where the first half had left off. The two sides effectively cancelled each other out with their uncompromising defensive work, in what was a closely-contested tactical dogfight. Cambridge showed lots of promise at the scrum and in creating fluid phases, but the RAF, flying with gusto into tackles and rucks, showed little sign of cracking under the pressure.

Cambridge captain Tom Stanley regretted the home side's inability to make more of their possession, opining: "we tended to turn the ball over a little bit too easily, and we couldn't exploit the opportunities that came our way." With no clear point-scoring chances present-



IMRAN MARASHLI

ing themselves, the next score would determine the outcome of the match.

And, with a mere three minutes left on the clock, that breakthrough went the RAF's way.

A lineout deep into the Cambridge 22 led to another advancing maul, and it was Stobbs once more who eventually bulldozed his way over the line to seal the victory for the visitors. Rory Wood's conversion proved to be the final score as the match ended 7-19.

Reflecting on the evening with *Varsity* after the match, Cambridge skipper for the evening, Tom Stanley, said: "We defended a lot in the first half, and in the second half we had the opportunity to attack a lot more. It was disappointing, but realistically we've got a lot of new talent and it was great to see those guys come on with a lot of energy and exuberance, so it was great to be out there with a bunch of young and developing guys."

The Kiwi added: "For the older guys like me, it's a little bit of a case of handing over the torch. Everything is moving towards being able to knock off the Varsity again this calendar year, so it's all building up towards that game now, and the focus is on going through the standards that we've built through this Blues season so that the guys can carry it on next year."

RAF captain Rob Bell remarked: "We were looking forward to a really hard test, so I think we learnt a lot more from the young lads in a tight battle like that. I think Cambridge showed the respect we deserve by putting 12 Blues out, and the game was a real battle from start to finish."

Happier with the second-half display, Bell analysed: "In the last 20 minutes we kept the ball - no silly offloads - and I think that showed. We kept the ball when we won penalties. But we lost last year, so we're really happy coming here and getting a win."

# Federer: The greatest player who ever lived

Charlie Stone  
Sport Reporter

This year's Australian Open was all about Andy Murray. It was his first Grand Slam since becoming world number one, and he was the favourite to beat Novak Djokovic, the man he replaced as best in the world, to the title. What an opportunity it was, too: Djokovic had been low on form since winning the French Open last June, Roger Federer was only just returning from 6 months out with injury, and the once-great Rafael Nadal seemed to have fallen by the wayside over the past couple of years.

First a shock that wasn't really a shock: Djokovic's poor run continued, beaten by unseeded Denis Istomin in the second round. Murray's path seemed suddenly much clearer. But, what followed was predicted by no one: Murray knocked out in the fourth round, and Federer and Nadal, the old rivals, the aged rivals, battling it out in the final.

It's worth remembering that Rafael Nadal last reached a

major semi-final 31 months ago, and Federer had not won a Grand Slam for five years, having not beaten Nadal in a major final in double that time. For Federer to win the Australian Open across a gruelling five sets against his great rival, at the age of 35 and not having played since Wimbledon last year, is simply miraculous.

It's not as if he had an easy run to the final. Federer overcame US Open winner Stan Wawrinka in five sets in the semis, and fifth seed Kei Nishikori in another five-set thriller the match before. Nadal had also been taken the distance twice already, and beaten two in-form players in the shape of Milos Raonic and Grigor Dimitrov.

The odds on a Williams-Williams and Federer-Nadal final in the women's and men's competition were the same as those on Leicester to win the title last year: 5000-1. Aside from showing what a rough time the bookmakers have been having in recent times, this reflected the recent trends across the tour: younger, fitter players are making their way up through the ranks and chal-

lenging for the major honours. It was no surprise that most experts had Djokovic and Murray, the fittest players on tour, to dominate 2017.

What, then, can we expect in the Slams to come this year? It's impossible to call. Before the Australian Open, I'd have said that Murray, Wawrinka, and perhaps Djokovic would be sharing the major titles between them. But now, Federer and Nadal are as likely as any of them. And we can't rule out players like Dimitrov, Raonic and Nishikori. All the Australian Open has done is prove that competition at the very top of tennis is wide open. It's also proved that Federer is truly the greatest male tennis player of all time.

After the French Open last year, it was a matter of *when*, not *if*, Djokovic would surpass Federer as the all-time record Grand Slam holder. Since then, though, Murray, Wawrinka and Federer have won one apiece, and now the most likely challenger looks like Nadal at four behind. In all likelihood none of them will now surpass Federer. Not only is he four ahead of his nearest competi-

tor, he is also just as likely as anyone to win another Slam this year.

The reason he's the greatest is not just to do with the fact that he's won so many titles. It's not even just to do with the fact that at the age of 35, he's won another. It's that his style of play is so different to all those around him. Tennis these days is about fitness and defence: Djokovic and Murray have been so successful because they are so difficult to serve against, and Nadal makes every match a physical battle, trying to wear his opponent down until they falter.

Even Wawrinka, who, with his one-handed backhand, has the playing style most similar to Federer's, has had to work hard on his defense in order to win his three Grand Slam trophies. With Federer, though, it's nothing but attacking. You could notice it against Nadal: he keeping points short, hit winners early on, refrain from involving himself in a physical battle. The style of his play, with quite devastating attacking shots and a beautiful backhand, is the most attractive around, and undeniably the best.



AUSTRALIAN  
OPEN TV





# A broken honours system owes Beckham

Devarshi Lodhia  
Chief Sport Reporter

David Beckham's career has been one built on overcoming adversity. The petulant boy, sent off for kicking Diego Simeone in England's last 16 match against Argentina at the 1998 World Cup, was reborn, reformed, redeemed with that goal against Greece in 2001, prompting the commentator to cry out "give that man a knighthood".

It's been 15 years since that free kick deep into stoppage time at Old Trafford and still there's been no knighthood for Golden Balls. The leak of emails this week in which he branded the Honours Committee "unappreciative c\*\*\*s" after missing out on a knighthood in 2013 and dismissed lesser awards, saying: "Unless it's a knighthood f\*\*\* off" have led to questions regarding both the value of the honours system and the character of the former England captain.

While a spokesman for Beckham said: "This story is based on outdated material taken out of context from hacked and doctored private emails from a third party server and gives a deliberately inaccurate picture," tabloid commentators have delighted in the news. Their corrosive faux-outrage, evident as Jan Moir in the Daily Mail referred to Beckham as a

"narcissistic schemer," while renowned moral arbiter Piers Morgan took time out of his busy Twitter schedule of defending Donald Trump, engaging in #classicbantz with Gary Lineker, and calling for Arsène Wenger's sacking, to draw rather ludicrous parallels between Beckham and Jimmy Savile.

The honours system is unquestionably awash with political cronyism. As we've seen all too often, gifts to political parties are often the easiest way to acquire one. The path to a knighthood generally passes through Downing Street, not Buckingham Palace, which is why, presumably, David Ord, co-owner of Bristol Ports, was made a Sir in January, the reasoning behind which probably has more to do with his £930,000 donation to the Conservative Party than his political service and "service to the community in the South West." Similarly, Lynton Crosby was awarded a knighthood in 2016, despite masterminding a mayoral campaign that suggested Labour candidate Sadiq Khan had links to terrorist organisations.

It would be difficult to suggest that Beckham deserves a knighthood for his footballing abilities and achievements alone. Look at some football personalities who have received knighthoods: Matt Busby, Bobby Charlton, Geoff Hurst, and Beckham's former manager at Old



Trafford, Alex Ferguson – Beckham's name doesn't quite fit. Hurst has a World Cup winner's medal to his name, while Charlton also has a Ballon D'Or. He's lost his England caps record to Wayne Rooney while Gareth Bale has proved to be a greater success at Real Madrid.

That is not to negate Beckham's achievements on the pitch. He's the first British footballer to reach a century of Champions League appearances and the only Englishman to win league titles in four different countries, as well as the only one to score in three World Cups. He was also an integral part of the famous treble-winning Manchester United team of 1999.

But Beckham's greatest contribution to society isn't his numerous memorable free kicks but his charity work. Even while playing, he gave his spare time to UNICEF and has been their Goodwill Ambassador since 2005. He has personally donated millions and his foundation, the 7 Fund, has raised millions more. He also donated his Paris Saint-Germain wages of about £1.5 million to a French children's hospital in 2013.

UNICEF has come out to defend Beckham in the face of claims that his charity work is merely a cynically self-aggrandising ploy, citing his visit to Swaziland in June 2016 to raise awareness of the devastating drought affecting

Eastern and Southern Africa. According to UNICEF, the 7 Fund is helping them to provide improved water and sanitation to children and their families in Burkina Faso and provide vital support and protection to HIV-positive mothers and children in Swaziland.

The truth is that the urge to support charities came first, and the desire for a knighthood came later. Even if all of Beckham's charity work was designed to help 'Brand Beckham', that does not detract from the fact that he's actually doing it. He no doubt could've taken a role on Sky Sports as a pundit alongside his old friend Gary Neville or he could've gone into management, but he didn't. Instead, he decided to dedicate himself to charitable activity and he should be applauded for that.

What is clear is that Beckham, once again, finds himself on the wrong end of relentless snobbery that footballers often face, rooted in the old idea that they, however rich, should know their place. Their exorbitant salaries somehow invalidate any positive contribution they make. For Beckham a knighthood might not be on the horizon any time soon and that's a shame. For his tireless work on the pitch as England's urgent and darkly heroic captain, to his efforts off it for a variety of charitable causes, he deserves to be dubbed Sir David Beckham.



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# Sport

## Hockey Blues stumble in relegation clash

Cambridge 0

KCL 2

▲▼ Cambridge were defeated 2-0 at home by KCL (LOUIS ASHWORTH)

Paul Hyland  
Sport Editor

● BUCS Hockey South B, Wilberforce Road Sports Ground

Cambridge University Hockey Club (CUHC) were on the receiving end of a 2-0 defeat in a relegation battle against the Guy's, King's and St Thomas' Hockey Club, representing King's College London.

Goals in either half from Raph Levy and Hashim Dadah condemned Cambridge to their third defeat of an indifferent BUCS League campaign, narrowing the gap between these two teams to just four points with two matches to play.

This was a match that really never got going. King's set about from the open to rather frustrate the hosts, with some impressive containment play from the away side helping to reduce Cambridge to long passes in wide areas, which were always just that touch too long for the Light Blue forwards to take in their stride.

Despite a seven-point advantage over King's at the start of the day, Cambridge never really allowed their apparent superiority to tell. Their best opportunities came from penalty corners, a quick series of which provided Cambridge's best moment in the first half. In came

the first, but captain Thomas Jackson's shot was blocked. In came the second, nothing forthcoming. Then the third, and nearly the opener for Jackson but for a great save by Dan Curley. At full stretch the King's goalkeeper just managed to deflect it behind with the very tip of his stick.

A near sight of goal had given Cambridge more impetus going forward, and they had King's on the back foot for much of the first half. But the Light Blues proved to be their own worst enemy. Had they not continued to squander possession time and again inside the 23 metre line they might have found themselves on the right end of a much-needed league victory which would have ensured their survival in the BUCS South B League.

For a while, neither game plan was really working. Cambridge couldn't consistently bring the ball in from the flanks, and many of King's passes on the counter were overhit just at the moment they looked like they'd break in. Both teams seemed to rely on cutting around the back of the wide defenders, but the defences mostly stood firm.

More penalty corners followed for Cambridge, but once again their failure to capitalise cost them. As the Cambridge no. 8 put in a low driven cross, Thomas Jackson had a sight of goal but the ball rather skimmed off his stick. Two minutes later he had an even better oppor-

tunity to put the Light Blues one to the good, but again it wasn't taken. In came the corner, Jackson received, and drew a top save out of the King's goalkeeper with a thumping shot towards the top right hand corner.

Cambridge hardly came much closer all afternoon. A couple of first-time efforts might have caught the King's goalkeeper off-guard, had they been on target. Cambridge's Matt Cockerill sent a diagonal ball into the circle, close enough for a decent sight of goal, far away enough to leave the goalkeeper on his line, but a glancing shot was scooped over the bar.

Thirty seconds before the interval, and the home side were having to tear up their half-time notes. With Cambridge minds apparently elsewhere, King's Jasen Soopramanien won a penalty corner from James Larman. Into the circle it came, for King's Raph Levy to collect, flummox his marker with a deft drop of the shoulder and hammer into the top left corner of the net. Cambridge goalkeeper Fergus Flanagan could do nothing to stop his team going into the break one down. A sucker punch maybe, but neither team had had enough of the match for anyone to say that the goal was against the run of play.

Cambridge did raise their game. Thomas Jackson looked the likeliest to make something happen for the Light Blues,



and shortly into the second half he almost did. A brilliant lobbed ball out of defence was controlled by Jackson hanging off the shoulder of the defender. A turn of pace left his opponent standing, and one-on-one with the King's goalkeeper the ball should have been rebounding off the backboard for 1-1. Jackson's shot lacked conviction, though, and Dan Curley didn't have to exert himself much to turn behind Cambridge's best opportunity of the whole afternoon.

The Light Blues lived to regret that miss. A scrappy penalty corner incident down the other end saw King's double their lead. An unconvincing save from Fergus Flanagan after a penalty corner and King's Hashim Dadah was on hand to poke home. Not exactly a sight for sore eyes, but King's didn't mind as they put clear daylight between themselves and their hosts.

All King's had to do was consolidate their lead, which they did with little difficulty. Packing the midfield, Cambridge began to struggle to link their attack with their defence. Cambridge resorted to the long pass in behind, but Thomas Jackson had too much on his plate as their main attacking outlet. Though they did manage a couple more sights on goal, a first-time shot squeaked wide of the post, and Jackson's final attempt of the afternoon was too high to trouble the King's stopper. 2-0 the final score.