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The Independent
Student Newspaper since 1947

VARSITY

Cambridgeshire police negligent and discriminatory with handling of **anti-Asian hate crime**

Georgia Goble
Senior News Editor

Content Note: Contains a description of an anti-Asian hate crime and police discrimination

A Cambridge Physics PhD student who was the victim of an anti-Asian hate crime last month (24/10), has claimed that Cambridgeshire police was negligent and discriminatory in the handling of the crime.

Ting (not her real name), who is Chinese, claims that Cambridgeshire police neglected to help her as the racially-motivated crime was taking place and failed to acknowledge the racist nature of the incident. She also describes that the police were discriminatory against her, writing down a “random name” on the report, since they could not spell her Chinese name, and asked for no clarification of the spelling. Another officer, she says, made no effort to pronounce her name correctly. The police’s handling of the case, Ting said, has retraumatized her.

The hate crime took place as Ting was walking down Mill Road. A group of around five teenagers began to throw bread at her as she walked past. They then began laughing as they threatened to “break [her] face”, “beat [her] up” and

“smash [her] phone”. They hurled racist abuse at her, and repeatedly called her “ugly”. “Our family has lived here since my grandma”, one member of the group shouted, “and you are just immigrants.”

Describing the crime as “nightmare-ish”, Ting says her friend, who tried to protect her, was shoved by the group.

Ting phoned the police while the incident was taking place, but not only did they not send an officer to the scene despite her stating her location, she also says that they failed to listen to how she wanted the case to be handled. An officer noted in the report that “the female did not want it to be further reported”, she says, despite this not being true.

Ting also says that the police officer on the phone questioned the credibility of her claim, stating that her account of the incident was “just [her] words” and that she didn’t know “what’s actually happening.” When Ting asked the officer if she could hear the teenagers shouting in the background of the phone call, the officer replied that she could “hear some noises”, again negating her experience of the situation. Ting also claims that the officer was rude to her on the phone, despite her obvious distress.

Later in the reporting process, Ting

Story continued page 2 ►



▲ The victim claims that officers wrote down a “random name” on the report since they could not spell her Chinese name (26/10) (Oli Woodman/UNSPLASH)

Cambridge Union controversies continue to divide opinion

Georgia Goble
Senior News Editor

Bethan Moss
Senior News Editor

Content Note: contains brief mentions of antisemitism and racial slurs

Last week, outrage was sparked when art historian Andrew Graham-Dixon performed a Hitler impersonation, voiced antisemitic ideas, and used a racial slur for Black people at the Cam-

bridge Union.

Many criticised Cambridge Union President Keir Bradwell, who was chairing the debate, for failing to intervene, leading to Keir’s subsequent apology. Some, including Cambridge SU BME officer Tara Choudhury, called for Keir to resign.

However, others condemned the outrage over Graham-Dixon’s impersonation, and the Union’s response to the incident – to place Graham-Dixon on a ‘blacklist’ – over free speech concerns. Though the Union has now U-turned on

this ‘blacklist’, opinion remains divided.

Gonville and Caius Fellow David Abulafia said that he was “mystified” that “what was obviously a satirical impersonation should be regarded as anything sinister. The speaker was making plain his complete rejection of Nazi doctrine.”

Abulafia called the concept of a blacklist “deeply objectionable” likening it to the practices of the Nazis and other totalitarian regimes, calling it “a negation of the way the Union has always operated”. He accused “woke activists” of being “vigorous opponents of free

speech”, claiming that “we should not underestimate the danger to all of us if their intimidation of those with different opinions continues.”

Editor of the Jewish Chronicle Stephen Pollard wrote to the Union on Twitter: “Your attack on Andrew Graham-Dixon is ludicrous and makes you a laughing stock. If you are going to blacklist those who [are] opposed to fascism, please blacklist me.”

On the other hand, one anonymous Jewish student told *Varsity* that they were “uncomfortable” when the speaker

launched into a Hitler impression. “He gave no warning.” I liked the blacklist idea”, they said, “I don’t think he should come back, and nor should other anti semites that the Union have invited like the Malaysian PM. Sending the list to other societies would also have been helpful, so it’s disappointing that this now isn’t going to happen.” “Free speech is important”, they continued, “but so is our right to attend events feeling safe.” The SU BME Officer said the Union “would do well” to address the “institutionally racist environment.”

News

EDITORIAL

Beginning on Friday (05/11), *Varsity* reported on the controversial conduct of President, Keir Bradwell, and visiting speaker, Andrew Graham-Dixon, at the Cambridge University Union. Graham-Dixon, who was arguing against a motion on 'good taste,' impersonated Adolf Hitler whilst Bradwell, who admitted to being drunk throughout the debate, failed to intervene. Both individuals have since released formal apologies.

Following *Varsity's* reporting of the controversy, the Union announced the introduction of a 'blacklist' protocol to prevent offensive speakers from returning to the Union. However, the subsequent backlash, most clearly seen in John Cleese's withdrawal from an upcoming event, proved too much for the Union. Bradwell has since reneged on his initial 'blacklist' protocol. We can only hope that the Union is better able to protect the very students who constitute its membership in the future.

On the topic of change, Tara Panesar in the Opinions Section considers which artefacts in the possession of the Cambridge University Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (MAA) should be next following the repatriation of the Ukukor Bronze.

In Science (Page 14), a revelation made by an old Chinese man on his deathbed has led to the discovery of a skull which is the most complete cranium representative of a new human species. Jonny Gathercole explains how Qiang Ji and his research team at the Hebei GEO University in China have declared the Harbin cranium to be the single member of a brand-new-species: *Homo longi*.

Oona Cooper, on Page 22 of Arts, dissects the case of the Carmen Mola writers and the effect of the masquerade on the accessibility of the literary space to women. In a shock reveal at an award's ceremony, Carmen Mola, the award-winning Spanish crime novelist, turned out to be a pen name for three men who had been masquerading as the female Spanish mother and author.

Fashion has exhibited its collaboration with the Serpentine Swap in a sustainable fashion shoot across pages 24, 25 and 26. Here, *Varsity* pays tribute to that knit, handed down by Grandma, and those baggy corduroy pants worn by Dad in the 90s.

In the leadup to the Cambridge Film Festival – the longest running film festival in the United Kingdom – Abigail Reeves puts forward her recommendations for the must watch films. In Music, Section Editor Mathew Cavallini tackles the controversial topic of TikTok-turned famous musicians, arguing that perhaps more credit is due.

Finally, catch up with all of this week's sports reports on Page 32 following the Cambridge University Rugby Union Football Club's (CURUFC) loss to Durham University and the Jay's – Cambridge University Ladies Netball Club – momentous win over Bedfordshire.

Nick and Isabel

EDITORS Isabel Sebode & Nick Bartlett *editor@varsity.co.uk*

DEPUTY EDITORS Akshata Kapoor & Emaan Ullah *deputyeditor@varsity.co.uk*

MAGAZINE EDITOR Lily Maguire *magazine@varsity.co.uk*

DEPUTY MAGAZINE EDITOR Margherita Volpato *deputymagazine@varsity.co.uk*

BUSINESS MANAGER Mark Curtis *business@varsity.co.uk*

NEWS EDITORS Bethan Moss, Georgia Goble & Louis Hodgson (Senior); Jacob Freedland & Jolyn Koh *news@varsity.co.uk*

NEWS CORRESPONDENTS Serge Isman, Aoife Petrie & Lorna Kimmins

INVESTIGATIONS EDITORS Caitlin Farrell

INTERVIEWS EDITORS Juliette Gueron-Gabrielle, Stephi Stacey & Isabella Todini *interviews@varsity.co.uk*

FEATURES EDITORS Ellie Austen & Inés Magré (Senior); Nabiha Ahmed & Lotte Brundle (Deputy) *features@varsity.co.uk*

OPINION EDITORS Olivia Young & Ramsay Hodgson (Senior); Emily Kelly & Frankie Richards (Deputy) *opinion@varsity.co.uk*

SCIENCE EDITORS Sambavi Sneha Kumar (Senior) & Nieve Brydges (Deputy) *science@varsity.co.uk*

SPORT EDITORS Liam Kline (Senior) & Damola Odeyemi (Deputy) *sport@varsity.co.uk*

VIOLET EDITOR Conall Hughes, Oona Lagercrantz & Evie Lucas *violet@varsity.co.uk*

ARTS EDITORS Emma Hulse & Famke Veenstra-Ashmore *arts@varsity.co.uk*

FILM & TV EDITORS Magdalena Gabrysiaik, Amber de Ruyt & Holly Sewell *filmantv@varsity.co.uk*

MUSIC EDITORS Mathew Cavallini & Madeleine Fisher *music@varsity.co.uk*

FASHION EDITORS Olivia Rhodes & Muhammad Syed *fashion@varsity.co.uk*

THEATRE EDITORS Stanley Lawson & Fergal Jeffreys *theatre@varsity.co.uk*

LIFESTYLE EDITOR Amy Howell & Ellie Wilson *lifestyle@varsity.co.uk*

HEAD OF ILLUSTRATIONS Eden Keily-Thurstain *magazine@varsity.co.uk*

CHIEF SUB-EDITOR Chloe Bond *subeditor@varsity.co.uk*

DIGITAL EDITORS Tilda Butterworth *digital@varsity.co.uk*

ASSOCIATE EDITORS Gaby Vides, Georgina Buckle, Gabriel Humphreys, Meike Leonard, Stephi Stacey, Cameron White, Christopher Dorrell *associate@varsity.co.uk*

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Cambridge scientists to feature in Royal Institution's 2021 Christmas



▲ Jonathan Van-Tam (pictured) will deliver lectures titled: 'Going Viral: How Covid changed science forever' (WIKIMEDIA COMMONS)

Serge Isman
Deputy News Editor

Three Cambridge scientists are among six guest lecturers to assist epidemiologist Professor Jonathan Van-Tam, the Government's Deputy Chief Medical Officer, in delivering this year's Royal Institution Christmas Lectures on "How Covid changed science forever."

Professors Julia Gog, Sharon Peacock and Ravi Gupta were selected to co-host the lectures with Van-Tam for their contributions to the UK's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The three-part lecture series will explore how public health measures, combined with cutting edge science and engineering, will have an impact far beyond COVID-19. Developments such as early detection techniques, rapid genome sequencing, and the world's first mRNA vaccines could be used to treat cancer, Malaria and HIV in the future.

The Royal Institution, which was founded in 1799 with the aim of promoting new technologies and teaching science to the general public, has hosted Christmas Lectures since 1825, when they were created by Michael Faraday.

The lectures seek to present scientific subjects to a non-specialist audience, including young people, in an engaging

way. They are the world's oldest scientific television programme, first broadcast in 1936, although it was not until 1966 that this was done annually.

Faraday delivered 19 lecture series in his lifetime. Other notable lecturers include Nobel Laureates William and Lawrence Bragg, Sir David Attenborough, Carl Sagan, and Dame Nancy Rothwell.

A Professor of Mathematical Biology and Fellow of Queens' College, Julia Gog advised the UK government through the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) and SPI-M, the group working on infectious disease modelling and epidemiology.

Sharon Peacock, a Professor of Public Health and Microbiology, is Chair of the COVID-19 Genomics UK (COG-UK) Consortium. In this role, she oversaw the delivery of large-scale and rapid whole-genome virus sequencing to local NHS centres and the UK government,

Ravi Gupta is Professor of Clinical Microbiology at the Cambridge Institute for Therapeutic Immunology and Infectious Disease. During the pandemic he used his expertise in RNA virus genetics and biology to define the process whereby new variants likely arrive, and also reported some of the first data on Pfizer vaccine-induced antibody responses against the virus in the UK.

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”

► Continued from front page

Later in the reporting process, Ting said that the police were also discriminatory to her friend. The police officer asked the friend if she could “simplify” her Spanish name by calling her an Anglicised version of it.

Meanwhile, while Ting filed in a risk assessment indicating that she felt “very unsafe” walking on the street, an officer told the victim that the possibility of encountering the group was “very low” since she said it was unlikely that they lived in Cambridge. Not only did this incident neglect to acknowledge her fear, she says, but it was also proven not to be true. Ting's friend, who was involved in the initial incident, was recognised by the same group of teenagers in Market Square, where they threatened her, and proceeded to follow her for the duration of the evening.

Varsity has previously reported on a growing trend of anti-Asian hate crimes in the Cambridge area, with rates increasing since the start of the Coronavirus pandemic. In September, a Chinese Cambridge alumnus Yuanzhao Zhang had his nose broken after being attacked and beaten by a group of roughly ten teenagers also on Mill Road. Several other attacks have also taken place in previ-

“
I don't
deserve
to feel
unsafe
walking
alone
on the
street
”

ous months, which Zhang suspects are connected.

Despite Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Commissioner Daryl Preston's statement, following Zhang's attack, that hate crimes against the Asian community “are being taken very seriously by the Constabulary”, one police officer that spoke to Ting had “no idea” that several attacks had recently taken place against Asian people.

“Maybe this is it,” Ting told *Varsity*, “Asian people can have random things thrown at them on the street; our names are hard to pronounce and spell so it's not important; we are not important, at least not to the police in the UK.”

“I don't deserve to be wondering if I am actually ugly. I don't deserve to feel unsafe walking alone on the street; I don't deserve to have my anxiety triggered whenever I see a group of people. I believe the rest of the Asian community doesn't either.”

A spokesperson for Cambridgeshire Police said in a statement: “We have a diverse community in Cambridge and we recognise that everyone should be allowed to live their lives free from harassment and the fear of hate crime.”

They continued: “The force is committed to tackling hate crime and we will do all we can to bring perpetrators

The guest lecturers' experience at the intersection of health science and policy making will provide insights into how advances in scientific research were rapidly adapted for the government's response to the pandemic and can now be used in the treatment of many other diseases.

As Deputy Chief Medical Officer to the Government for England, Van-Tam's role is nominally to provide independent advice to the government on medical issues, but the pandemic saw him, and many other medical and scientific advisers, take on very public duties, often appearing alongside Boris Johnson in televised news conferences to explain policy decisions to the general public.

Lucinda Hunt, Director of the Royal Institution, said: “We are delighted that Jonathan will be joined by such an exciting and expert group of scientists during this year's series of three Christmas Lectures.

“They will work together to take us on a journey through the world of viruses – how they arise, how they proliferate, and how science and society responds – just as they are doing in tackling the current pandemic. What a strong and positive message that will be for our young audience, about the power of collaborative science.”

Patrick Holland, BBC Director, Factual, Arts and Classical Music Television, said: “Scientists across the world have responded to the Covid crisis with expertise and ingenuity that is humbling for us all. It is no exaggeration to say that the path of history has been changed because of the work of vaccine scientists and epidemiologists.

“Jonathan and his team will give us another exciting and thought-provoking series of Lectures, covering so much more than COVID-19. This will be a celebration of science and of the scientists whose advances are shaping our world.”

The 2021 lectures broadcast on BBC Four between Christmas and New Year.

to justice. We work hard to encourage victims to come forward so we can take action against those who choose to discriminate and commit hate crimes.”

“All reports help us to build a picture and target our resources where they are needed most”, the spokesperson added.

Commenting on the “systematic apathy” to anti-Asian hate crimes, Ting said “these kinds of things are happening every week. Do we wait for another person to be beaten up? Does someone more important need to have bread thrown at them? I really don't know what more I can do to have our voices heard.”

SU BME Officer Tara Choudhury told *Varsity* that she was “absolutely disgusted to hear of yet another mindless and violent racist attack. I am even more disgusted to hear that the police have handled this serious incident so appallingly”.

“By immediately contacting the police,” Tara added, “Ting demonstrated commendable level-headedness and bravery. To learn that Ting's bravery in calling the authorities was met with total ambivalence by trained professionals is beyond concerning.”

“Cambridgeshire Police can release as many statements as they like - their words will ring hollow until they take action to protect our Asian community.”

Cambridge unions to protest against staff outsourcing proposal

Cambridge Unite, Unison, and the SU have written an open letter demanding an end to outsourcing plans for non-academic staff at the University

Akshata Kapoor
Deputy Editor

The Cambridge University Unite Branch and Unison University of Cambridge and Colleges Branch will carry out a demonstration today (12/11) against the University's move towards outsourcing professional, non-academic jobs. The '12 on the 12th' demonstration will be held outside the Senate House.

The two unions have also signed an open letter, alongside the Cambridge Postgraduate SU, addressed to Vice-Chancellor Professor Stephen Toope, which urges him not to allow the "Estates Management Division to outsource our Estates Management Maintenance Team".

The Estates maintenance team at the University is tasked with maintaining around 378 buildings. The Strategic Framework for the Development of the University Estate 2016 seeks to support the University's mission by being "an expression of the University's academic excellence, with high quality places and services, in order to contribute to the University's and the City's competitive advantage" and supporting "productivity by delivering a positive experience

for students and staff."

According to the open letter, in several announcements in September 2021 the Head of Estates Management Maintenance Division "put forward a proposal to his staff which will ultimately see the complete outsourcing of Estates Management maintenance services" and instead offer "one overarching contract to an outsourcing firm."

This letter and planned demonstration come alongside the news that Cambridge will be taking part in industrial action over staff pension cuts.

A letter by the Cambridge University Unite Secretary dated 1/11 asks: "Where will it end? If the University is allowed to outsource a team of people, whose efforts carried the University throughout the pandemic shutdown, which services will they next turn to?"

The open letter draws attention to the underfunding of the Estates Management Maintenance team where only "11% of the total maintenance budget is allocated to the University in-house team" and that if they continue on this trajectory of funding, "the staff wage bill must be cut by 5% a year."

While announcements in September assured support for those who escape Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of

Employment) (TUPE), unions are worried that the underfunding of the team will mean such support and development for these workers "will not be possible to achieve." TUPE is when workers transfer from one employer to the other, in this case from the in-house team to the outsourced firm.

For staff that get 'TUPE'd', pensions do not transfer to the new employer, and the staff "will lose their status as a member of the University, including the protection offered by the University HR policies and procedures."

The letter points to other problems with outsourcing which might face the Estate Management Maintenance Unit, including the loss of direct managerial control, hidden costs, and being tied to the financial well being of another company.

When asked about claims that outsourcing reduces Trade Union involvement, the Head of Estates Management Maintenance Unit disagreed with the "inflammatory" statement. However, the open letter claims that despite the disagreement, the Estates Management UCU representative has been removed, and the Head "is in the process of removing both Unite representatives through TUPE action."

An article published by The Association of University Directors and Estates (AUDE), cited in the open letter, states that "many universities feel that it is unfair and not a viable option for key roles within the university... to have a lower standard of employment protection, pay or pension provision than those roles that are clearly teaching or research focused."

Another contention in the open letter involved Toope's staff email sent on 14th October, which offered reassurance about supporting unions, in which he "directly referenced UCU" but not Unite or Unison.

The letter demands a stop to outsourcing, University support for the staff threatened by the proposal, for the University to recognise "the worth of the staff affected by this proposal and [display] the same loyalty that the maintenance unit staff showed throughout the lockdown period". It also calls for "Estates Management reasons for proposing this exercise [to be] scrutinised in depth, both from a monetary and an ethical perspective by an independent investigatory panel under the auspices of the Universities and Assistants Joint Board."

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Fitzwilliam Director
Luke Syson

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Cambridge fall to
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Durham University



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Remembrance Sunday in Cambridge: a round up of events

Esmé Kenney
News Correspondent

Cambridge is set to host many events for Remembrance Sunday, to remember those who lost their lives in conflict.

Great St. Mary's, the University Church, will host the annual Remembrance Day service this Sunday (14/11), starting at 11:00 am.

The service will be held in person, after last year's event was hosted online due to the pandemic.

Lucy Lewis, the University Marshall and the British army's first female bomb disposal officer, will be preaching at the service.

Vice Chancellor Stephen Toope and Deputy Lieutenant of Cambridgeshire, Sir James Paice, will be attending to represent the Queen.

St John's, Jesus, Girton and Trinity colleges will be amongst those holding special services this Sunday to commemorate Remembrance Day.



Local towns in Cambridgeshire will also be holding their own events to mark the occasion, with parades taking place in Whittlesey, March and Wisbech.

On Thursday (11/11), a new memorial was unveiled in Chatteris, in memory of seven RAF aircrew who crashed in the town.

The Reverend Canon Adrian Daffern said that by remembering the sacrifices made by those who fought in the past, we can learn to overcome the challenges of "modern society", such as climate change and the pandemic.

Daffern commented: "The annual opportunity for remembering those who fought very different battles, for their country and the freedoms we enjoy, matters as much as ever."

"In honouring them for what they gave in their day, we can learn lessons for living more wisely in our own."

▲ UNSPLASH/VICTORIAORVICKY

Student portered for cooking fish and chips, sparking college debate

Krystian Schneyder
News Correspondent

Following a fire alarm in one of Selwyn's Old Court staircases, residents received an email from the head porter, Helen Stephens. The email has since sparked a debate online which has been nicknamed 'fishgate' and inspired some to call for protest.

In the email, the head porter reminded students that the gyps in their staircases are intended for the preparation of light snacks only. Stephens also reminded them of fire safety regulations.

The email, which was shared anonymously on a Facebook group, was sent after the porters discovered members on one of the floors cooking fish and chips. Stephens wrote: "I trust that you will agree that fish and chips are not light snacks and because you have not read the guide or you have chosen to ignore the rule yet another evacuation was caused in your staircase."

The email sparked debates within the student community, with one student writing: "I would argue that fish and chips are a light snack." Students subsequently set up a white board with the question "Is fish + chips a light snack?" and encouraged students to vote either yes or no.

Some students criticised the ambiguity of what constitutes a 'light snack', and one post asked: "At what point does a meal become a light snack? Is it against college regulations to eat a series of

snacks for dinner? Is Tapas allowed?"

Another post said: "To protest against the college's role in fishgate, this Friday every gyp will be cooking fish and chips. #fishgate, #demandchange, #beerbatter."

Fishgate led to a discussion about the standard of food in hall. One student commented: "Maybe if hall offered better food we wouldn't have to use the gyps for more than light snacks." Many also felt that hall food at Selwyn College is too expensive.

Others rose to the defence of the College saying that they liked the food. However, many stated that the food is expensive and said that not allowing students a cheaper alternative to cooking their own meals is unfair.

In a statement to Varsity, a Selwyn spokesperson defended the College. The spokesperson admitted that "it is probably true that Selwyn doesn't offer the cheapest food in Cambridge" and stated that this is because the College pays its staff "properly" and has "carried out an extensive upgrade of [its] catering offer."

The spokesperson continued: "It is clearly stated on the first page of our student accommodation handbook that we are not a self-catering college, and the small kitchens on each staircase - equipped with microwaves - are there for lighter snacks."

"We do not plan to install full ovens and more fridges throughout the college in part because it would lead to a significant increase in our carbon footprint just at a time when we need to reduce it."

News

This week in research...

Louis Hodgson
Senior News Editor

How exactly did lockdown screw up our routines?

We all know that lockdowns had a huge impact on our lives. However, have you sat down and thought carefully about what has changed since Covid-19 reared its ugly head? Cambridge economists have done the hard work for you, recently conducting research looking at exactly what changed in our day-to-day routines.

Analysing data from nearly 800 diaries has revealed how people structured their time differently when cut off from the outside world. The diaries used were “time-use diaries”, which give detailed accounts of a person’s activities over 24 hours.

The researchers studied how individuals balanced their time across four categories (employment, housework, leisure and subsistence) and three time periods (pre-lockdown, the first lockdown, and the March 2021 lockdown).

The researchers reported many interesting findings, such as parents of young children significantly reducing time spent on leisure. Meanwhile, those without young kids saw an increase in leisure time over the lockdowns but reported enjoying it less than they had prior to the pandemic.

The researchers also reported that in the third lockdown there was a rise in people working during ‘unusual hours’



▲ Caterpillar poo may be impacting lakes on a “huge scale” (ERIK KARITS/UNSPASH)

— no surprise to any Cambridge student. Working during these hours was found to reduce people’s enjoyment of the whole day.

Co-author Dr Ines Lee from the Faculty of Economics highlighted that the lockdowns hugely disrupted routines by blurring the distinction between work and home. Dr Lee stated that whilst lockdowns are hopefully a thing of the past, working from home may not be: “Employers should promote better work-life balance in the post-pandemic world.”

Are leaf-munching caterpillars increasing carbon emissions?

One would assume that something as green and harmless as a caterpillar would have a modest impact on carbon dioxide emissions. However, recent research from Cambridge has found that two types of caterpillars are impacting nearby lakes on “a huge scale”, which in turn is leading to an increase in carbon dioxide.

Outbreaks of caterpillars of invasive gypsy moths and forest tent caterpillar moths occur every five years. The larger number of insects results in a marked decrease in leaf-fall, whilst simultaneously increasing the amount of insect excrement: these two factors combine to alter the nutrients of the land and nearby lakes.

The change to the nearby lake water results in a growth of greenhouse gas-producing bacteria and a decrease in algae, which removes CO₂ from the atmosphere.

Researchers found that lakes near regions of caterpillar outbreaks contained an average of 27% less dissolved carbon.

Senior author Professor Andrew Tarentzap of the Department of Plant Sciences summarised the findings: “These insects are basically little machines that convert carbon-rich leaves into nitrogen-rich poo.

“The poo drops into lakes instead of the leaves, and this significantly changes the water chemistry - we think it will increase the extent to which lakes are sources of greenhouse gases.”

Eat your greens kids!

Scientists have long been trying to work out why humans are getting taller and hitting puberty earlier. For example, over the 20th Century, the height of the average Briton increased by roughly 10cm! It has long been suspected that this is related to widening access to more nutritional food; however, nobody has proved it until now.

Research led by the Wellcome-MRC Institute of Metabolic Science at the University of Cambridge has discovered that a particular receptor in the brain may be the biological key that bridges the gap between nutrition and puberty.

The receptor has been dubbed the “melanocortin 3 receptor” (MC3R) and is able to detect the body’s nutritional state and subsequently control the release of key hormones involved in growth and sexual maturation. Never before has there been such concrete evidence for kids to eat their five-a-day!

These findings have useful applications in the medical world as children with delays in puberty could be tested for MC3R mutations.

The study’s senior author, Professor Sir Stephen O’Rahilly, stated: “This discovery shows how the brain can sense nutrients and interpret this to make subconscious decisions that influence our growth and sexual development.

“Identifying the pathway in the brain whereby nutrition turns into growth and puberty explains a global phenomenon of increasing height and decreasing age at puberty that has puzzled scientists for a century.”

Bowels and anxiety - is there a link?

Meanwhile, a study of over 50,000 people has discovered an overlap in susceptibility to irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) and mental health conditions such as anxiety

IBS affects one in ten people and causes a wide range of symptoms such as abdominal pain and bowel dysfunction.

One would expect any genes associated with IBS to affect the gut. However, researchers have found that risk genes for IBS have significant effects on the brain. They also found that the heritability of IBS was very low, suggesting that environmental factors (e.g. stress) are highly important in its development.

Current treatments for IBS vary widely: for example, dietary changes are often prescribed. This research has excellent potential to help develop new treatments, possibly with an increased focus on behavioural changes.

Study co-senior investigator Professor Miles Parkes from the University of Cambridge explained: “IBS is a common problem, and its symptoms are real and debilitating.”

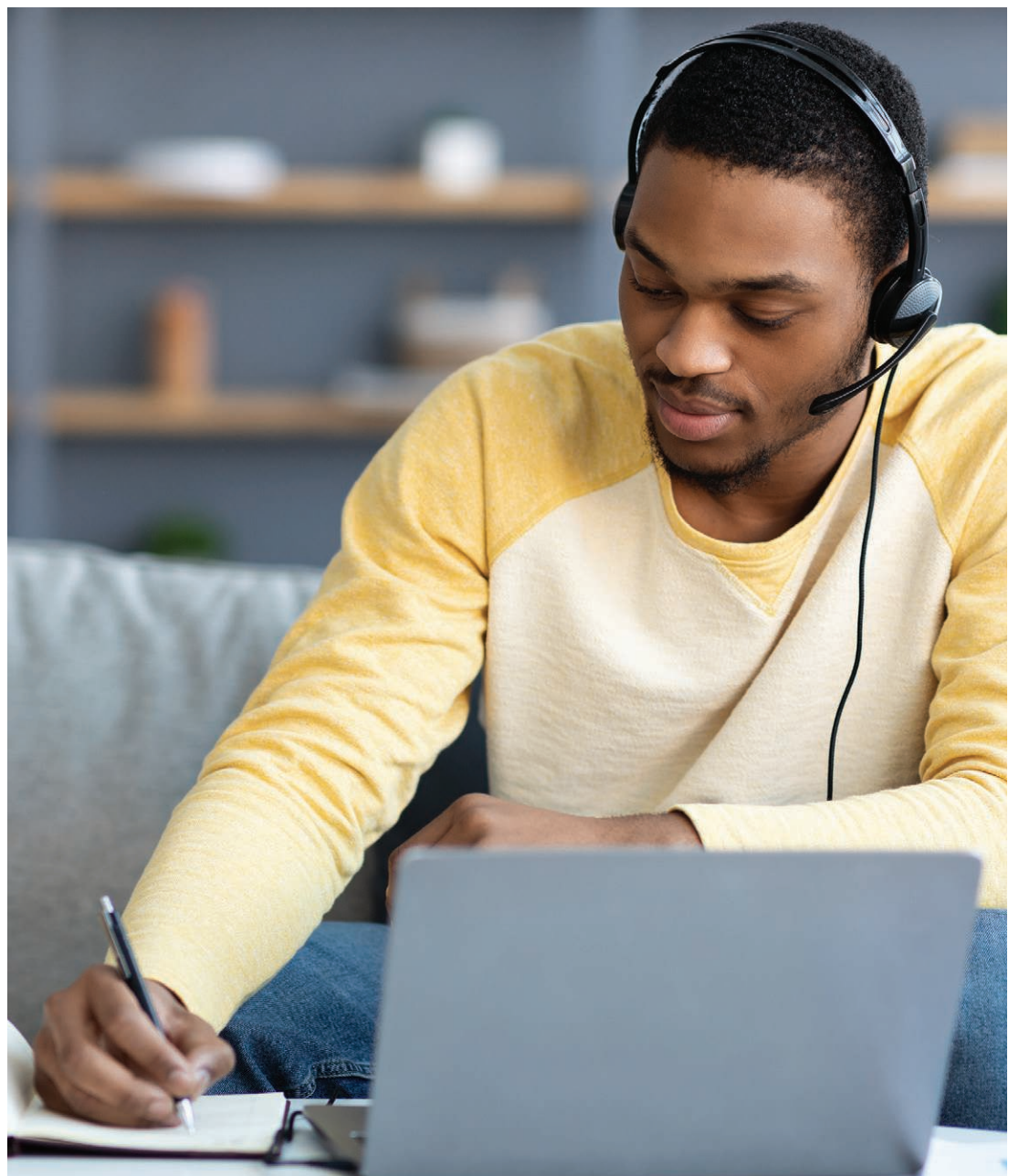
Parkes continued: “Although IBS occurs more frequently in those who are prone to anxiety, we don’t believe that one causes the other - our study shows these conditions have shared genetic origins, with the affected genes possibly leading to physical changes in brain or nerve cells that in turn cause symptoms in the brain and symptoms in the gut”, such as abdominal pain and bowel dysfunction.



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Cambridge-led study reveals scale of pangolin trafficking

Christopher Dorrell
Associate Editor

A team of conservationists, led by the University of Cambridge, has produced the first data-driven study quantifying Nigeria-linked seizures of pangolin products.

Between 2010 and September 2021, 190,407 kilos of pangolin scales were taken from at least 799,343 of the animals, but potentially up to almost a million creatures are dead due to the smuggling.

This figure is close to recent estimates for the entire global pangolin trade since 2000, suggesting levels of trafficking are far higher than previously thought.

The scales were taken from shipments intercepted and reported by authorities in ports across the world.

Researchers traced cargo, from countries such as Cameroon and Gabon, that was destined for Asian nations including China and Cambodia, sometimes travelling via France and Holland. All had been funnelled through Nigeria.

26 of the 77 seizures were uncovered alongside thousands of kilos of ivory, pointing to the possibility of pangolin traffickers using long-established ivory-smuggling networks.

Although there have been improvements in limiting smuggling, researchers say that overall enforcement in Nigeria is lax and that corruption is endemic. Total prosecutions for pangolin trafficking in Nigeria amount to just four – all in the last year. The fact that so few are prosecuted suggests that seized shipments represent a small fraction of the pangolin

product now moved through Nigeria.

The study, published in *Biological Conservation*, cites experts suggesting that detected wildlife seizures are anywhere from 30% to just 2% of the overall illegal trade.

“The figures in our research suggest there has been a gross underestimation of the scale of pangolin trafficking in Nigeria and indeed Africa as a whole, which could translate into mismatched anti-trafficking policies,” said lead researcher Charles Emogor from Cambridge’s Department of Zoology.

Pangolins, sometimes dubbed the “most trafficked mammal”, have large, protective keratin scales, similar in material to fingernails and toenails, covering their skin. They are the only known mammals with this feature.

Pangolins are in demand because of the false belief in the curative power of their scales. In addition, in parts of Asia eating pangolin meat is considered a status symbol.

Pangolin bodies are illegally traded at markets across China, and some studies, including a recent one from Cambridge, have implicated the sale of the animal’s meat in the origins of the COVID-19 pandemic.

All eight pangolin species – four African, four Asian – are listed as threatened, with three now considered critically endangered. Researchers randomly sampled dozens of sacks impounded by customs, and estimated that some 90% of the scales involved in Nigeria-linked trade are from white-bellied pangolins.

HISTORY PRIZE Cambridge academic wins prize for Best Book in Historical International Relations

Cambridge historian of international political thought Dr Mira Siegelberg has won the 2022 Francesco Guicciardini Prize for Best Book in Historical International Relations.

The Francesco Guicciardini Prize, named after the Italian historian and statesman Francesco Guicciardini (1483-1540), is an annual award given by the International Studies Association.

Dr Siegelberg’s book, *Statelessness: A Modern History*, was described as a “compelling, multi-layered exploration of the emergence of statelessness as a mass phenomenon during the interwar years” which “makes a forceful case for the need to reframe the way we think about refugees and

WINTER FAIR
North Pole returns to Parker’s Piece

Planning permission was granted by Cambridge city council last Wednesday (03/11) for the North Pole, the winter festive fair on Parker’s Piece, to go ahead this year.

The North Pole was cancelled in 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic. Its return this year will see the construction of a 36-metre high ferris wheel, a Christmas market, and an ice rink. It will run from 19th November 2021 to 3rd January 2022.

Concerns over its long-term impact on one of Cambridge’s best-known greens have led to over 50 objections being sent to the council.

BLUES CALENDAR 2022 Cambridge Blues Naked Calendar announced

The publication of the 2022 edition of the annual RAG Cambridge Blues Naked Calendar has been announced.

RAG, the largest student-led charitable organisation at the university, enjoyed success with the 2017, 2019, and 2021 editions of the calendar. This year, nearly 80 Blues athletes are featured in locations across the city.

Locations this year including Churchill College and the University Sports Centre and Gym.

All profits from the RAG calendar will go to Jimmy’s Cambridge, Student Minds, Teenage Cancer Trust, and Rainforest Trust. The 2022 edition will be released on Friday (12/11).



▲ Diana Ross (above) and Lionel Richie (left) will headline the Cambridge Club Festival 2021 (WIKIMEDIA COMMONS)

MUSIC Diana Ross and Lionel Richie to headline the Cambridge Club Festival 2022

R&B legends Diana Ross and Lionel Richie will headline the Cambridge Club Festival next June.

Diana Ross was the lead singer of the Supremes, who remain the best-charting female band in history with such classics as “Baby Love,” “Stop! In The Name Of Love,” and “Come See About Me.” She will also perform at Glastonbury later in June 2022.

Lionel Richie enjoyed immense success in the 1970s with the Commodores, creating funk hits such as “Easy” and “Brick House”; the 1980s saw him record his biggest triumph, a duet with Ross, “Endless Love.”

Nile Rodgers and Chic will also be performing at the festival. Rodgers has written, produced, and performed on some of the greatest records of the past 50 years, including Sister Sledge’s “We Are Family,” David Bowie’s “Let’s Dance,” and Daft Punk’s “Get Lucky.”

Ticket sales open today, Friday 9th November. Day passes start from £60, weekend tickets from £155.



Addenbrooke’s faces capacity crisis

A high number of Covid-19 cases and staff absences due to illness are putting Addenbrooke’s Hospital’s A&E Department under strain

Meike Leonard
News Correspondent

Addenbrooke’s Hospital is under “extreme pressure,” with Covid-19 patients reaching numbers not seen since February 2021.

The Cambridge University Hospitals (CUH), which runs Addenbrooke’s, confirmed on Tuesday (09/11) that it had 60 in-patients being treated for Covid-19, 10 of whom were in the ICU.

According to reports from CUH, 75% of these patients have no record of a Covid-19 vaccination.

This comes on the heels of Cambridge and Peterborough being designated as an Enhanced Response Area on 1st November. The month of October saw infection rates in both areas surpass levels seen in January 2021.

While the case rate in Cambridge decreased by 1.3% in the seven days to Saturday 6th November, “extremely busy” conditions at Addenbrooke’s are partially due to the recent closure of over 100 beds as part of an effort to limit the spread of Covid-19 within the hospital.

Hundreds of staff taking sick leave due to Covid-19 or other illnesses has also debilitated the hospital. CUH confirmed 408 staff were absent on October 28, 162 of which for Covid-19-related reasons.

Addenbrooke’s Chief Executive Roland Sinker warned that patients could face being sent almost 88 miles away

for treatments if the hospital is unable to resolve its ongoing capacity issues.

The “mounting pressure” has caused a “fragile situation,” Sinker wrote in a letter to staff, with at least four Covid-19 cases being admitted each day.

“This winter, the line between success and failure is much narrower than before,” he said.

In a transcript from an internal meeting seen by the *Cambridge Independent*, Sinker revealed that the Cambridge University Hospital has been forced to postpone some elective surgeries, with the reduction of beds leaving Addenbrooke’s “ceasing to function as a hospital.”

“The plan B for us is, effectively, Cambridge University Hospitals, which has been around for 250 years, thinking about restricting access to care and saying to patients [...] ‘I’m terribly sorry we can’t look after you. You’re going to have to think about going to another hospital’” he said.

“And those hospitals need to be in London and Birmingham. We’re going to the heart of the sun.”

On 24th October, a patient awaiting admission to A&E died of a cardiac arrest in an ambulance outside the hospital; CUH has launched an inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the death.

However, Sinker confirmed that Addenbrooke’s will “continue to provide vital life-saving specialist services to the region and to deliver transplantation, complex surgery and high-risk therapies such as bone marrow transplants.”

“The difference between our situation now and the impact of the early waves of this pandemic,” the Chief Executive explained, “is that we are managing the needs of Covid patients while continuing to provide surgical, outpatients, diagnostic, and emergency care at the same rate or even higher than before Covid-19 arrived”.

A spokesperson for Addenbrooke’s urged Cambridgeshire residents to “pull together” at this difficult time for the hospital, and encouraged community members to get vaccinated, and maintain mask-wearing and social distancing in crowded places.



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News

Does Cambridge clubbing deserve its poor reputation?

Caitlin Farrell
Head of Investigations

Bethan Moss
Senior News Editor

Aoife Petrie
News Correspondent

Cambridge clubbing has faced a number of criticisms in recent months. Increased ticket prices and overselling by clubs have led to students being turned away at the door, overwhelmed on dancefloors and overcharged for tickets, whilst many have reported issues with bouncers at clubs, most recently at Lola Lo.

Lack of disabled access to Cambridge's clubs has also caused consternation, and long waiting times for clubs have left students frustrated. In this investigation, *Varsity* asks the question: Does Cambridge clubbing deserve its poor reputation? Queues and overcrowding

Queue times for clubs in Cambridge have been described as “ridiculously long” by students, even in instances when club goers have purchased tickets in advance.

It is not uncommon for students who

have bought tickets in advance to queue and be refused entry without receiving a refund. One student in this situation detailed how on one night: “We bought

“
Increased ticket prices and overselling by clubs have led to students being turned away at the door and overwhelmed on dancefloors”

tickets which promised that we'd gain entry to Lola's provided we had queued before 11:15 which we did” They weren't let into the club, and described the bouncers as “very dismissive” of the situation.

The student expressed how frustrating it was to be refused entry since they,

and others, lost money as a result of clubs overselling the tickets.

Upon entering clubs in Cambridge on student nights, the effects of overcrowding are obvious. Though some complaints of congestion are light-hearted, with one student lamenting their inability to “boogie at Rumboogie”, one of the most popular student nights, many have expressed more serious concerns.

One anonymous student described to us how they “consistently avoid going to specific club floors” because they are “scared of getting crushed”. They continued: “As soon as you go to dance you begin to feel trapped and it's overwhelming.”

Other club-goers have expressed similar fears, with one student detailing how “on Halloween there were so many people on one of the floors at Lola's that the barrier surrounding it was broken – half the crowd were knocked to the ground.”

It is not only on dancefloors that these issues have occurred; one Cambridge student told us how one night in Lola Lo “there was an unbelievable amount of people pushing down the stairs and you couldn't move.”

Another student expressing their discomfort with overcrowding to Revolution was told that the venue planned to sell the same number of tickets the following week. Revolution Cambridge, however, told *Varsity*: “We don't want overcrowding because we will get less money”, given that they make the majority of their profits through the bar.

Bouncers

During an incident similar to those described above, a Cambridge student has claimed that “a bouncer at Lola Lo nightclub assaulted her when overcrowding led to a blocked staircase.”

The student told The Tab that “one bouncer grabbed [her] arm and would not let go (really hurting [her] in the process) screaming and swearing and spitting in [her] face.”

In response to this “distressing information”, Lola Lo said the club will implement changes, including the introduction of a one-way system for staircases. An internal investigation will also take place at the venue.

There have also been reports of stu-

dents being forced to leave Cambridge clubs while inebriated and without friends.

“
A Cambridge student has claimed that a “bouncer at Lola Lo nightclub assaulted her””

One female student told *Varsity* of how she “was removed from the club by security and left alone outside. I was not in a state to text my friends who were still inside and it is terrifying to consider the alternative outcomes that could have arisen from that situation.”

Revolution Cambridge told *Varsity* that “if someone is too drunk and vulnerable” then it is ensured that “we always look after them”.

Ticket pricing

Issues with ticket pricing and lack of refunds have also been exacerbated by the booking fees involved in online ticket purchases.

Last academic year, when clubs were socially distanced and pre-booking was compulsory, many Cambridge clubs began using FIXR, a ticketing website which charges a booking fee for each ticket. Before the pandemic, online booking systems were typically used only for special, non-weekly events, such as Grandma Groove.

“
Lack of disabled access to Cambridge clubs has been a major issue for years”

However, despite tickets now being available on the door at all of Cambridge's clubs, many are still encouraging the sale of tickets through FIXR, including Mash and Vinyl.

This booking fee makes most club tickets more expensive for students, usually by around £1, which translates to a 16% increase for some nights; with issues of overcrowding and overselling of club tickets rife in Cambridge, many are paying a higher ticket price only to be denied club entry.

Furthermore, FIXR's Terms and Conditions states that their booking fees may be internalised” – in other words, it is possible that clubs are adding it to their profits.

Disabled access to clubs

Lack of disabled access has been a major issue for Cambridge clubs for years.

Although Mash advertises itself as fully accessible, with its upcoming event The Queer Get Down describing itself on Facebook as “wheelchair accessible with a disabled toilet and wheelchair lift with a capacity of 800kg available”, wheelchair users are only offered table service.

Other Cambridge clubs do not include any such provisions. Vinyl in particular has been criticised by students for its lack of accessibility, including the absence of a suitable lift. One disabled club-goer was informed by the venue's staff that they did not possess a fire escape plan for wheelchair users.

Another told *Varsity* that “Vinyl is completely inaccessible for anyone with a physical disability”, calling their refusal to implement an accessibility policy “degrading and patronising”.

On Facebook, Cambridge SU's disabled students officer Anna Ward writes “management have been refusing to make [Vinyl] wheelchair accessible since I brought it to their attention 3 years ago and since have said they've gone ‘above and beyond’ to fix it, which means I get carried down the stairs by a friend and they overlook the fact that they don't have a fire escape plan for wheelchair users”.

Ward told *Varsity*, “Wheelchair access in Vinyl has been something I have been campaigning for since I was personally refused entry to the club in early 2019, but previous managers have not been open to conversations about the issue.”

They note that the 150kg weight limit on Vinyl's lift excludes many electric wheelchair users. Ward says that the lift is an improvement, but “still falls short of current building regulations” and met with the new manager of the venue last week – they stated that “he is open to improving access to the venue which I am very happy to hear.”

Lola Lo was criticised in a TripAdvisor review for its inaccessibility, with one user calling it “completely inaccessible and unwilling to make any reasonable adjustments for a night out for me as a wheelchair user”.

They continued: “I found the manager insensitive and rude when suggesting to ‘go to another club’.”

Cambridge's club issues are nothing new. A racist incident was reported at Vinyl in June, and increased reports of spiking have dominated the news this term. Both of these have inspired club boycotts, the latter on a national scale. FUSE, a group for queer people of colour at Cambridge, released open letters last week condemning Vinyl's lack of response and demanding a response from Glitterbomb.

In many cases, issues have been exacerbated by the challenges faced by nightclubs in the post-Covid economy, and students have been left frustrated by their disappointing experiences.

Varsity has contacted MASH, Revolution Cambridge, Lola Lo, Vinyl and The Regal Cambridge for comment.

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Applications are now open for the position of Varsity Editor-in-chief in Lent 2022. This is your chance to lead the Cambridge's biggest, best and only independent student newspaper.

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Please email editor@varsity.co.uk for an application pack or for further information.

Applications close 5pm 22nd November 2021. Interviews will take place on the morning of 26th November 2021.

www.varsity.co.uk

Extinction Rebellion Cambridge: all the action from the past fortnight



▲ The protests come in light of the COP26 conference in Glasgow (LOUIS HODGSON)

Lorna Kimmins
News Correspondent

Extinction Rebellion Cambridge are continuing to demand action on climate change through their involvement with several demonstrations over recent days and weeks.

The protests come in light of the COP26 conference in Glasgow, which started on October 31st and will run until November 12th. The UN conference brings together leaders from around the world to discuss issues relating to climate change.

COP26 Global Day of Action for Climate Justice

Climate activists from throughout the community gathered in Cambridge city centre on Saturday (06/11) as part of the COP26 Coalition for the Global Day of Action for Climate Justice.

Crowds of participants met outside Great St Mary's Church on King's Parade before marching to Parker's Piece ahead of the Climate Fair that afternoon.

Members of Extinction Rebellion Cambridge took part by staging a 'Silent Rebellion', in which they meditated on the lawns outside King's College Chapel.

Elsewhere activists could be seen walking while holding a 1km-long ‘umbilical cord’ made from reused cloth and textiles by local artists. Organisers said the purpose of the community art piece was to “highlight that we are all connected to each other, and to nature and the Earth.”

Cambridge Students' Union Undergraduate President Zak Coleman attended the rally in support.

Speaking at the Climate Fair over at Parker's Piece, third-year student Daisy Thomas said: "[W]hile the university tries to divide us, we must stand together and fight hand in hand for a just future for this city, this community, and this planet".

Blockade of oilfield research centre

Earlier in the week, members of Extinction Rebellion Cambridge staged a blockade of the Schlumberger Gould Research Centre near Madingley Road in west Cambridge.

The climate activists took the action on Thursday 4th November to protest

against the company's research into fossil fuel extraction methods.

Protesters stood on stilts and camped out in tents to block the roads around the centre, while some locked themselves to a pink boat draped with a banner saying 'no more fossil fuels'.

In a statement, the demonstrators accused the University of Cambridge of

Members of Ex-
tinction Rebel-
lion took part by
staging a ‘Silent
Rebellion’ outside
King’s College
Chapel

“cosying up to companies like Schlumberger” and urged them “to sever ties with the fossil fuel industry and instead use its influence to help create a sustainable and socially just future.”

They also said the University “must condemn the destruction of ecosystems and communities carried out by the fossil fuel industry, and take action by removing Schlumberger from the West Cambridge Site.”

The demonstration at the Schlumberger building follows a similar protest in January 2020, during which participants chained themselves to the building's main entrances.

XR Youth Cambridge Natwest protest and city centre 'funeral march'

On Saturday 30th October, members of Extinction Rebellion Youth Cambridge (XR Youth) attempted a sit-in at the Cambridge city centre branch of Natwest, only to find that it had shut half an hour

earlier than usual ahead of the protest.

The activists had hoped to protest against what they perceive as “green-washing” on the part of the bank, ahead of the start of the COP26 conference the following day (31/10), of which Natwest is a sponsor.

Instead of the planned sit-in, activists

Protesters expressed their pessimism towards COP26, calling it a “catastrophic failure”

from the group, whose members' ages range from 18-30, sat in "learning circles" outside the branch on Fitzroy Street, discussing and reading about climate

politics as well as other social issues.

Later that day, Extinction Rebellion Cambridge held a second protest which saw members marching from Parker's Piece through the town centre in eye-catching costumes.

The march was led by the ‘Red Rebels’ who were wearing long scarlet robes with red paint on their faces. Behind them walked demonstrators dressed in funeral wear and pushing empty prams. Their banner said that the government’s “climate betrayal [is] killing our children”.

Protesters expressed their pessimism towards COP26, handing out flyers which claimed that the conference is doomed to result in “catastrophic failure, which the government will cover up by spinning stories of optimism”.

UK-wide protests

Extinction Rebellion Cambridge's protests have occurred against a backdrop of demonstrations across the UK held to coincide with COP26.

Elsewhere in East Anglia, hundreds of protesters gathered outside the city hall in Norwich for the Global Day of Action for Climate Justice, while large demonstrations in Glasgow and London emphasised growing demands for action.

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News

Daniel Zeichner joins Richard Ratcliffe on hunger strike to call for government action

Georgia Goble
Senior News Editor

Cambridge MP Daniel Zeichner joined Richard Ratcliffe, the husband of detained Iranian-British dual national Nazanin Zaghari Ratcliffe, in Westminster on Tuesday (9/11) to support Ratcliffe's

campaign to secure his wife's freedom. Ratcliffe was into the 17th day of a hunger strike outside the Foreign Office when Zeichner visited.

Zaghari-Ratcliffe has been detained in Tehran since April 2016, and was sentenced to five years in prison in September 2016 for plotting to topple the Iranian

government, claims that she has always denied. Though her sentence ended in March 2021, Zaghari-Ratcliffe, was further charged with propaganda activities against the Iranian government, and was sentenced to one year on parole in April. She is not allowed to leave the country.

Richard Ratcliffe claims that Nazanin was imprisoned as leverage for a debt owed by the UK over its failure to deliver tanks to Iran in 1979, and was thus being used as a bargaining tool in negotiations between rival states. He is calling on the Government to repay the £400m debt owed to Iran.

Zeichner said in a statement that Richard is an "incredible man, highlighting the failures of the Government to protect its citizens abroad."

"His determination was clear to me," Zeichner stated, "and we discussed how his campaign has put the plight of British citizens detained in Iran back in the hearts and minds of people across the country. I passed on the messages of solidarity I have received from constituents here in Cambridge and affirmed to him that Cambridge stands with him."

Zeichner continued that The Government "must do more" to resolve the ongoing detention of Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe, alongside all of the British-Iranian nationals who are currently detained in Iran. "Their freedom is so wrongly being used as a political bargaining chip, which has resulted in an unimaginable ordeal for them and their families. I spoke to Richard's Mum, who conveyed how difficult this has been for Richard, Gabriella, and their extended family."

"The Government's strategy so far has clearly not worked. This is a sustained failure of British diplomacy."

Dominic Raab, the former foreign secretary, said the government was doing everything it could to ensure Zaghari-Ratcliffe's freedom. When asked if he

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Zaghari-Ratcliffe has been detained in Tehran since April 2016

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thought the payment of the debt would enable her release, Raab said that it was "not clear," and that he did not think there should be a "quid pro quo."

A source inside the Conservative Party told the Guardian that the prime minister, the foreign secretary and the defence secretary were all willing to pay the debt to Iran, so "unless they are not telling the truth," it remained unclear what "under the British Constitution" was preventing them from doing so.

According to the source, mechanisms had been put in place to allow the money to be transferred through humanitarian channels, and the Iranian government has committed that the money would not be transferred to the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps.

Foreign secretary Liz Truss said that she had a "a useful call" this week with her Iranian counterpart Hossein Amir-Abdollahian, in which he reiterated that the £400m debt must be paid.

Zeichner's visit came as concerns for Ratcliffe's welfare increased, with many of his friends and family suggesting that he stop the hunger strike to avoid doing permanent damage to his health.

"Labour has called on the Government to work with international allies to do everything it can to secure their immediate and unconditional release", Zeichner added. "This dreadful situation must be resolved urgently."



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Features

In defence of labels

Columnist *Ceci Browning* argues that being more open to labelling relationships would save us all a lot of time, worry and heartbreak

What is the magic number? How many dates do two people have to go on before they are dating? And, if they are dating, does that mean they are in a relationship? Are they together, just the two of them, exclusively? How much time has to pass before they are?

One day last week, at Waterstones, I overhear something that reminds me of this blurred line. I am there to work, in the café, but I have rushed through town and crashed down at the only free table to catch my breath, so it takes a few minutes before I even take the books from my bag, and I find myself tuned in to the conversation of the people next to me.

From what I gather, one of the two girls, with a fuzzy sheep jacket and ginger hair piled up on top of her head, has been dumped. The man in question has just told her that he doesn't want to take anything further. She doesn't call it 'dumped' though, because she doesn't really know where she stood with this guy to begin with. She knows that they weren't in a relationship, that she was never his 'girlfriend', but she is also sure that she was certainly more than just his friend during the three months they spent 'seeing each other'. She pauses, once she has finished recounting what happened, and then admits quietly that, while it wasn't quite a breakup, she is hurt.

The problem is that there is no relationship ruler. There is no gold standard, no measure by which we can judge whether we are in or out. In this world of dating apps and casual sex, it has become the norm that until it is explicitly established that two people are 'exclu-

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There is no gold standard, no measure by which we can judge whether we are in or out
”

sive' they have free rein to date whoever they like. Several weeks in, some people are still spreading themselves thinly, juggling a handful of people at once. After the same period, others might be living together, or even married. This is unlikely, of course, an exceptional case, but is perfectly possible. There is no one length of time after which two people become one couple.

The friend, whose face I can't see, but whose hair is black and shiny and reaches all the way down to her waist, apologises. She can do nothing to help, but she understands the feeling of what it is like to lose something you never really had to begin with. I think we all do. This is a universal sadness,

the kind when you feel like you have no right to be sad at all.

Does sleeping with somebody count as a major milestone, I wonder, as the pair carry on discussing the dilemma. Is that what's important? If you have sex on the fourth date, is that when the relationship becomes, well, a relationship? Or is it meeting the family? Surely not. Surely that comes afterwards. Is it when you stay over for the first time? It's quite easy to remain unattached when you're seeing them for only a couple of hours a week, leaving their house with your hair tied up and your knickers on back to front, but at the point where you stay, at the point where you're comfortable enough waking up next to them and eating Shreddies in your pyjamas together - surely this is significant? Surely this is a sign that you are sliding into something serious?

The grey area in the middle - that's where most of us find ourselves. It's rarely obvious. We meet somebody we like. In a bar. At work. A friend of friend.

We go out with them a few more times. We laugh at their jokes. We smile at their messages. We look forward to the next time we get to spend time with them as soon as we say goodbye. And we wait for the day when suddenly it becomes apparent that we've accidentally tripped and fallen into a relationship, without any real reassurance that this day will come at all.

I don't think I'm alone in wishing that things were easier. Aren't all of us casual daters a little bit frightened that we might bump into the person we are 'seeing' in town, 'seeing' someone else? I don't want to embarrass myself, to ask for too much too early, but at the same time I don't want to reserve myself for somebody who hasn't reserved themselves for me.

As I sit there, in Waterstones, staring at the blank document I have managed to open on my laptop, I re-

“
The grey area in the middle — that's where most of us find ourselves
”

alise the only way out of this dilemma is to get over the fear of labels we all seem to have. By never committing, by refusing to define the relationships we find ourselves in, we are absolving ourselves of responsibility. If we are not in, then we don't have to find an out, and there never has to be the difficult breakup conversation.

There may not be a relationship ruler, but to let ourselves be vulnerable in front of the people we are attached to, admitting that we like them and want to be exclusive, that we want to put labels on things - this is possibly the biggest milestone of all. If you have what it takes to tell the one person you want to date that you want to only date them, you've reached the turning point. Sure, there's a risk the other person might not have reached the same point, but at least you know where you stand. At least you have reasserted your right to feel hurt, instead of pretending that this important thing, this person you care about, can walk away and you will feel nothing.

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Features

I chose to study English because of a passion for creativity: the University's ranking system is crushing that passion

Deputy Features Editor **Lotte Brundle** considers the effects of the University's exam ranking system on students' mental health and self worth

I have always known that I was never top of my year at university, and it had never bothered me; I was confident that my talents lay elsewhere, in writing and other creative pursuits. I'd known too that, in first year, I didn't prioritise academia; my mental health, relationship, friendships, and family have always been more important to me than exams. Working, too, became my priority. You can't have a good time at Cambridge when you don't have enough money in your bank account – a coffee in this city is usually around £4.50 – a ridiculous price for hot, caffeinated, murky water. But that's how I've always viewed the 'extreme' parts of Cambridge: ridiculous, but ultimately harmless enough if you have your head screwed on right. Wrong.

Although it hasn't always been my prime concern, life being unpredictable, I have started to care a lot about univer-

sity. So last Easter term, when I achieved a 2.1 after my end of year exams, I was ecstatic. I've never considered myself particularly academic, so to me a 2.1 was a huge achievement.

My parents were delighted with my exam results. I felt warm and loved, as I heard my mum excitedly share the news with her husband. Over the summer, I allowed myself to be proud, maybe I was, after all, a valid member of this university. A feeling of mediocrity has followed me ever since starting at The Intimidating Cambridge; anyone who goes here who isn't *blatantly* an arsehole has a sense of 'imposter syndrome', I've found. This feeling of being overwhelmingly unworthy of the title 'Cambridge Student' had been with me all the way through first year, until I'd received my exam results. That was, until today, when I logged into Camsis and realised my 'ranking', the place (1st, 2nd, 3rd etc..)

that I had come in the year had been uploaded.

I knew I wasn't the best English student. For starters I find reading hard. Really hard. I find studying English Literature at Cambridge ludicrously difficult. Additionally, I'm not even the most interested in the subject out of my supervision group; I love English, but when I found out the two boys I share classes with wanted to do PhD's and go on to study and teach English I stopped comparing myself with them. I want to write TV shows, or maybe manage a business, produce theatre, or edit columns for magazines. We, therefore, do not have the same priorities. This year I have been focused primarily on making money at my holiday job that I do in the breaks between university, and my university job which consists of bartending at my college bar. I pour my other free time into extracurriculars: building a

portfolio of creative work, alongside my degree, which I will be able to show to employers when I have graduated. Work that will be useful for me after university; a portfolio that, I hope, will set me apart from other job applicants: something that will show them that I *care* about art, writing, entertainment and, most of all, joy. These things extend beyond the narrow boundaries of a degree.

Two of my friends from college who study a different subject saw their rankings before I did. When I talked with them about their exam results, they were devastated. They had received the same grade as me. Confused, I asked why they were upset – a 2.1 is a fantastic grade! Sadly, they told me that they had ranked low in their year.

I saw my ranking today. I feel embarrassed to write it and publish it publicly.

I came in 182nd place, out of 233 students. When I realised that I was the 182nd *worst* student in my year in English, all the pride, the achievement, the warm

glow that had kept me going when I was in a dark lonely place in this city, evaporated. Cambridge is wearing me thin, it's grating me to the bone, and for what?

Also, if I feel like this, how do the people above and below me feel? Also, how does the 1st person feel – what sacrifices have they made to be number one?

Fortunately my mental health is okay right now, but what if it hadn't been? Ranking like this has the potential to be dangerous.

The ranking system is cruel and, by its very nature, invites comparison. It tells us to consider whether we are 'better' or 'worse' than our fellow students, instead of encouraging individuals to be proud of their hard work and personal growth. In supervisions we are encouraged to bounce ideas off each other, read each other's work and discuss literature together. The ranking, unequivocally, splits us apart. To me, it feels like a blatant dismissal of my hard work: at both of my paid jobs, my friendships, my romantic relationship, and time spent with my family. This feels like Cambridge's way of saying that none of it matters: normal human interactions, manual work, romance, family time.

Does this university care about its student's mental health? Many of this University's famous alumni have gone

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The message to me seems to be very clear: get a 1st class degree or lose your passion for your subject trying
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on to be comedians, actors, creative writers, things that cannot be achieved simply from a first-class academic degree. Some of 'The Cambridge Greats' – Stephen Fry, Emma Thompson, Claudia Winkleman – made their careers in the media, in the arts, not in academia. This ranking system seems to tell me that the most important thing is where you place academically. The message to me seems to be very clear: get a 1st class degree or lose your passion for your subject trying.

I received a Student Support Docu-

ment last academic year from the Disability Resource Centre after being diagnosed with ADHD – widely considered a learning difficulty. Neurodiv-

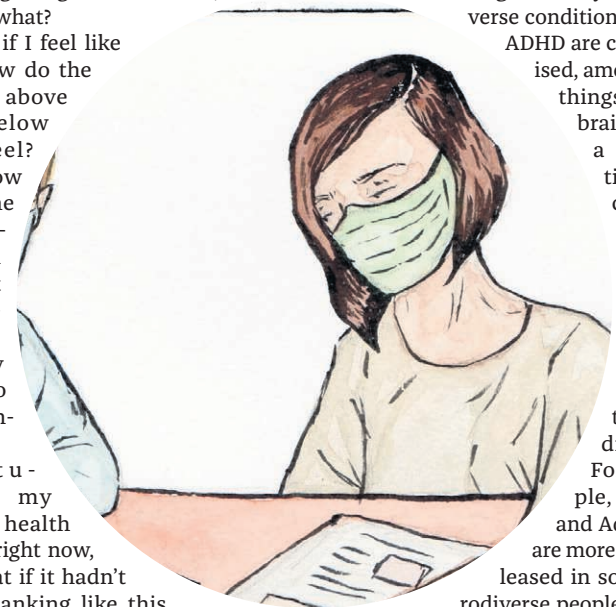
erse conditions such as ADHD are characterised, among other things, by the brain having a harder time with certain functions that come more easily to neurotypical individuals.

For example, Cortisol and Adrenaline are more easily released in some neurodiverse people, such as those who have ASD, ADHD and Dyspraxia. Cortisol is the stress and anxiety hormone; Adrenalin triggers the 'fight flight freeze' response. Having high levels of these hormones makes Oxytocin (responsible for belonging and being valued), Serotonin (happiness), and Dopamine (reward) harder to come by.

But Cambridge University isn't stupid: they know these things. They are aware that a high percentage of their students are neurodiverse. Cambridge knows too that their students are not lazy, they made us jump through enough ridiculous hoops (multiple interviews, extra examinations etc.) to get into this institution in the first place. The conclusion then is that they either don't think about these issues, or simply don't care about their students enough, and that makes me angry.

The academic pressure here sometimes is so heavy I feel as if my spine will snap from the sheer weight of it. By many I am congratulated on attending this 'marvellous' University, but I'm starting to wonder how marvellous Cambridge really is after all, if the ranking system they choose to impose can make me feel this terrible about what is, realistically, a great achievement. There are great parts of going to this university too – don't mistake me, but the ranking is not a great part.

This is my message to the university, but I guess let's start with the English Faculty, my Faculty. In your effort to push us to be better, you may just be killing the very creative spirit, the joy, the *magic*, that you liked so much about us in our interviews. So, on behalf of the potential future artists, writers and creatives in this department, if you care about us at all. If you care about art – sort it out. It's not unreasonable to ask you to reconsider ranking us in this way. Because that enthusiastic sparkle you saw in our eyes, the eager glint you saw that told you we loved this subject – it's growing dimmer, fast.



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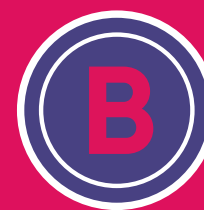


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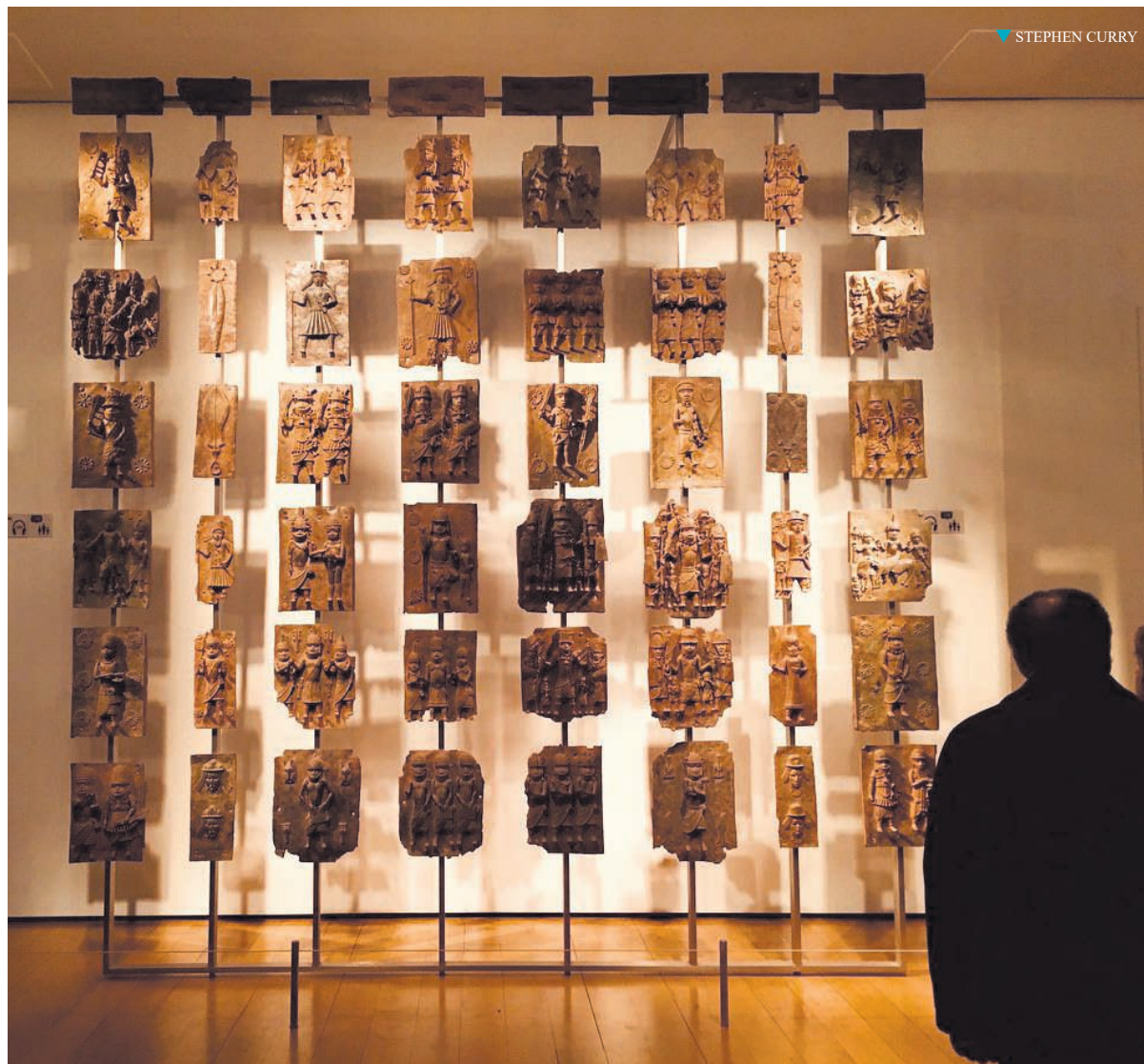


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Opinion

The repatriation of Benin Bronzes

After years of campaigning by alumni, Jesus College have handed back the Okukor Bronze. *Tara Panesar* discusses this recent watershed moment and considers whether museums and other institutions should follow suit



On the 27th of October Jesus College Cambridge officially handed back the Okukor Bronze that had been looted during Britain's 1897 colonial punitive expedition of Benin. The repatriation was the result of long-term campaigns from Cambridge University alumni Jason Okundaye, Ore Ogunbiyi, Amatey Doku and Nadine Batchelor-Hunt and the Legacy of Slavery Working Party at Jesus College. As the first UK institution to return a looted Bronze, this watershed moment has placed much anticipated pressure onto more institutions to repatriate artefacts in their collections. The Cambridge University Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (MAA) currently owns approximately 160 artefacts that were looted during the 1897 invasion, with 6 Bronze portrait busts on display today. Will it be the next institution to consider a full return of the Bronzes?

In 2017 the MAA established its relationship with the Benin Dialogue Group (BDG), an organisation consisting of the Royal Court at Be-

nin, the Nigerian National Commission for Museums and Monuments, and museum representatives from the United Kingdom, Germany and Sweden to name a few. The BDG is dedicated to sourcing and repatriating items looted from Benin and displaying them in a new purpose-built museum in Benin City. Ac-

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Museums are crucial
in discussions of colo-
nialism
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cording to the group, the museum will reunite numerous artefacts created by the Edo people from the 13th century onwards — artefacts that are currently dispersed across the globe — as well as situating the Bronzes within a wider display of contemporary Nigerian art. Since

2017, the Museum of Anthropology and Archaeology have been working to strengthen relations and continue dialogue with the BDG, but have not reported any concrete action until recently.

On the evening of October 26th, the MAA hosted The Benin Dialogue Group and representatives from the Royal Court at Benin to continue the discussion of repatriation at the MAA that began the previous day at the British Museum. I attended the first half of the event as a gallery assistant, and visitors were given a tour of the museum's current exhibition '[Re:] Entanglements: Colonial collections in decolonial times' led by curator Professor Paul Basu from SOAS alongside Dr George Agbo of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The exhibition stirred up a range of reactions from the BDG. There was both praise and critique, the latter discussing how photographs of people in Sierra Leone — taken by colonial anthropologist Northcote Thomas — should be displayed in a modern context.

The '[Re:] Entanglement' exhibition highlighted how crucial mu-

seums are in discussions of colonialism/decolonisation; they have the positionality and power to re-evaluate their collections through a post-colonial lens. Research spotlighting the unethical means through which artefacts, such as the Benin Bronzes, were obtained plays a key role in repatriation endeavours. Museum goers should no longer wander passively through the halls of the MAA, but instead consider how and why the objects on display came to be, and what may their future be? The MAA has responded to this growing responsibility with an honest statement on the acquisition of the Bronzes, the RePresent project, and contemporary artwork by Black-British artist Tony Philips which highlighted the unnatural displacement of highly sacred Benin objects in Europe.

Whilst I accept that the methods of display at the MAA encourages visitors to see artefacts through a decolonial lens, the final and most important step in decolonisation is to transfer the Benin Bronzes back to Nigerian ownership. In the words of Dan Hicks, “Anthropology museums can be sites of conscience...But without acts of return this means nothing”. After the discussions held at the British Museum and MAA, the BDG released a statement in which they hinted at the repatriation of the Benin artefacts from both institutions, and ongoing cultural heritage projects in Benin. I spoke to MAA Director Dr Nicholas Thomas to gain a better understanding of what this process entailed. He replied stating that over the next few months the MAA will work with the National Commission for Museums and Monuments in Nigeria to repatriate objects looted from Benin in 1897. Furthermore, he reported that the returning objects will be housed in a world-class museum in Benin City — in its early stages of development this will be the Edo Museum of West African Arts.

The repatriation of the Benin artefacts rightfully makes us ask what objects in the MAA should be researched and returned next. The museum is already engaged in the return of Ugandan artefacts taken under the colonial endeavours of Reverend John Roscoe. Working with the Uganda Museum and MAA, Professor Derek Peterson expects items such as the Bugandan royal drum to be exhibited in Uganda in late 2023. To keep up momentum, it's important not to ignore the looted items that are in the archives of large institutions, not just the ones that are on display. With over one million objects

under its wing, I asked Dr Nicholas Thomas as to whether the MAA perceives the future repatriation of the Benin Bronzes as a watershed moment in which the institution encourages the return of other

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objects both in display and in the archives, that are not as politicised and well known as the Benin Bronzes and Ugandan objects?

In his response Dr Thomas also attested that the museum is proactive and transparent when responding to interests in their collection from communities and nations, and the institution greatly values provenance research. On the back of this, with the digitisation of all their artefacts in an online catalogue August 2020, the MAA and University of Cambridge should actively encourage public volunteers and students to conduct provenance research on artefacts, whether this be individual or project-led. After all, the case for the repatriation of unethically acquired items is always stronger if we know the context in which they came to museums in the first place.

Joining Jesus College, the MAA will be one of the next British institutions to return their Benin Bronzes. As a high-profile museum, I anticipate that this repatriation will pressure other institutions to solidify relations with the Benin Dialogue Group and Nigerian National Commission for Museums and Monuments, developing a clear plan to return stolen objects. I am hopeful that the repatriations at the MAA will become a part of a much wider movement in which institutions from all around the world are forced to confront their collections' unethical origins, and are held accountable to take quick and meaningful action. With a lot of discussion and hard work, the next decade will be one of active research, re-evaluation and repatriation.

Wars of commemoration: the scuffle over Northern Ireland's centenary

Julia Fitzpatrick argues that politicians must be willing to cooperate one hundred years after the partition of Ireland



On Thursday 21st October, a service at St Patrick's Cathedral in Armagh marked the centenary of the partition of Ireland and the establishment of Northern Ireland. The "Service of Reflection and Hope", organised by the leaders of Ireland's main Protestant and Catholic churches, was tainted

“It doesn't get much more ecumenical than an inter-faith church service”

with controversy weeks before it took place. Irish President Michael D. Higgins announced he would not attend the service, because “what [had started out as] an invitation to a religious service had in fact become a political statement”. His stance reflects the difficulty of com-

memorating such a divisive event. Enacted against the backdrop of the Irish War of Independence, partition divided the island into two entities: Northern Ireland, a semi-devolved region within the UK, and the Irish Free State, a dominion within the Commonwealth (until 1949 when it declared itself a republic). A century later, partition and the ensuing Civil War of 1922 to 1923 remains, for many, a painful chapter in Irish history. The lasting hostilities and divisions were laid bare in the sectarian conflict of more recent decades: the “Troubles”.

A tricky centenary, then, for certain. However, it's unclear what Higgins found so objectionable in the service's title. This was no celebration of partition. It would be difficult to construct a more carefully-worded pitch than an “opportunity for honest reflection on the past one hundred years, with the acknowledgement of failures and hurts, but also with a clear affirmation of our shared commitment to building a future marked by peace, reconciliation and a commitment to the common good”. It doesn't get much more ecumenical than an inter-faith church service. The hard-line republican Sinn Féin's boycott was unsurprising. Higgins' strong record on reconciliation in the past,

however, makes his absence more disappointing. Throughout the “Decade of Commemorations”, his *Macnamh 100* initiative has organised seminars reflecting on events including the First World War, the Easter Rising, and the War of Independence. The aims of *Macnamh*, the Irish phrase for “reflection, contemplation, meditation and thought”, are not at odds with a “Service of Reflection and Hope”.

The service itself was dignified and inclusive. Far from being a celebration of partition, the overall tone was sombre, as when the Catholic Archbishop of Armagh, Eamon Martin, expressed regret at how “partition has polarised people on this island”. The Church of Ireland Primate John McDowell spoke of the lack of cross-community connection growing up in unionist East Belfast: “there was always a sense of them and us”. Archbishop Martin recalled how Troubles-era border checkpoints spoiled childhood holidays south of the border, a timely reminder that the Irish border was a contentious issue long before Brexit. The President of the Methodist Church, Reverend Dr Sahr Yambasu, reflected on the need “to give thanks and, also, lament; to imagine what could be, and to choose the way for-

“Sinn Féin, after all, wrote the manual on politics-through-truancy”

ward that can be mutually beneficial”. Most notable was Archbishop Martin's acknowledgement of “the difficult truth that perhaps we in the churches could have done more to deepen our understanding of each other and to bring healing and peace to our divided and wounded communities”. Prayers were read by two victims injured in the Troubles, Professor Mary Hannon-Fletcher and Robert Barfoot, serving as a powerful reminder of the purpose of commemoration and reconciliation.

In fact, the only crass element was Boris Johnson wearing a Union Jack face mask. Which brings us back to the politicians, who unfortunately do not approach reconciliation as sensitively as the church leaders. While Higgins' absence was disappointing, no one could have been surprised by the Democratic Unionist Party leaping at the opportunity to attack him. Their accusation that he was snubbing the Queen fell a bit flat when it became clear she wasn't attending either (albeit for medical, not

political, reasons). And as Higgins correctly pointed out, their righteous indignation was “a bit much” given that there “often has not been a great deal of traffic down [south] from the DUP”. Most glaringly, the DUP are boycotting the North-South Ministerial Council in opposition to the post-Brexit Northern Irish Protocol. Participation in the cross-border NSMC is a condition of the Troubles-ending Good Friday Agreement of 1998, meaning that the boycott has recently been judged unlawful by the Belfast High Court.

Perhaps, then, absence is what defines Northern Irish politicians. Sinn Féin, after all, wrote the manual on politics-through-truancy by refusing to take their seats in Westminster. The attendance at the service of senior Irish government ministers Simon Coveney and Jack Chambers, as well as Colum Eastwood, leader of the moderate nationalist SDLP, shows that some are taking more constructive approaches to commemoration. Still, the service had barely concluded before a new fight began about the Northern Ireland Office's plans to light up buildings across the UK in green and blue to mark the centenary. Sinn Féin blocked the proposal in both the Stormont Assembly and

Belfast City Hall, creating the farcical picture of acknowledgment of Northern Ireland — in everywhere but Northern Ireland. Plus

“[Politicians] unfortunately do not approach reconciliation as sensitively as the church leaders”

ça change.

A hundred years after partition, the goal of a peaceful and inclusive society seems as challenging as in 1921. Coming to terms with a contested past requires leaders to acknowledge that their opponents have valid perspectives. The church leaders have acknowledged their responsibility. It is time for the politicians to follow their lead.

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Science

'Dragon Man' and its place in evolutionary history

In this exciting report of a new insight in palaeontology, *Jonny Gathercole* explores the story of how an unusual skull found in 1933 may shed light on the elusive Denisovans



► MICHAEL KEESEY, STEPHEN COOMBS, SMOKEY BJB, NOBU TAMURA AND MATEUS ZICA

In recent months, a revelation made by an elderly Chinese man on his deathbed has shaken the already arguably contentious field of human evolutionary history.

In 1933, whilst completing construction on a bridge over the Song-

hua River in China, this elderly man in his youth uncovered a remarkably intact fossilised skull from the riverbed. Perhaps sensing its value, the man hid it inside his family's well – a location far away from the Japanese soldiers who occupied the region at the time. Over 80 years passed be-

fore the man revealed the lonesome fossil's location to his children, and in 2018 the children, in the wake of their father's passing, donated the skull to the scientific community. The skull was immediately examined by palaeoanthropologist Qiang Ji and his research team, who are based in Hebei

GEO University, China. The group named the more-than-146,000-year-old fossil the 'Harbin cranium', an apt name considering its discovery in the city of Harbin.

In one of the three initial research papers, the authors explain that aside from a missing jawbone, the Harbin skull is "an undistorted and almost complete cranium". Ji and colleagues elaborate that the Harbin skull presents a "mosaic of features". A mosaic that bizarrely includes morphological attributes typical of our own species, as well as those typical of far more archaic hominins. The authors put it simply by stating "(the Harbin skull has) a wide but *H. sapiens* like face". In fact, this peculiar combination of cranio-morphological traits led to the researchers' affirmation of the skull as "the most com-

plete representative of a distinct middle Pleistocene lineage".

In light of this information, Ji and his research colleagues concluded there was sufficient evidence to declare the Harbin cranium as the single member of a brand-new species, *Homo longi*. The name comes from "Long Jiang", which describes the original area of the skull's discovery and translates to "dragon river". Thus, *Homo longi*, which in turn offers the literal translation of "Dragon Man".

It is the declaration of Harbin-exclusive-speciation where other palaeoanthropologists start to disagree. Many believe that instead of constituting a new species, the Harbin cranium is instead the first relatively complete fossil of the ev-

initial researchers were able to extract some genetic material from a dentine proteome (essentially a protein on one of the teeth), and low and behold it matched the Denisovans, thus delivering the palaeoanthropological community the bottom quarter of a Denisovan face. Shortly after, a paper was published outlining the discovery of Denisovan mitochondrial DNA being trapped in the sediment of the same Tibetan cave. Interestingly, the DNA deposits were present in three different layers of sediment, and thus three different time periods, thereby suggesting the extended occupation of the cave by the Denisovans.

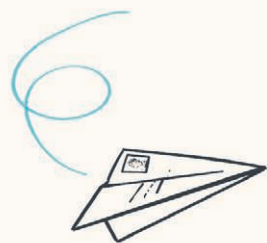
So where does the Harbin cranium fit in? Well, considering the previous evidence on the likelihood of the Xiahe mandible as a Denisovan mandible, we must return to the original paper. Ji and his colleagues describe how the second upper molar (M^2) of the Harbin skull matches that of the Xiahe mandible. Not only this, the authors of the paper express how "the Harbin M^2 also matches the known permanent Denisovan molars in size and root morphology".

Whilst this amalgamation of evidence seems conclusive, consensus is likely aloof. Similarities in dentition do not necessarily mean two individuals are of the same species. Moreover, the genetic evidence linking the Xiahe mandible and the Denisovans does not rule out the possibility of a close Denisovan relative as the culprit.

So, when can we expect answers?

In a bid to settle the debate, there is currently an effort to obtain genetic material from the Harbin cranium, however this is by no means a guarantee. Despite this, the possibility of the Harbin cranium belonging to a Denisovan is an exciting prospect. In the words of our own Professor Marta Lahr in a recent BBC interview, "Now we may actually have the first face of the Denisovans".

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Facing a career in archaeology

Muddled by the image of hobbyists and metal detectors, **Evie Carter** unearths what archaeology is really all about



poor career prospects, and slightly intangible skillset are things to be desired. Residing on the border between science and humanities means daily (and sometimes even hourly) u-turns; from excavation to coding, heritage studies to lab work, translations to artefact conservation.

Anyone taking an unconventional course will know that your passion is often met with unsolicited opinions, which may have been brought into uncomfortably close proximity for those living at home during the past few lockdowns.

From an uncle who tells me archaeologists 'do nothing productive' and cost him an

arm and a leg; to a younger cousin who

believes in ancient aliens; and a grandma whose church teaches young-earth creationism – we've all got a monopoly of opinions on human history. To the extent that even my partner's dad asks me how my 'little hobby' is going whenever I see him.

When it feels as if the outside world (read: government) is mounting an offensive, the little things can be gratifying.

In their desire to be taken seriously as a 'hard' science (alongside a healthy dose of classism – see *The Dig*), academics have attempted to distance themselves from perceived 'hobbyists' and, to an extent, the sector of commercial archaeology. But gatekeeping who can 'do' archaeology and ranking research archaeology as more 'valuable' only damages science communication and community engagement. Projects such as the Portable Antiquities Scheme aim to remedy this dis-

connection. Widening participation is a vital part of fighting future cuts. I have learnt that enthusiasm is infectious, and usually, people are less apathetic than they think they are. Holding an object, resurfaced for the first time in hundreds (or even thousands) of years, made and used by someone long since deceased, is a uniquely addictive feeling. Lockdown has physi-

cally removed us from this experience, the touch paper for my route towards this degree. Recently, on a walk with my family, an unexpected encounter with some metal detectorists transformed us briefly into a 20-person strong field survey, spotting buckles, bells, sherds, and thimbles as we scrutinized a ploughed field. At home, a little cousin washed her finds in the sink while another told me about her history teacher, Adrian Targett, who made headlines in 1997 after being identified as a maternal descendent of Cheddar man – a

9,000-year-old hunter-gatherer from Gough's cave in Cheddar Gorge. I talked to my grandma about the transformation of the fenland landscape of her childhood and how this continues to affect wildlife and archaeological preservation today. Despite our dramatically different outlooks, she appreciates the value of researching who our ancestors were and how they lived, and she always meets my enthusiasm for my degree with genuine support and interest.

Heritage is deeply personal; that's what makes it so hard to effectively lobby against detrimental legislation and convince others that it is important. I believe outreach is the only way to combat the threats archaeology faces – giving people places, objects, and stories they can relate to. Old, broken, discarded things don't seem engaging until they illuminate an individual's life, and archaeology is fundamentally about people – a time-worn cliché, but a true one.

Living and studying in an area so close to my personal heritage is a privilege few people have and not one I take for granted. After two missed years, walking through the fields our ancestors inhabited was a perfect way to reconnect with family: past and present.

Digging isn't for everyone, but heritage is.

PHOTOGRAPH BY EVIE CARTER

I love my degree. I really love it. Soil science and bones might not be *your* thing, and that's understandable, but ask my friends and you'll hear how I manage to bring every conversation back to human culture and adaptation.

Unfortunately, it's not the most welcoming time to be facing a career in archaeology.

Since the beginning of 2021, Sheffield, Hull, and Worcester Universities' Archaeology Departments have announced their closures to future undergraduate applicants. Classified neither as STEM or SIVS (Strategically Important Vulnerable Subjects), funding for archaeology and biological anthropology departments is scarce. Student applications are falling, and jobs in academia provide increasingly little security.

Following each closure, pockets of outrage spring up on Twitter or in student protests, but it is difficult not to feel disheartened when hearing university staff describing their short notice and sometimes disrespectful dismissals.

Additionally, changes to local planning permission are threatening commercial archaeology. Current legislation requires developers to pay commercial archaeologists to conduct fieldwork as required by the local authority. In this way, the developers who stand to make financial gains from constructions that could harm archaeological deposits invest in preserving local heritage through the archaeological process. The new planning bill, proposed at the opening of the current parliament, does not allude to this local arrangement.

If this legislation is overlooked, developers who regard Archaeology as slow and costly will not face consequences for cutting corners – putting both careers and heritage at risk. It's demoralising to see Archaeology erased like a footnote from the white paper. The progress of the new bill has

been paused by the government, but it is still uncertain if future iterations of the legislation will protect the archaeological process.

Meanwhile, in the heritage sector, proposals for a road tunnel underneath Stonehenge were narrowly averted for the fourth time this July. Since 1995, transport secretaries have attempted to dig a bypass underneath the landscape of this UNESCO world heritage site, destroying valuable archaeological contexts. Thanks to judicial review, the construction has been narrowly avoided, but when the security of globally recognised monuments isn't guaranteed, it's easy to feel a little helpless.

Take it from popular history giants Dan Snow, Alice Roberts, and Tony Robinson – British archaeology is under attack on the ground and in the lecture theatre.

Passionate archaeologists do an excellent job of mounting a worthy defence

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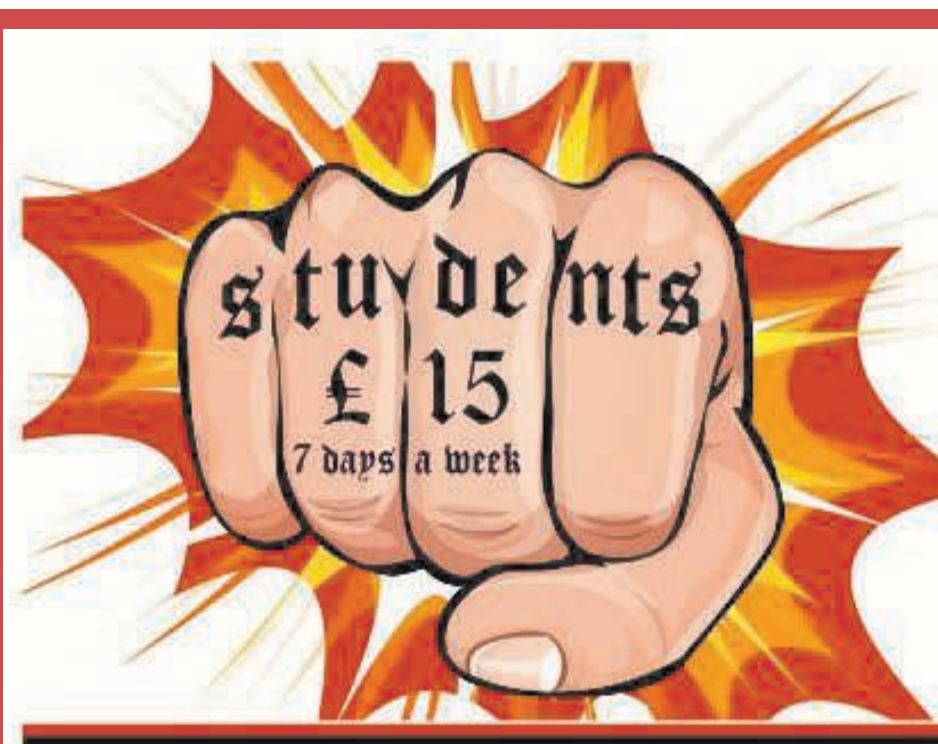
based on the innate value of cultural heritage; the importance of exploring human identity; and the economic value of historical tourism: all completely valid and important justifications. But defending 'doing' archaeology and biological anthropology at a societal level rarely convinces people in day-to-day life that your £40,000 student debt,

arm and a leg; to a younger cousin who

believes in ancient aliens; and a grandma whose church teaches young-earth creationism – we've all got a monopoly of opinions on human history. To the extent that even my partner's dad asks me how my 'little hobby' is going whenever I see him.

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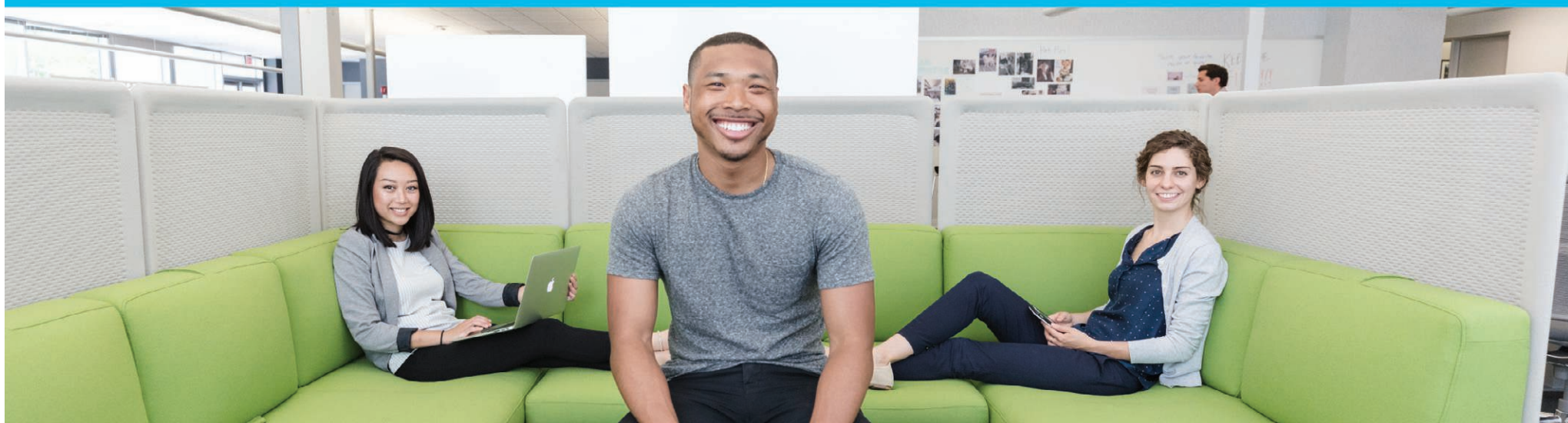
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Comment

The government's empty rhetoric against Ratcliffe's grim reality

As Richard Ratcliffe enters his seventeenth day of his hunger strike, Senior Opinion Editor **Olivia Young** argues that the government has continued to fail Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe

Georgia Goble
Senior News Editor

Richard Ratcliffe, the husband of detained Iranian-British dual national Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe, is, at the time of writing (11/11), 19 days into a hunger strike outside the Foreign office, with the aim of putting pressure on the Government to secure his wife's freedom.

Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe has been detained in Iran since 2016, and was sentenced to five years in prison in September 2016 for plotting to topple the Iranian government.

Richard Ratcliffe claims that Nazanin was imprisoned as leverage for a debt owed by the UK to Iran. He is calling on the Government to repay the £400m debt.

Hunger strikes are not a new form of political protest, but this protest has a key difference from the past. For others like Emmeline Pankhurst or Mahatma Gandhi, their hunger strikes were to raise attention for their cause to public officials. For Ratcliffe, however, the story couldn't be more different: the government have already accepted that they need to act, but the problem is that they haven't. Visits from Claudia Winkleman, Cambridge MP Daniel Zeichner, or even Labour leader Keir Starmer may be a good photo opportunity – but how far will they actually go in closing the accountability gap of the government?

Ratcliffe argues that the government is clear on what needs to happen: the £400 million debt that the UK acknowledges it owes Iran from 1979 must be paid. In 2008, international courts ruled that the UK did owe the debt from undelivered tanks, and the UK government has indeed indicated that they are willing to pay it. Ratcliffe is arguing that his wife is essentially being held as ransom for this debt – and the governments

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“It's too easy to forget that inaction can have the same human cost as a misguided action”

empty promises to repay it is behind her five year and ongoing detainment by the Iranian government. From a journalist to a diplomatic pawn, the situation surrounding Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe's has become increasingly beyond belief.

The government's apprehension in moving from rhetoric to reality may be a common observation in the last few decades, but it's too easy to forget that inaction can have the same human cost as a misguided action. The longer inaction continues, the more political prisoners and their loved ones will needlessly suffer.

Every day after school, their seven-year-old daughter joins her father in the cold and often rain-soaked camping chairs outside the Foreign Office. Committed as he is to his hunger strike, Ratcliffe insists he will not let his “my daughter, Gabriella go from two parents to none. [He has] no death wish”. Nevertheless, concerns for his wellbeing are increasing as he enters day seventeen of his hunger strike. Well wishing strangers send their kindness, and even Amazon packages to the FCDO, but this is no substitute to sustenance. Ratcliffe admits that “each day now feels like a descent” – and coupled with a “strange desire for scrambled egg on toast”, every day of Richard's suffering reminds us of the government's failure to protect its citizens.

Ratcliffe vows that he and his wife will be united in their goals and united in their suffering for as long as it takes for her to stop being seen as political leverage. After all, what does it mean to have a British passport if your government treats you as collateral damage? Whether it's blue or black, surely if British passports mean free movement, this should include your passage back home to your family. The family of Zaghari-Ratcliffe can only hope, and the government seemingly can only disappoint.



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Interviews

Director Luke Syson wants to re-examine the Fitzwilliam Museum's collections and legacy

Alex Wardle speaks to Luke Syson about the Fitzwilliam Museum's societal and civic role

A week has passed since the third reopening of the Fitzwilliam Museum and as I walk down Trumpington street a crowd of people are lining up to go inside. Past the spiked railings and the stony lion guardians, I turn right down a tree-covered road which takes me up to the Fitz's offices in Grove Lodge where I'm meeting with Luke Syson, Director of the Fitzwilliam Museum.

In contrast to the towering neoclassical façade of the museum, Grove Lodge is reassuringly unimposing. Syson welcomes me into what I imagine was once a dining room and sits across from me at a broad wooden table. Outside, a performance of *As You Like It* is taking place and the occasional line slips in through a crack in the window.

I'm struck by how normal our meeting feels but suspect that for Syson this restored normality is particularly pronounced. Having been appointed Director in February 2019, he has spent the majority of his tenure overseeing a museum closed to the public.

The COVID era brought its own set of challenges for Syson, but the Sisyphean task of responding to the events of this past year is far from over. As the museum sector shakes itself out of its stupor, it re-emerges onto a cultural landscape irreversibly altered by the Black Lives Matter movement. If before, inaction on anti-racism could be passed off as complacency, continued lethargy can

only be considered an act of complicity.

As an institution, the Fitzwilliam has its fair share of untangling to do. For starters, it is one of the largest museums in the UK, housing over 500,000 objects spanning four millennia of human creation. Notably however, it has no collections from the Global South. These works reside instead in the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology.

"[The Fitzwilliam] has collections of material that were considered [historically] as belonging to the category of 'art', as belonging to civilisations that were deemed to be part of the chain of being that led to our own glorious civilisation." Syson says this with more than a pinch of irony. "Despite the fact that European artists were annexing or citing artwork from Africa, it wasn't regarded as being part of the narrative the Fitzwilliam wanted to tell."

This is a narrative that Syson is unwilling to perpetuate. "It was a white, European, male-dominated history of art," he says. "And even if I thought that was acceptable, the rest of the world doesn't and I don't either."

Syson received a BA in Art History from the Courtauld Institute, an education which he describes as being "exclusively Western". He says, however, that "shaking this off was a very quick process" and describes how his interests were "informed early on by the consciousness of working in museums that looked at the whole world".

The challenge for Syson, having previously worked at museums with a global scope, is to come back to a collection which was built up in a way that militates against the telling of more inclusive and global narratives. Having inherited a collection that willfully excluded so many artistic traditions, how might Syson present a global history of art?

The first step, Syson tells me, is to re-interpret Fitzwilliam's existing material. He cites, as an example, a medallion inscribed with Josiah Wedgwood's 'am I not a man and a brother' slogan. The image, showing "a person of colour in a subservient pose", is universally recognisable. It is an image which "has its legacy today in racist attitudes" that remain all too prevalent.

"However, it was also an object that persuaded [a] lot of the white population at that moment, who were prepared to think of slavery as something that happened far away, [to think of it] as something that affected them immediately, emotionally and politically."

Some objects, Syson admits, are "purely bad and need to be dealt with", but on the whole objects do not fit neatly into a 'good' vs. 'bad' binary. Instead Syson stresses the idea that "every object is complex in terms of its history, and that [objects] can provide quite simple pathways to this complexity." Handled with care, an object such as the Wedgwood medallion "can raise consciousness, can build awareness, can foster protest".

With the image of a toppled Edward Colston still fresh in my mind, I wonder how Syson feels about the removal of such artwork. "One thing to say is that the strength of feeling that has given rise to actual physical removal is completely understandable given that for much too long people like me working in institutions didn't do enough."

"I instinctively favour an idea of keeping things in play because my worry is that if you remove them those histories get forgotten. But I also worry very

much if the promises to explain are hollow or not carried out; that seems to me to be very worrying indeed [...] So I'm

exclusively on my own experience." I push Syson further on this topic: are we going to see members of marginalised communities in Cambridge actively involved in the commissioning and acquisition of new works at the Fitzwilliam? "There is a part of me, which as a traditional museum creator, thinks, 'golly giving over agency in that way to people outside



▲ FITZWILLIAM MUSEUM

the museum feels very uncomfortable' [...] But ultimately it is a good suggestion."

Everything Syson and I have spoken about to this point fundamentally concerns the interaction of art and people. It is striking, then, that this heightened public discourse has been taking place at a time of collective distance between society and its artworks. For over a year, lovers of art were only able to experience works through the glitchy prism of the digital divide.

Syson is no stranger to visiting galleries that are closed to the public – this is, he says, "one of the great privileges of [his] profession". He did not, however, look forward to his occasional visits to the Fitzwilliam during its closure. "A closed-up building, with at that point no clear expectation of when people will return, is very different from that stolen hour before you know you're going to be sharing it again with lovers of art, people who have come to feel and to think. Art", he says "loses its energy in some profound way when there aren't people to look at it."

Though efforts were made to transpose parts of the Fitz's collections into the virtual realm, this was clearly an unhappy compromise. "I still think [...] that there is no substitute for standing in front of a work of art, engaging with it in real life, in real time, in the flesh. That's when you find yourself with tears in your eyes, that's when you get a shiver up your spine, that's when you are moved and ideally you're starting to think."

As the Fitzwilliam begins to welcome visitors once again, Syson seeks to address a number of questions as Director – "what is our social, our civic, our societal role? How can we make ourselves more indispensable to more people's lives?" After our conversation, I feel confident that Syson intends on taking on these challenges with urgency and with force.

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Vulture



WEEK
FIVE
BLUES

ILLUSTRATION BY OLIVIA LISLE

Lifestyle

Magic mushrooms & more: The Graduate Hotel

Editors *Isabel Sebode* and *Nick Bartlett* sit down for a dinner at the Graduate Hotel and find themselves indulging in a variety of surprising, and spectacular, dishes

Mushrooms are controversial. You either love them, or you hate them. Growing up, I belonged proudly to the latter group. I couldn't understand how something with such a spongy texture could be considered appealing. Certainly, I shied away from them at home, let alone when they appeared on a restaurant menu. At first glance, the dinner menu at the Graduate Hotel awoke my childhood instinct to drop the menu and seek refuge in the bathroom. Though, after meeting our lovely waiter Laura, who was warm and chatty from the outset, there was little I could do to evade her recommendations. Mushroom was the order of the day.

When you first wander into the Graduate Hotel the glint of the liquor shelves from the bar catches your eye. If you follow your feet to the left, passing the couches and chairs where bar-goers recline lazily and contentedly, you will arrive at the main restaurant. Situated along the river Cam, the rustic wooden beams combine with the elegance of the Parisian-velvet booths to affect an ambience of style and comfort. At the rear of the restaurant, the kitchen extends horizontally, so that the chefs and their tools are visible to the patrons as they wait on their meals. We took the opportunity to catch the head chef, Adam, as he stood, hands working ferociously, in front of the grill.

Originally from Cardiff, Adam initially began work with Mark Waring before moving on to the Square - a two Michelin star restaurant in London. Towards the end of the meal, when Isabel slumped back contentedly against the chair, and I reached across for her saucer to scoop up the remnants of her mushroom ice cream, Adam reappeared. Very quickly, he picked up on my rough, easily distinguishable, Australian accent; it was even more distinguishable, he tells us, because of his prior experience working in the Northern parts of Melbourne city. After seven years in London, working 7am to 1am shifts, Adam travelled to Australia and around South-East Asia before moving into the role at the Graduate Hotel.

At Home now in the kitchen of the Graduate Hotel, Adam and his team are finding their ground in the use of local ingredients, sourced from spots not far from the restaurant itself. Unlike Nick, I have always loved eating mushrooms; growing up in Germany left little option but to indulge in their various tastes and flavours. Consequently, I was looking forward to our trio of mushroom dishes, yet I was less prepared for the odd-looking array of crackers that arrived at our table before the starters. Aligned with their ethos of creating food that is natural and wholesome, the kitchen reuse ingredients that may otherwise go to waste, developing them into surprising treats. Besides the onion and cheese rind, or

the lemon, it was definitely the seaweed and coffee ground crackers that seemed perhaps just a step too far into the experimental realm of modern cuisine. Yet, the seaweed and coffee seemed to melt together, combining the richness of the latter with the saltiness of the former in an unexpected burst of flavour.

Before the appetisers arrived, Laura brought out a basket of the restaurant's malted grain sourdough bread and bangay cultured butter. The recipe, perfected by chef Ben, was a lockdown creation - guiltily, I asked Nick what he had achieved during his stint at home? The first mushroom starter arrived next, and it was this dish which reaffirmed for me, and convinced Nick, of the versatility of the humble mushroom. Since both of us follow a vegetarian diet, we were surprised to find the texture of the hen of the wood mushroom to be similar to that of chicken or scallops. The richness of the mushroom meat was balanced out by the bitterness of the yeasted hollandaise sauce. Next to arrive were the roast jerusalem artichokes. After we had punctured the egg on top of the dish, the creamy yolk enveloped the artichokes, the fattiness obscuring the fact that the dish was solely composed of vegetables. The yolk's heaviness blended well with the earthy flavour and texture of the artichokes, with the black pepper bringing heat to the creaminess. Often, restaurants either do too little to season a vegetable dish or go overboard in trying to conceal the fact that it is after all just veggies. The kitchen found the perfect balance of two dishes which were well-balanced and left no need for a meat-based protein.

The main courses soon arrived, with the steamed and grilled flourish farm vegetables and the broccoli and berkswell tart proving the versatility of simple vegetables, if carefully attended to. What Adam's kitchen has perfected is finding the most interesting way to prepare the vegetable and then balancing its natural flavour with a light, oftentimes acidic sauce. Whether that be the sour hollandaise sauce of the starter or that of the farm vegetables: the vegetables' natural tastes are accentuated through the addition of the sauce that elevates but does not overpower the original flavour.

The berkswell tart was flavoursome, but perhaps became overshadowed by the mushroom mashed potatoes that we ordered as a side - the second element of our mushroom voyage. The richness of the mushroom, combined with a strong saltiness and the creaminess of the potato made this side addictive. A truly beautiful addition (Nick and I both agreed that this is 'the best mash we've ever had'), yet perhaps diverting attention away from the two mains, whose flavour was more subtle, albeit satisfying. We both agreed that we would happily eat a main course of the

mushroom mash potato.

Already mightily content from the dishes and the drinks we had consumed, and with our belt buckles bulging, we balked at the suggestion of dessert! At first, we both ordered ice cream - salted caramel and chocolate mint, before Nick changed his order to the Cambridge burnt tart. At this point, Adam remarked how we truly managed to hit every mushroom option on the menu, and Laura told us that almost everyone who orders the mushroom ice cream is positively surprised. The taste itself was curious, as there were no hints of mushroom, only a heaviness in taste that arose from the fungus, yet that combined with the salted caramel sauce left only the sweetness of caramel as the dominant flavour. The burnt tart was good, yet perhaps not what we were looking for in the way of a refreshing dessert after a substantive meal.

Our dinner at the Graduate Hotel was marked by unexpected ingredients and a (re)discovery of stimulating flavours. Alongside the different dishes we tasted, the cocktails we selected added a welcome fresh touch to our meal. We tried the Garden House Spritz (blanco vermouth, ahus akvavit, pineapple, sparkling wine), as well as the River Cam Fix (wyborowa vodka, dolin chamberyzette, pear, lime, lychee), both of which acted as stimulating aperitivos. It was the somewhat bitter flavour of the Garden House Spritz that went well with the artichoke starter, whilst the summery fruitiness of the River Cam Fix complemented the zesty crackers. Whether it be for a wholesome and diverse meal, or simply for drinks at the bar, The Graduate Hotel is definitely a must-visit spot on a Cambridge food tour - even if not during mushroom season.



Grilled hen of the wood mushroom and yeasted hollandaise



Roast jerusalem artichokes, egg yolk and black pepper



Aged mushroom mashed potato



Broccoli and berkswell tart

Theatre

Politics as theatre, in three acts

Theatre Editor **Fergal Jeffreys** draws three analogies between theatre and politics



tiation of power has enormous consequences for the United Kingdom – poverty, racism, poor infrastructure and climate change are all allowed to fester without the intervention of government. By thinking about politics as purely performance, narrative and perception it becomes an entertainment, loosened from the demands of the electorate.

Yet the political age we live in now is one of unavoidable theatre. With 24-hour news every politician is method – truly all the worlds a stage. Boris Johnson's trajectory into Number 10 illustrates this. He has moved effortlessly between journalism, television and elected office, learning along the way about the allure of character. The leader of the opposition has entered the stage from a more private, rational sphere of law and found the audience doesn't warm to his stickler for the rules part. While politics might have once been drama it is now comedy, and one leader is evidently better suited to the lead. A central concern then of the opposition should be widening the focus, juxtaposing the prime minister's buffoonery against a darker, more troubled setting, the country he leads.

ILLUSTRATION FROM INSTAGRAM/@MATHILDEAUBIER

What is the connection between mediocre theatre and Westminster politics? Most people aren't paying attention. When the acting's subpar and the script not up to much, eyes begin to wander, and the fidgeting begins; normally though nobody bothers leaving. Likewise, this government lurches from crisis to crisis – most recently over Owen Patterson's lobbying – and continue to retain a popular edge over the opposition: either the general public don't care or more likely, they don't really know about it. This isn't an issue for the government, but it is one for the opposition. They're relying on the day-to-day flaws of the cast – forgetting lines, bad chemistry – to turn off the audience rather than offering a compelling alternative that's going to make people leave their seats.

Great theatre can teach the opposition about good politics. Striking drama tends to have the principles: an engaging narrative and airtight collaboration. Theatre is about storytelling and great theatre takes the audience beyond the actors on stage – though they're important – and into an evocative world. Politics needs to have such a narrative, with an overarching plot and theme for an audience to understand. The case needs to be made that this isn't just about a fantastic cast, or even that they're an alternative – This is theatre you have to see. Elections like 1979, 1997 and 2019 demonstrate the importance of such a plot, bringing together a sense of what the issues are and how they can only be solved by the opposition. The success of most Shakespeare plays is that they can be put on by anyone, so general a template do they provide. What makes them soar is the direction – a vision of how thematically the play fits together. The same is true for opposition politics.

It is often thought that what Shakespeare teaches us about politics is the personal. Boris Johnson has almost ubiquitously been compared to Falstaff – his Dionysian character,

Macbeth – the monstrous ambition and Hamlet, the compulsive laziness. What the late Shakespeare plays say about character is that these inherent character traits directly have tragic consequences. Political commentators like Steve Richards and David Runciman see the aforementioned qualities of Johnson's character as the thread which will lead to his eventual downfall. This framing has been used to characterise his predecessors – Cameron's resignation based on his latent arrogance, May's on her stubbornness.

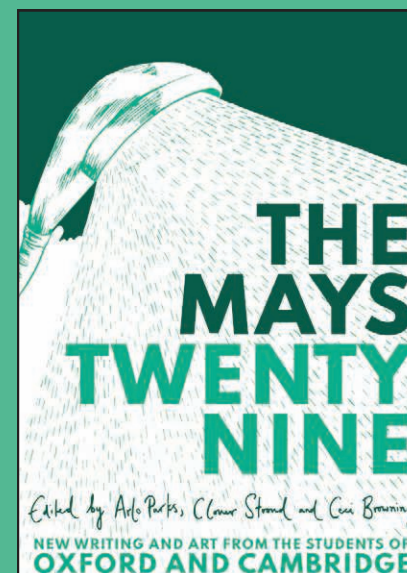
“
Yet the
political age we live
in now is one of
unavoidable theatre
”

This focus on Shakespeare's late tragedies comes at the expense of the more relevant early plays like 'A Comedy of Errors'. In this 1594 play, events beyond the characters control drive the plot. They are often confused and reactive, trying and failing to grasp what is going on. It is this that has defined this government's course, Johnson's premiership has been defined more than any of his predecessors by forces beyond his control. That is not to exculpate him of responsibility – like the cast of 'A Comedy of Errors' it is how he act to these forces which decides his fate. Many of his predecessors have resigned due to such tempestuous forces – Callaghan, Major, Brown. Character doesn't always define fate – it is up to the opposition party to explain what these forces are and why this government cannot deal with them.

There is a danger in devaluing politics by comparing it to theatre. The transfer and nego-

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Arts

Pseudonyms: The Carmen Mola Controversy

Oona Cooper discusses the Carmen Mola writers and the importance of female space in literature



ILLUSTRATION BY EMMA HULISE

It was in 1929 that Virginia Woolf's "A Room of One's Own" spelled out the copious difficulties faced by women who wish to pursue a career in literature. If Shakespeare had a sister with the same poetic capabilities as he, Woolf posited, we would remain none the wiser. The almost constant historical oppression of female autonomy has ensured that our authorial heritage is brief, our celebrated literary foremothers few and far between. This is why, when faced with successful women who manage to juggle a family, career, and authorial pursuits, a sense of collective, female pride is palpable.

Enter Carmen Mola, middle-aged mother of three and a ward-winning Spanish crime novelist. Mola is the author of the Elena Blanco trilogy, a series recognised by a regional branch of the Women's Institute, and which recently won Mola the Planeta prize, a literary award worth 1 million euros. Seeing women succeed in this way, professionally and creatively, feels

liberating, refreshing, and well overdue. This was until three men emerged from the wings to collect their winnings, not the all-accomplishing female icon readers were promised.

Agustín Martínez, Jorge Díaz, and Antonio Mercero were enticed out of anonymity and onto the awards stage to the general shock of the many who had followed the career of Carmen Mola. Appropriating this distinctly feminine pen name, the men had masqueraded

for years as a working and writing mother, wrongly encroaching upon female space and, whether consciously or not, assisting in the drowning out of the marginalised voices of those female authors who have long dealt with discrimination in both readership and publishing.

Pen names have long been used throughout literary history, affording authors anonymity and allowing their work to stand independently from any associations with their person. When used appropriately, they can act as shields, allowing a writer to write

freely and unreservedly. Pen names have been especially and most famously adopted by women to protect and preserve their literary exploits. Mary Anne Evans, better known by the name George Eliot, for example, published seven novels under a masculine name in order to create without prejudice and widen her potential readership in a predominantly male-dominated literary world.

However, the impersonation which Martínez, Díaz, and Mercero engaged in cannot, and should not, be legitimised by the liberating history of pseudonyms in literature. The men were already established in fields of creative media, having published novels and worked as scriptwriters before forming the author-persona Mola. Therefore, the three cannot be vindicated through claims that the pen name permitted them access to the literary world as it did Evans and the many other female authors before her and after.

Instead, the men's use of a pen name worked to target female audiences and provide a false means of feminine authorial representation in crime writing. Associating a woman's name with the violence of their novels, the impersonators engaged in a deceitful marketing strategy. The figure of a regular

woman leading a double life as an intense crime writer calls to mind authors such as horror writer and housewife Shirley Jackson, providing a curious backstory to the novels and drawing in readers through the elusive, double image of Mola.

What is more, the conception of Mola was not merely the creation of a name, but of an entire person. Mola appeared in interviews which discussed her fabricated life and career, authenticating her identity as a living, breathing woman with a lived female experience. Notably, the interviews also acknowledge the presence of a pseudonym, but claimed the use to be traditionally protective, preserving Mola's apparent identity as mother and teacher. A pseudonym behind a pseudonym was thus created, profitably tricking readers into perceiving Mola as a woman utilising the tradition of pen names to allow her literary autonomy.

This deceitful creation of Mola as an actual woman gave authority to the female voice in the men's novels and allowed them access to female readerships and discourses of which they had no right to be a part. Through writing as a woman, the men behind Mola usurped space within the female literary canon, space which could have been assigned to an actual woman writer, who truly faced the adversary assigned to her with her gender, and who succeeded creatively nonetheless.

As the false sense of pride pro-

“The men behind Mola usurped space within the female literary canon”

duced by Mola's success crumbles to expose a backdrop of manipulation and dishonesty, what we must focus on is finding that pride elsewhere. The Mola controversy has succeeded in generating a cacophony of noise around the subject of female space in literature and so what must come next is a movement towards real women who we can appreciate, read, and celebrate.

Men like Martínez, Díaz, and Mercero have had their time in the spotlight and the thousands of real Carmen Molas are simply waiting in the wings.

“What must come next is a movement towards real women who we can appreciate, read, and celebrate”

Letters to Gil: A Memoir

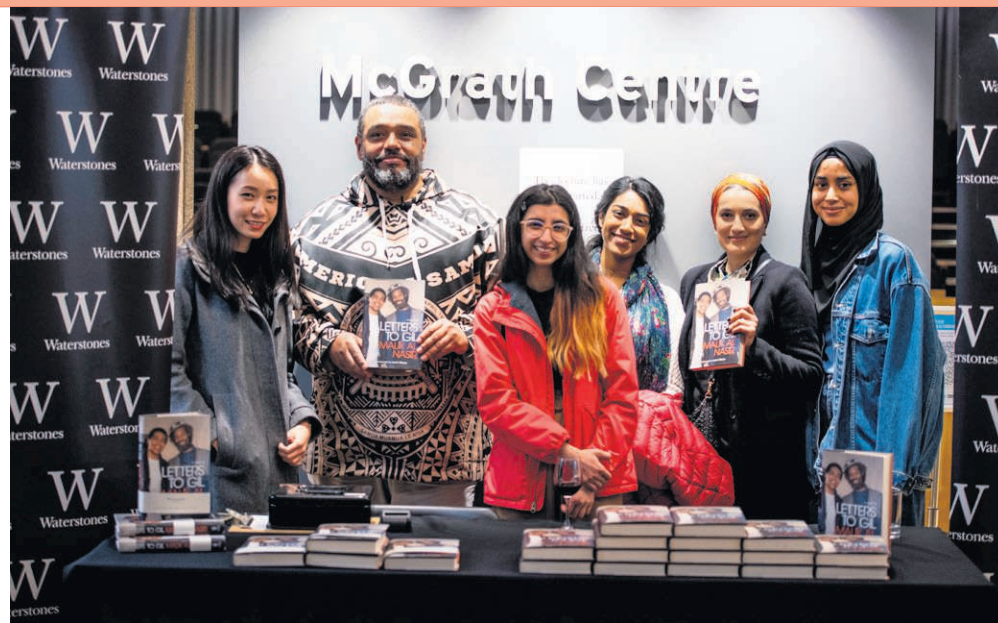
Arts Editor **Famke Veenstra-Ashmore** discusses a talk held by St Catharine's PhD student, poet, performer, and activist Malik Al Nasir on his new memoir 'Letters to Gil'

Malik Al Nasir speaks with an unadulterated passion about spoken-word legend Gil Scott-Heron. It is clear, from both his recollections of the man, as well as his own poetry, how inspired he was — and remains to be, by everything that he stood for. Hearing his poetry echo around the walls of the McGrath Centre, located inside St Catharine's College, there's an added sense of gravity to Malik's words, which explore themes of power, struggle, and justice in a deeply personal and authentic way. As receivers of his storytelling and art, we are left with the impression of an utterly remarkable life having emerged from the most challenging of circumstances. Malik's life story is one of resilience, resistance, and reflection — three themes that somewhat summarise his new memoir *Letters to Gil*.

Malik acknowledges that he is perhaps best known for his revelatory article *Gil Scott-*

Heron Saved my Life, and cites its publication as the turning point in his writing career. Despite the personal importance of the article in publishing his work and aiding this career, he expresses pride in being able to portray a side to Scott-Heron that was previously uncovered; the impact which the poet had on all parts of his life are illustrated, through his words and his writing, to be immeasurable. Through a spiritual collage of video clips, photographs, and stories, Malik details his startling encounter with the poet, demonstrating just how literal the title of the Guardian article was. A victim of Liverpool Council's corrupt care system in the 1970s, Malik was left traumatised and abandoned by the state, with little to no education, and comparably low literacy. But by a chance encounter, and a wealth of kindness, he was taken off the streets and put on planes taking him around the world, learning how to read and write as well as how to survive in an unjust world — and how to reconcile that with his past. This was all achieved through the previously untold mentorship of Gil Scott-Heron.

There's a twinned motivation behind Malik's memoir. One side, naturally, is to give space and praise to this giant of the poetic world, but the other is to highlight a darker, yet just as obscured, truth about his experience in the care system. The pain which filters Malik's voice is palpable, and there's an aural silence which covers the audience as he discusses the inhumane treatment of himself, alongside countless other children, which was suffered at the hands of institutions which were meant to safeguard and provide for him. Instead, he found himself serving the state — performing unpaid labour amounting to slavery — and lacking the typical tools which children would use to express themselves. The most important one, he discovered later, was a voice, something he utterly lacked, and worked relentlessly in his young adulthood to reclaim through poetry, music and reading. He is able to reclaim some of that power through spoken-word, which he performs with his band



Malik & the OGs, as well as on an individual basis. Performing his poem 'Power', it was clear that Malik has used his pain and wielded it as a form of reclaiming justice, which he has also, fantastically, achieved through legal means — securing an official apology from Liverpool's Lord Mayor.

The accessibility of a voice, and the chance to learn, is therefore something that Malik is hyper-conscious of, and he discusses the importance of reforming institutions such as education and the care system. His own personal transformation from street-kid to PhD student made him realise the essentiality of potential, and now he advocates for the many children and people in similar circumstances whose talents are neglected, whose interests aren't nurtured. The importance of opportunity, Malik argues, cannot be overlooked. With Gil Scott-Heron's guidance, and his own perseverance, Malik was able to explore his own literary and historical interests, culminating in some amazing research on his ancestry and links to the

slave trade, and gaining him several degrees, a place at the University of Cambridge, and a two-book deal with Harper Collins. He contrasts these achievements to the place he was in before meeting Gil Scott-Heron, and mourns for those who were not as fortunate as him. He tells us how he wants his audiences to be filled with the elite — company executives, policy-shapers, politicians, leading academics, so his impact can filter down to those in the highest echelons of power. He wants to avoid his voice being lost again, and to amplify the millions of voices from underrepresented backgrounds, so like him, they can have the chance to succeed and inspire others in the same vein that Gil Scott-Heron was able to inspire and support him.

“As receivers of his storytelling and art, we are left with the impression of an utterly remarkable life”

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Fashion

Varsity X The Serpentine Swap

Fashion doesn't have to cost the earth, or ruin the planet. Varsity teamed up with The Serpentine Swap for a sustainable fashion shoot

ILLUSTRATIONS BY EDEN KEILY-THURSTAIN

Fast fashion may be easily accessible, but it's mass produced. While also not being the most environmentally conscious choice, high-street clothing can often be impersonal. That's why, this week, we chose to do a fashion shoot celebrating the hand-me down, thrifted, and well-loved. Be it your nan's old jumper or a charity shop find, second hand clothing has a history: it is clothing that has lived a life, clothing that can tell a story. The Serpentine Swap in Cambridge is a purveyor of a beautiful collection of vintage, second hand clothing. They take people's used clothing, giving 25% of resale value in store credit in return. You can find them on 9 Norfolk Street, Cambridge (@the_serpentine_swap on Instagram).





ILLUSTRATIONS BY
EDEN KELLY-THURSTAIN

Creative Directing: Lotte Brundle

*Photography: Nana Ama Konadu Otuo
@amakotuophotography*

Styling and Assisting: Lily Maguire

Modelling: Ellie Austin, Akshata Kapoor, Benny Soran, Ellie Nagy, Naphysa Awuah, Damien Ye Rao, Kali Gladdish, Alessandra Rey, Abbie Gellatly

With thanks to Thrive Cambridge for the use of their beautiful space, and to The Serpentine Swap for the loan of their fantastic clothes

Film & TV

Bringing The Cambridge Film Festival back together with the University

Abigail Reeves recommends films to watch at the upcoming CFF in light of her experience volunteering for the festival



Just missed out on the London film festival in the busy first weeks of term? Not quite committed enough to travel to Cannes, or Venice? Film lovers, do not fear, as the next film festival is taking place in our very own Cambridge. The CFF (Cambridge Film Festival) is the third longest-running film festival in the UK, celebrating its 40th anniversary this year. Taking place from the 18th to the 25th of November, it showcases a wide variety of highly anticipated new releases, a broad selection of the best of foreign films as well as enough art-house pictures to satisfy even the most alternative of movie buffs.

The first CFF happened in 1977 and immediately set its high standards for diversity, innovation and creating a space for world cinema to be shown in England. David Jakes was the original programmer of the first event. Back then, the festival was hosted at the Arts Picturehouse, located in the market passage – the home of Mash today. The Cambridge University film festival, in those days, brought in up to 450 people for its film screenings and attracted the likes of Alfred Hitchcock and was run by David Hare, now an award-winning screenwriter. A collaboration between the University society and the local Picturehouse produced this festival which has since grown and developed into a three-location event that premieres big-name films such as Tarantino's *Reservoir Dogs*, and attracts stars like Tilda Swinton, Gary Oldman and *Amelie* directors Jeunet and Caro.

Somewhere along these last 40 years, however, the close link between the festival and the University has been lost. Its humble beginnings with opening parties at Emmanuel College and no funding were turned into the great success it is today by Tony Jones, the festival's director and driv-

ing force behind the program from 1981 until 2020. The festival had featured introspectives of different directors every year in its early days, giving audiences a chance to see new, exciting work on the big screen. From 1997

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Today, the CFF is connected to the Youth Lab which welcomes any one aged 16 to 24 to join a community of film-lovers and film-makers

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to 2000, the festival took a well-earned break and returned with a full programme and free outdoor screenings.

Since then, the festival has gone from strength to strength and new, spin-off groups have been established around it. Today, the CFF is connected to the Youth Lab which welcomes any one aged 16 to 24 to join a community of film-makers and film-lovers. I recently got involved with the Youth Lab myself and have had the opportunity to volunteer at the festival and join a team of passionate individuals from all walks of life. This way of getting involved in the festival is a way to bring the students back to the cinema and return to the festival's roots

in the university.

With the overwhelming amount of choice of films to see, here are my top picks for movies to prioritise when thinking what to watch over the festival-week.

Titane

Julia Ducournau first hit French cinemas with her bold and provocative film *Raw* and *Titane*, her second feature-length film, does not disappoint. Winning the Palme d'Or at Cannes this year, the film has been hailed as the latest body horror masterpiece which combines violence, eroticism, cars, comedy and, surprisingly, a soft tenderness. It has been described by the BBC as 'the most shocking film of 2021' and it is certainly not for the faint hearted, needing a content note for both sexual scenes and extreme violence. The film is tense and winding, shocking at every possible moment and yet maintaining a thematic consistency throughout. Ducournau is changing the game for a genre previously dominated by men and this film clearly carves out her place as a director to watch.

Flee

Originally premiering at Sundance earlier this year, *Flee* is an animated, documentary-style film which deals with themes of dis-

placement and isolation. It brings to life the experience of a refugee who has fled from Afghanistan to Denmark, becoming an academic and only now telling the story of his journey. It has been successfully received, garnering praise for pushing the boundaries of genre as well as for its delicate story telling.

Petite Maman

Céline Sciamma has become a household name in the world of cinema for her compelling love story in *Portrait of a Lady on Fire*, and her follow-up film *Petite Maman* maintains the same consistent, enchanting focus on intimacy. It follows Nelly, an eight year old girl, in the aftermath of her grandmother's death who is helping her parents clear out her mother's childhood home. The film gently explores this grief and the comfort which is found through friendship. Described by critics as a 'vanilla pudding film: sweet and soft while it's there', this gentle film is a perfect break from essay stress.

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Music

In defence of the TikTok-to-Musician career trajectory

Music Editor **Matthew Cavallini** offers his take on the musical careers of TikTok's biggest stars, arguing that there is perhaps more than meets the eye when it comes to the music's quality

It seems like several lifetimes ago when TikTok poster-girl Dixie D'Amelio opened the floodgates with her first venture into music, the infamous "Be Happy". With Dixie being the first major TikTok star to release a song, it was sure to be talked about – but "Be Happy", the peculiar mental health anthem with a vocal performance paradoxically devoid of emotion, sparked plenty of conversation about what makes a singer truly deserving of their platform. Dixie particularly turned heads for her incredibly unorthodox pronunciation of the word "but" – it's difficult to even translate into writing, though "BhUeSjYeS" is *vaguely* accurate. If this was intentionally nonsensical to draw attention to the song, then it was marketing genius: the song remains the second most-streamed song from a TikTok star, with over 300 million listens.

As other TikTok stars' attempts at music came and went, usually in the form of diss tracks, Dixie made it clear that "Be Happy" wasn't a one-time thing. Despite it being ranked amongst the worst songs of the year on RateYourMusic (alongside 6ix9ine and Justin Bieber's "Yummy", no less), labels clearly saw the potential in pushing the music career of one of TikTok's most beloved stars, and soon enough Liam Payne and Wiz Khalifa were on board to offer features on her two follow-up singles. The latter, "One Whole Day", was a huge turning point in my perception of Dixie's potential. Despite the song's chorus refrain of "I was really, really, really sad" being clowned just as much as "Be Happy" was, I firmly believe that this song combines one of the stickiest pop melodies and snappiest guitar riffs of recent times. To this date, it remains my favourite Dixie song – proving sometimes elementary lyrics can be the most effective at getting their message across.

Whilst Dixie was foraying into the world of pop, other TikTok stars were entering a different musical realm: the revival of pop-punk. Both Sway House's Jaden Hossler and Hype House's Chase Hudson caught the attention of Blink-182 legend Travis Barker, and soon enough they were jxdn and LILHUDDY, two key figures in the genre's renaissance movement. jxdn's own brooding, hedonistic breakthrough single "Angels & Demons" truly felt like a statement from a musician, rather than a TikToker trying to make music, and people noticed that – the song sold over half a million units in the United States. Soon enough, jxdn was going from strength to strength, performing at Lollapalooza and working with Machine Gun Kelly and "Mood" hitmaker iann dior. Even despite these high-profile collabs, the song that really made waves was "la di die", a duet with soon-to-be girlfriend Nessa Barrett. Released shortly prior to one of TikTok's biggest scandals (both Jaden and Nessa were in relationships with other TikTok stars at the time), the song was the first TikToker single to receive a major promotional push, not only through the scandal, but with aggressively sweet performances on Jimmy Kimmel and The Ellen Show.

Admittedly, I hadn't given much thought to Nessa's music that she had slowly been putting out up to that point, but "la di die" perfectly balanced a swaggering sense of coolness and despair all wrapped into one. It's a feeling I've wanted to get from a song for a while – something that I could listen to regardless of what mood I'm in and it would still seem fitting. And despite "la di die" being my most-

played song this year, what I didn't expect was for Nessa to continue to release music that repeatedly nailed that dual-mood target, admirably balancing between sad and sexy. Delivered with a wink and a wry smile and armed with pummelling drums and fuzzy guitars, her EP's lead single "i hope ur miserable until ur dead" became the first song of hers to hit the Billboard Hot 100. Clearly, Nessa's crossover appeal extended beyond any other TikTok star, and for good reason. The EP (*pretty poison*) that followed was nothing

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Nessa's crossover appeal extended beyond any other TikTok star, and for good reason
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short of a triumph. In just eighteen minutes, Nessa paints the picture of her breakup with Josh Richards, relationship with Jaden, and impact of both of these events on her mental state. Halfway through the EP is the story's pivotal track "grave", a devastating devotion to Jaden and how his love saved her. "Heart held on with glue / the only thing keeping me o u t

of the grave is you", she whispers. The song breaks me like no other song can.

If Nessa's music was the turning point in proving that TikTokers most certainly can make great quality music, then the arrival of Bella Poarch proved that they can have

worldwide success, too. Whilst other TikTokers had several stabs at music before finding their feet, Bella came right out gate with "Build-a-Bitch", a song that transcended the TikTok realm and became a genuine global hit, complete with a killer music video that received a VMA nomination, and an appearance on the adored *Just Dance* game series.

At just two minutes, the song capitalised on the short attention span of TikTok's very nature, and its lyrics served as a consideration of industry beauty standards ("This ain't build-a-bitch / you don't get to pick and choose") – a serious message enclosed in a song that, crucially, didn't take itself too seriously. "Build-a-Bitch" felt culturally significant like no other TikTok song did, as it finally felt like people were unashamedly enjoying the music, rather than approaching the song with a more-backhanded sense of "it's good, for a TikTok song."

In spite of these steps forward, there still seems to be a sense that TikToker music isn't something to be respected. Addison Rae's debut single "Obsessed", for example, was met with disdain from the public, despite it sounding like something that would fit perfectly on the last Selena Gomez album (and with uncannily similar vocals, too). The music purists on RateYourMusic continue to downvote the songs into oblivion just based on the artists themselves, completely ignoring the clear elevation in quality. YouTube critic Anthony Fantano quite unamusingly trolled LILHUDDY into believing his debut *Teenage Heartbreak* was his album-of-the-year, despite not even giving the project a listen. It's frustrating that there still seems to be a number of people who approach the musical contributions of these artists with undisguised mockery (do we really need *another* journalist offering a list of the so-called "worst" attempts at TikToker music?). But as they say, no publicity is bad publicity; Nessa perhaps summed it up best herself: "If my name is in your throat, you're mine to take, I hope you choke / In the end, I hope you know, I'm in your veins like pretty poison".

Varsity Music's TikTok Viral Playlist

FLEETWOOD MAC - "DREAMS"
The popularity of "Dreams" was proof that a song doesn't need to be anywhere near new to achieve viral success on the app

MARINA - "BUBBLEGUM BITCH"
"Bubblegum Bitch" was one of several Marina songs to resurrect thanks to her theatrical delivery and eccentric lyrics, perfect for lipsyncing along to

MÅNESKIN - "BEGGIN"
TikTok propelled the success of Måneskin after their Eurovision win, with their cover of "Beggin" highlighting the cyclical nature of music across generations

Listen to these songs and the songs mentioned in the article on the Varsity Spotify ([musicvarsity](https://open.spotify.com/playlist/37i9dQZF1DX0XUf1C2R9Hh)) or by scanning the code below on the Spotify app



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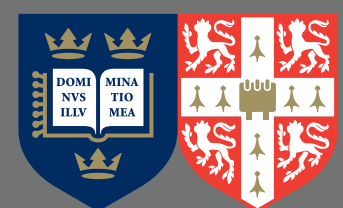
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Designed by Sir Robert Smirke, the architect responsible for the British Museum, the Club's impressive façade illuminates Pall Mall. Inside, a burgeoning social scene sees a host of diverse events take place each month, including Cocktail Making Masterclasses,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

For details on membership or a tour of the Club house, please visit
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Violet Emission Impossible: Part I

Bringing the latest on the G20's fight against the climate crisis, Violet correspondent *Florence Brockman* reports...

Whether it's the raging forest fires in California, the flash flood in Germany, or even the mini tornado that ushered in the start of the COP26, the climate is in the headlines. A myriad of words like net zero, green energy, and offsetting have polluted the news, the radio, the media for months. The endless talk has gone stale; it is now time to get serious about emission impossible.

As we slowly boil to death in our own emissions, on a diet of 60z steak and living in a sea of single use plastic, there is only one group of people to save us from our own ignorance. Let the avengers assemble! I present: the G20. The twenty richest nations in the world. Merkel, Macron, Biden, Trudeau and Johnson had a new mission: to prevent a global climate catastrophe. The enemy? 414.85 parts per million of CO₂ globally. And global warming threatening to climb above 1.5°C. And the violent weather patterns making vast stretches of land uninhabitable. Oh, and don't forget the twenty richest nations who are responsible for 92% of climate emissions. Indeed, these were our world-leading climate combaters, saving the world one vague carbon neutral promise at a time.

Lined up in front of the Trevi Fountain, the mission commenced with a coin in the fountain for good luck. 'Surely our

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The concept of taking a 'train' seemed to have conveniently slipped everyone's mind
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climate combaters don't need luck?' I hear you cry. The coins catapulted into the air, shining in the Italian setting sun, and then hit the ground in a chorus of clinking. The fountain watched on; its waters undisturbed as every single coin missed. They may not need luck, but a large dose of common sense might have come in handy. The mission had begun, with all engines of stupidity fired up.

Of course, not everyone can be trusted to save the planet. Believe it or not, the G20 Green Team were entirely colourblind. There wasn't a shade of green in sight as the jet engines assembled on the runway. Engines roaring, the smell of petroleum and burning tarmac filled the air from Rome to Gas-glow. The mission was off to, quite literally, a flying start. I mean, how can we save the world if we can't get there? Everyone scratched their heads, but drew blanks; the concept of taking a 'train' seemed to have conveniently slipped everyone's mind. After offsetting 0.45 tonnes of CO₂ each, they were ready to really kick climate change's arse.

But wait — hold on! A tornado threatened to pull the UK apart before Scotland does: even the climate crisis couldn't stop a quick game of British and French battleships in the Channel. With 40% of French fishing boats applying to fish in the Channel, it seemed Britain had this in the bag.



frothing at the mouth. Ending in a stalemate, Jersey better start collecting fire wood for the winter.

Landing in Gas-glow, Boris' balloon had already burst. "We have," he gravely announced, "one minute to midnight to save the planet." His blonde mop

The French hit back by detaining a British vessel. The planet may be burning, but in the last days of the apocalypse the British people must hang onto our cholesterol induced love affair with deeply battered cod. Liz Truss's blood pressure pounded at the thought of school children missing their Friday Fish 'n' Chips. Already deprived of a healthy planet, this was too much to bear. The unlikely victim in all of this? Jersey. As

France has threatened to cut electricity to the island it can look forward to a lovely nut roast over the fire this Christmas, and to becoming the first country

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As France has threatened to cut electricity to the island it can look forward to a lovely nut roast over the fire this Christmas
”

to hit net zero, whether they like it or not. Twisting his superhero cape awkwardly, schoolboy Boris ummmmed and ahhhhed and finally slammed the battleship board shut in defeat. Macron smirked. At home, Truss started

hung, dishevelled and limp. Shoulders slumped, Captain Doomsday's superhero suit resembled an ill-fitting Halloween costume, eyes glassy like a child in the middle of a sugar crash. A harrowing realisation, for a man who last week claimed recycling was ironically, a load of rubbish. Newly educated on the climate crisis, the simple question 'what's your favourite tree?' shouldn't be too hard. A tree? What's a tree? 'Blurggh' Captain Doomsday cried in despair. Don't worry, Boris, at the current rate of deforestation, you won't have to worry about them for much longer.

As the COP26 unfolds, will the Green Team be able to handshake, photograph and network their way to saving the world? Or will they find all the infinity stones in a sea of bureaucracy to stop the climate catastrophe? Is Leonardo Di Caprio, who had also donned his climate cape after climbing off his private jet, ready to save the day? Or is it an emission impossible? One thing's for sure, it's hard to declare victory when the true enemy you're fighting is yourself.

▲ Top: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Bottom: FLICKR/ANDREW PARSONS

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Sport

How football can improve the climate crisis

Damola Odeyemi
Deputy Sports Editor

The opening statement of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (IPCC) technical report, published back in August, is: "It is unequivocal that human influence has warmed the atmosphere, ocean and land". For a report written exclusively by scientists, the use of the word 'unequivocal' should be surprising to us all. It's a decisive term that tends to be avoided in the scientific community because it leaves little room for doubt. The report was prepared in time for COP26, which began at the end of last month (31/10) - a summit where world leaders come together to discuss the damaging effects of the climate crisis and what must be done to reverse the seemingly irreparable damage done to our planet.

But this summit is not only for world leaders - every commercial industry that is directly affected by climate change is being represented, and that includes sport. Extreme weather and rises in temperature are making outdoor sports increasingly dangerous, particularly in tropical countries. This year's Tokyo Olympics was a prime example of a sporting event that was hugely governed by the heat. Athletes complained about the sweltering conditions, in what went down as the hottest Olympics Games in recent history. For the tennis tournaments in Tokyo, the times of matches were moved to the evening and night-time to accommodate players, while the marathon was changed to a cooler time, aiming to avoid the hot conditions.

Elsewhere, matches in the 2019 Rugby World Cup were postponed due to Typhoon Hagibis in India, and earlier droughts in the country rendered Indian Premier League cricket impossible to continue due to a scorched playing surface back in 2016. In the United Kingdom, the main issue is flooding, and this has already become a concern in football with the growing frequency of flooding in stadiums. By 2050, it's estimated that almost one in four English football league grounds can expect flooding every year.

It would be naive to think that sport is simply a victim of the climate crisis - sport is a minor contributor to greenhouse gas emissions. When looking at the effects that sport has on the environment, it's easy to target the behaviour of football, as it's the largest sport in the world and, consequently, is responsible for about half of the industry's emissions. More generally, commercial sport contributes approximately 0.8% of the world's carbon emissions. That 0.8% may

not seem like much, but it's similar to the overall emissions of countries like Poland, Thailand, and Spain, and these nations are by no means getting a free pass when it comes to exacerbating the climate crisis.

Football, as the world's biggest and arguably most influential sport, has the ability to set an example to its fans and other sports. Approximately 60% of football's carbon footprint comes from spectators travelling to matches. Taking this into account, FIFA plans to make next year's Qatar World Cup carbon neutral, primarily by offsetting fan travel. Although offsetting has its own issues, FIFA should take a look inwards at its own hypocrisy, given that Qatar is the most polluting nation per capita in the world.

No discussion about football and climate change is complete without an examination of Forest Green Rovers, the most eco-friendly football club in the world. The League Two club are unique in a number of ways, transforming into an excellent case study on how an organisation can be successful whilst putting sustainability front and centre. It is the only fully vegan football club to currently exist. 100% of their energy usage is from renewables - 20% from solar panels and 80% from the grid, specifically a nearby windmill.

Most of their players drive electric cars, while the car park at the stadium is fitted with charging points to increase accessibility for fans. The material for their shirts is made from sustainable resources, such as bamboo and coffee grounds. Even the pitch is organic, as they do not use chemical pesticides or synthetic fertilisers, while water drained from the ground is captured and reused. The next plan: an all-wooden stadium. Every single aspect of this football club has been geared towards lowering its carbon footprint. Forest Green Chairman Dale Vince has been widely praised for these initiatives, which he started after taking over the struggling club back in 2010.

Recently speaking to The Athletic, Vince discovered during the early years of his tenure that supporters were the hardest to convince, being somewhat resistant to change. This was particularly the case with the transition to being a vegan club. Food was an emotional issue for the fans, but over time people grew to like it and take pride in it. The initiative has even influenced some other clubs to now provide more vegan options on match days, largely due to pressure from fans to imitate the Forest Green system. Vince recently explained that, when it comes to running a sustainable club, there are two factors to consider in addition



EDEN KELLY-THURSTAIN

to food: transport and energy. As a result, his club is now targeting the final part of their transformation: the use of an electric bus.

Taking inspiration from Forest Green, German top-flight club Wolfsburg undertook a staggeringly in-depth analysis of their carbon footprint back in 2018. They found that 60% of their carbon footprint was associated with fan travel, and that about 18.8% is down to energy usage and heating. Only 2.9% of their emissions were attributed to 'employee movement', which mostly represents travel for the players. This report has outlined that the way to lower football's carbon footprint is to adjust the fans' patterns of behaviour, which is where the influence of football's ruling organisations must come into play.

Sport is not like the concrete industry. In absolute terms, it's a fairly small contributor to the planet's greenhouse gas emissions. However, sport has extraordinary power over vast

swathes of the world's population. A sport like football has the sizeable platform to genuinely change the world. What will it take for the bigger teams to see past short-term successes and make the sort of changes that Forest Green have done? It will only be when both

high-profile clubs and players publicly put forward potential resolutions that we will truly see the huge impact that football can have on altering the course of the climate crisis. What we need is more than just Adidas and Paul Pogba releasing the first vegan boot.

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▲ Cambridge lost the tie in the second half due to poor discipline (Jiachin Lin/UNSPLASH)

Cambridge fall to defeat: CURUFC 12-16 Durham University

Joseph Hill
Sports Correspondent

Cambridge University Rugby Union Football Club (CURUFC) suffered a 12-16 defeat to Durham University at Grange Road on Wednesday evening (10/11).

Tom Walton captained the men's side in Charlie Watson's injury-enforced absence, while Sam Odu earned a call-up to the squad following an impressive attacking performance last Saturday (07/11) for the LXs in their victory over Welsh Academics. Stephen Leonard also returned to the starting lineup for the first time this season.

Cambridge started the affair brightly, with strong carries from Tim Andrew and Archie Smeaton punctuating the opening exchanges of the game. It was Durham who broke the deadlock, how-

ever, through scrum-half Morgan James dummying brilliantly off a line out to break into Cambridge territory before slipping in Jack Benton. Patrick Bishop failed to add the extras.

Off the restart, Andrew leaped highest to claim the ball before good phase play from Cambridge allowed Stephen Leonard to score just seven minutes into his Grange Road return to make it 7-5.

Applying wave after wave of pressure, the Light Blues finally scored again, with Max Loveridge having the awareness to spot Andrew in acres of space on the left-wing to send him in for yet another try. Alex King narrowly missed a difficult kick from the touchline to leave the score at 12-5 to the hosts.

Suwi Chibale became the home side's main outlet in the latter stages of the first half as he consistently shrugged off

tackles, but Cambridge's lack of discipline plagued their attempts to add to the scoreboard. The half-time whistle blew at 12-5.

As visibility faded in the second half, the game became increasingly kicking-oriented. Durham's Will Nicholson missed a 40-yard penalty, yet the incident leading to the sanction left Cambridge down to fourteen men.

Durham capitalised on their man advantage soon after, as Nick Jonas brilliantly carved open the Light Blue defence from inside his own 22 to then find winger Charlie Coe, who finished just before it went dead. The extras were missed again by Bishop, leaving the score 12-10.

Yet another penalty given away by Cambridge allowed Durham to edge the lead, with replacement fly-half Harry Mercer slotting over from close range. A

succession of Durham penalties eventually allowed Mercer to convert a further three points, making it 12-16.

After a few more phases, the ball was gleefully kicked into touch with Durham still 12-16 to the good. Cambridge will walk away from this game feeling it was theirs for the taking, but ultimately a severe lack of discipline ensured that the away side emerged with the victory.

Varsity Player of the match: Mike Ford (Durham)

Teams
Cambridge Starting XV: Danny Collins (Fitzwilliam)*, James Wright (Jesus), Matt Pettit (Clare)*, Charlie Friend (St John's), Zac Bischoff (St John's)*, Tom Walton, (St John's, Captain)*, Stephen Leonard (Emmanuel)*, Archie Smeaton (Queens)*, Charles Favell (Homerton)*,

Max Loveridge (Jesus)*, Tim Andrew (Jesus), Sam Odu (Gonville & Caius), Suwi Chibale (Queens)*, Douglas Russell (St John's)*, Alex King (St Catherine's) Cambridge Replacements: Luke Parry (Downing)*, Jeremy James (Selwyn), Paddy Harris (Hughes Hall), Matt West (St John's)*, Demi Obembe (Churchill)*, David Holdroyd (Jesus), Angus McIntosh (Jesus), Josh Grier (Gonville & Caius)

*Denotes Blue
Durham Starting XV: Mark Dormer, Josh Chinyemba, Michael Carr, Rhys Belcher, Jack Benton, Brayden Barratt, Henry Wills (CC), Ollie Tomalin, Morgan James, Patrick Bishop, Charlie Coe, Mike Ford, Will Nicholson, Paul Brown, Nick Jonas (CC)
Durham Replacements: Jed Shaw, Monty Royston, Jake Spurway, Jonty Cope, Harry Mercer, Alex Earnshaw

Jays storm to 82-19 victory over Bedfordshire

Liam Kline
Senior Sports Editor

On Wednesday afternoon (10/11), Cambridge University Ladies Netball Club's (CULNC) second team, known as the Jays, defeated the University of Bedfordshire by an emphatic score of 82-19 at the University of Cambridge Sports Centre.

Taking a short break from league action, the Jays were looking to progress to the third round of the EY Midlands Conference Cup, after receiving a BYE in the opening stage.

Cambridge got the first quarter underway, as goal attack Anna van Velsen, who was last week's (03/11) MVP against Birmingham, opened the scoring within a matter of seconds. To make it 6-1 early on,

goal shooter Kate Godsmark converted a brilliantly worked play between herself, van Velsen, and wing attack Amelia Burdett - a trio that caused the Bedfordshire defence a lot of trouble.

Although Bedfordshire enjoyed a short burst of scoring to push the tie to 7-4, the Light Blues finished the first fifteen 18-6 to the better. Godsmark was rolling her defenders effortlessly, while snappy feeds from Burdett made the lives of her shooters much easier.

Going into the second quarter, Alex Telford came on for Godsmark, giving the shooter a well-earned rest. Van Velsen really took over the scoring in this period, pushing the tally to 23-6 with five goals in a row. Telford and van Velsen linked up to produce a staggering 27 points before

the half-time buzzer, executing counter attacks perfectly following a number of interceptions from both wing defence Catherine Allen and goal defence Millie Ireland-Carson. The score read 45-10 at the break.

The third fifteen saw van Velsen and Burdett on the bench, with Godsmark back on and Ines Shammah slotting into wing attack. Godsmark and Telford shared the scoring load fairly evenly, racking up eleven and seven points respectively.

Bedfordshire continued to misplace passes on the court, much thanks to the superb defensive duo of Allen and captain India Foster, whereas the Jays were able to find a perfect balance between high intensity and accurate passing. A

final run of ten straight points for Cambridge ended the penultimate quarter at 63-14.

The game's final period was summed up by a display of excellent Jays partnerships across the floor. Telford and van Velsen shouldered the scoring burden with ease, while defenders Astrid Williams and Libby Bryant dominated Cambridge's goal circle, hardly allowing the away attackers a sniff at the net. Playmakers Burdett and Shammah also bossed the goal third, often combining together well to supply their shooters who closed the affair at 82-19.

Cambridge put on an exhibition in both shooting and passing for a tenacious Bedfordshire side that unfortunately lacked end product. Van Velsen

finished the tie with 34 points, while Godsmark and Telford secured 24 apiece.

Varsity Player of the match: Anna van Velsen

Teams
Cambridge Jays: Libby Bryant (GK), Astrid Williams (GD, Vice-captain), Catherine Allen (WD), India Foster (C, Captain), Amelia Burdett (WA), Anna van Velsen (GA), Kate Godsmark (GS) Substitutes: Alex Telford, Millie Ireland-Carson, Ines Shammah
Bedfordshire Women's 1 Squad: Becca Maxwell, Bethany Andreassen, Eleanor Alderman, Ellie Seamark, Erin Wilkinson, Jordaan Flaherty, Libby Wright, Samantha Davies