

# Cherwell

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1ST WEEK, MICHAELMAS

## 12% of students seek mental health support

Programmes expanded to meet rising demand

By ZACH BURGESS

**A**round 12% of Oxford students have made use of Oxford University's counselling services in the past academic year, Vice-Chancellor Irene Tracey said in her Oration this year. 2,000 staff have also received training to provide mental health support to students.

Last year, the University joined the University Mental Health Charter Program, an initiative by charity Student Minds to support universities in improving their mental health services. Tracey said that the Charter is a new commitment that will "strengthen" Oxford's existing policies.

This is in line with the University's pre-existing "Common Approach to Student Mental Health", which outlines a commitment to provide counselling to all students who request it and to respond to all queries within one working day. The priority of the service is that all treatment be "efficient and focused". As a result, the University acknowledges that students must use the NHS or private services for long-term

talking therapy. A uniform approach was implemented across colleges after a review into five student suicides in Cambridge, which concluded that a significant cause was "wide variations" in provision between colleges. Cambridge's new updated policies on mental health are similar to the Common Approach in centralising the mental health provisions to provide a single university-wide standard.

A student who has accessed Oxford's counselling services in the last year appreciated the speed at which they replied to her request. However, she expressed frustration over the limited time offered: "45 minutes every other week isn't enough to form the sort of relationship that I needed to make any progress. Besides, after two sessions my counsellor told me that I wouldn't need any further meetings and dismissed my feelings as 'freshers' anxiety, despite me disagreeing." The student told *Cherwell* that she went on to seek private counselling.

A 2023 investigation by *Cherwell* found that students did not believe that the University's services were adequate to meet mounting mental health challenges.

## Chancellor candidate interviews reveal competing visions

By CHERWELL STAFF

**L**ord Chris Patten resigned as Chancellor of Oxford University earlier this year, having served in the role since 2003. The Chancellor occupies a ceremonial position with no executive power, but is expected to provide advice and guidance to the University and to the Vice-Chancellor. Events such as Encaenia and the Chancellor's Court of Benefactors are presided over by the Chancellor.

Past holders of the position include Oliver Cromwell; former Prime Ministers Lord Salisbury and Harold Macmillan; Vice-roy Lord Curzon; and influential statesmen such as Edward Grey and Roy Jenkins. Although the first Chancellor was appointed

in 1224, no women have held the post in exactly eight hundred years. In the third week of this Michaelmas Term, a quarter of a million Oxford alumni and staff will vote for his successor. *Cherwell* interviewed six of the candidates for this year's election.

*Cherwell* can also reveal that Imran Khan is not on the list of 38 candidates for Chancellor, according to a University press release, despite Khan's intention to run. *Cherwell* has contacted Khan's advisor for comments. A University spokesperson declined to comment on which of the four exclusion criteria Khan had been disqualified for.

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## Rise in harassment claims strains proctorial system

By ENRIQUE NORMAND VELARDE

**T**he Proctors are one of the oldest and most fundamental parts of the University of Oxford and yet perhaps also the most obscure. Students don't encounter the Proctors very often; and if they do, it is typically when receiving their coveted degree or a considerably less desirable summary of penalties for misconduct. There have been Proctors in Oxford since the thirteenth century, but unlike most institutions of the day, they continue to play a crucial role in the running of the University now and their activities have a direct impact on current student lives.

The Proctor's Office is devised as a body independent of the Vice-

Chancellor, tasked with upholding the University's statutes. It is headed by a Senior and Junior Proctor and an Assessor on non-renewable yearly terms, meaning that every Hilary the position is newly filled with a different individual. Typically these are academics and not senior University administrators, who are elected by each college every thirteen years on an ongoing rota.

*Cherwell* has reviewed data from the past ten years of Proctor's Reports to gain an insight into the workings of the Proctor's

Office within the distinct collegiate structure of the University. Our findings reveal that not only do Proctors continue to be heavily involved with many crucial aspects of student life but this impact is growing greater. While instances of sexual misconduct and harassment are increasing, the Proctor's Office is still predominantly trained to deal with minor academic-related breaches.

As an institution, the Proctor attempts to provide centralised disciplinary action in the context of the extreme decentralisation fostered by the college system. In response, the office either relies on

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## Vice-Chancellor introduces free speech series

By DONOVAN LOCK

**A** new termly series to "reaffirm the importance of free and inclusive speech" was announced by Oxford University Vice-Chancellor Irene Tracey in her annual oration on 8th October. Named the Sheldonian Series, these events will explore "the big questions of our age" and observe a set of "Free Speech Tips".

The series is open to all students and staff, who will have the opportunity to hear from a wide range of scholars. The first topic will be "Democracy" and is scheduled to commence this November, just weeks after the US elections. Speakers for the events are yet to be confirmed.

The Sheldonian Series will follow a set of "Free Speech Tips", which provide detailed guidance on how to conduct debates on controversial topics. This intercollegiate initiative was developed by students, academics, and Heads of Houses from Balliol, Brasenose, Mansfield, Somerville, and Worcester College. It aims to supplement, not replace, official Oxford University guidance on free speech.

The tips advise that while the contents of conversations may be discussed outside the event, specific comments and questions should not be attributed to individuals, with the hope that people will feel freer to speak. It asks for organisers to consider contingency plans in case "respectful communication breaks down" and encourages people

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## Transport Secretary: Oxford 'well on way' to be all-electric city

By EKAM HOTHI

**O**xford is "well on its way to becoming the first all-electric city in the country," Transport Secretary Louise Haigh said after visiting Oxford on Tuesday to meet public transport stakeholders in the region and speak about the challenges of transitioning to electric vehicles (EVs).

The same day, Go-Ahead Group, the parent company

of the Oxford Bus Company, announced they would be investing £500m to build 1,200 electric buses, battery-powered with no emissions. The company has stated that it aims to cut its overall emissions by 75% by 2035, and to become fully net-zero by 2045.

On X, the Transport Secretary described the Go-Ahead Group's decision to invest in the production of 1,200 electric buses as "a huge vote of confidence in our economy" because it would "support 2,500 jobs, clean up our air, and take us a step closer to our bus revolution".

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Proposals to increase tuition fees will disproportionately affect working-class people, making higher education ever more the preserve of the affluent

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How has Ticketmaster tainted the concert-going experience, and what can be done?

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A rundown of the well-kept secrets of Oxford's midnight dining scene

#### A comprehensive guide to Oxford student stereotypes

The peculiar, weird and wonderful of Oxford studenthood laid out for all to see

# Oxford researcher wins lawsuit over peanut allergy research plagiarism

By RAAKHI BHAGDEVE

An academic recently won a legal battle against Oxford University after being unfairly dismissed over accusing a colleague of plagiarism.

Former Oxford academic Dr Amin Moghaddam and Professor Quentin Sattentau collaborated on a groundbreaking study which found that dry-roasted peanuts are more likely to trigger an allergic reaction than raw peanuts.

A 2014 paper outlining their research was released with Sattentau as the lead author, which Moghaddam claimed to be a breach of academic guidelines as he was the main contributor. In 2018, Sattentau produced a review of the paper in which he was cited as the sole senior author with Moghaddam named “third author”, leading to further accusations of plagiarism.

Moghaddam was dismissed in 2019 after 16 years of employment at the University, with the reasons cited as being unable to secure further funding and his fixed contract ending.

Following the termination of his

contract in March 2019, Moghaddam took the university, Sattentau, and his chief supervisor, Professor Matthew Freeman, to an employment tribunal which ruled in favour of the University and threw out his unfair dismissal claim. However, Moghaddam has won his recent appeal of the tribunal’s verdict.

Although the initial tribunal concluded that Moghaddam had not been unfairly dismissed but rather the funding he required was simply not available, Judge Shanks overturned their decision and concluded that it could not be supported, stating that the “breakdown in relationship” with Sattentau and the “detriment because of whistleblowing, protected disclosures based on his allegations about Sattentau stealing his work” had not been adequately considered in the first tribunal.

Dr Moghaddam’s case will now be taken to another tribunal to consider whether he is due any compensation, having already succeeded in two of his four grounds of appeal.

*Image Credit: James Morrell.*



# Oxford to become all-electric city

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In January, the Oxford Bus Company, in partnership with Oxfordshire County Council and Stagecoach, launched an £82.5m project to deliver 159 new battery-powered buses. The Oxford Bus Company, who were responsible for delivering 104 of the planned 159 buses, completed the rollout earlier this month.

Emily Kerr, the Green Party councillor who has represented the St Mary’s ward of Oxford City Council since 2022, told *Cherwell*: “the shift to electric buses will make a huge difference to air quality. Unlike private cars, buses operate in the city centre where the high walls of colleges trap pollution and where there’s a high density of people breathing in the air.”

She identified the top of Headington Hill as one of the worst spots for pollution in the entire city.

Kerr continued: “Oxford is well suited to the switch to electric: we’ve got a strong charging network, plus initiatives like the ZEZ [zero emission zone] have meant that we’re already at the forefront of businesses switching to EVs.”

She anticipates that in the longer term, it is “definitely feasible” to see all-electric large vehicles but notes

that “a rapid shift to 90% of vehicles [being electric] is much better than a slow shift to 100%.”

Nitrogen Oxide emissions in Oxford have significantly improved over the last few years, according to the city council’s 2023 air quality annual status report, but 68% of the current emissions are attributed to the transport sector.

The Oxford Bus Company is in agreement with Haigh and Kerr that the future of Oxford’s public transport is EVs. A spokesperson told *Cherwell*: “in Oxford it is feasible for the city fleet of buses to all be electric and this is something we achieved with our network recently.”

The company also stressed the other, non-environmental benefits to EVs, such as incentivising the use of public transport: “Offering modern, comfortable vehicles, a strong network and improved connectivity along with the current government £2 fare cap are all helping encourage more people to give buses a try.”

“Oxford is a shining example of what can be achieved when funding and investment is made and key stakeholders work in partnership for the greater good.”

*Image Credit: David Hays*

# Institute launched for ethics studies

By SARA ROURKE

The new Uehiro Oxford Institute, launched on 1st October 2024, has tasked itself with answering a long-standing philosophical question: “How should we live?” Through its interdisciplinary research, the institute aims to apply its findings and get closer to answering the Socratic question, providing forms of ‘ethics consultancy’ to organisations.

The Uehiro Oxford Institute will replace the previous Oxford Uehiro Centre for Practical Ethics based in the Faculty of Philosophy. However, the Institute will retain its strong links with the department and will be directed by Oxford’s renowned philosophy professor Roger Crisp.

Crisp told *Cherwell*: “[t]he fundamental question we are asking is ‘How should we live?’, and more particularly ‘How should we act?’

“To answer that question in particular

areas will require input from specialists in politics, science, medicine, and many other areas, and so we aim to be genuinely interdisciplinary in our approach. We are not expecting to provide all the answers, but we aim to use what we’ve found to help others make their own decisions: this is what we call ‘Thought into Action.’”

The Institute aims to help solve pressing contemporary ethical issues such as how we should respond to the climate crisis, pandemics, and rapid developments in information technology.

It will be based in the Humanities Division and will focus on producing interdisciplinary research across a range of areas such as art, literature, law, medicine, and social sciences. The move to the Humanities Division from the Faculty of Philosophy recognises the collaboration between relevant disciplines needed to tackle ethical issues.

A gift from Uehiro Foundation on

Ethics and Education, which has worked with the University for over two decades, enabled the Institute’s creation. The gift will also allow for the creation of postdoctoral research fellowships and graduate scholarships for the Institute.

Founded in 1987, the Uehiro Foundation was formed by Eiji Uehiro, a Japanese social educator and writer. Inspired by his father’s survival of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, he dedicated himself to the furthering of moral and ethical education.

Vice-Chancellor Professor Irene Tracey said: “The ethical challenges facing humanity today are greater and more numerous than at any point in our history. To understand them and to find the best ways to confront them, the Uehiro Oxford Institute will draw on the expertise of our world-leading researchers across the university.”

# Rowers impacted by Oxford’s rainiest month recorded in 250 years

By Evelyn Power

Heavy rain has prevented Oxford rowers from going on the river as September marked the wettest month Oxford has seen since 1774. Researchers at Oxford University’s Radcliffe Meteorological Station recorded a staggering 193mm of rainfall last month, making it the second-rainiest ever recorded in Oxford.

Due to excess rainwater, the current and volume of the river frequently renders it far too dangerous for rowing expeditions; college boat club practices have increasingly had to take place inside. Last year, at Godstow, rowers couldn’t row 85% of the time, whilst on the Isis, rowers couldn’t 61% of the time, a *Cherwell* investigation found.

Annabeth Brown, a captain at New College Boat Club, told *Cherwell*: “we’ve had to postpone this year’s taster outings, and last year both the Novice Regatta and Torpids were cancelled because of the rain and most training sessions being indoor on ergs.”

Cambridge University rowing, by contrast, row on the smaller and calmer River Cam. Emily Richmond, the lower captain of Cambridge’s Peterhouse Boat Club, told *Cherwell*: “we have all been allowed to go on the river this year, and as far as I know there haven’t been any red or yellow flags on the Cam.”

While at Oxford, Brown said that “the Blues teams have had to do a huge amount of travelling just to try to get enough time on the water” with countless hours commuting to a safe river. College boat clubs also cannot afford journeys to and from calmer rivers, and thus miss out on rowing time, she said.

The rainfall, which is 374% the average for September, amounted to the highest two-day total in the meteorological station’s history.

Radcliffe Meteorological Observer, Charlie Knight, said in an Oxford University release that the “exceptional amount of rainfall” is made all the more concerning “given that September is typically not a very wet month”. Two of the five wettest months recorded in

Oxford since 1767 have been recorded in the last five years.

Countless areas faced flooding as a result of the heavy rainfall. Oxford is uniquely vulnerable to shifts in climate and weather partly because of its location in historical marshlands and floodplains. Freak rainstorms, exacerbated by climate change, have already begun to take a toll on student life and traditions, as well as shifting the geography of the city itself.

In January 2024, Oxford City Council released a statement warning people against walking along towpaths by the river, as the exceptional rainfall rendered sheer proximity to Oxford’s rivers a “serious risk to life”.

Rowing is central to student life for many Oxford students and the flooding issues, coupled with risks from E. coli, have kept students away.

Brown told *Cherwell*: “not being able to get on the water regularly means rowers can’t work on their technique at an individual level, and also can’t get to know their teammates... and learn how they work together as a crew.”

*Image Credit: Selina Chen*



## NEWS SHORTS

### Bridge denied permission to extend open hours

The new home of Oxford's beloved student club night Parkend, Bridge, has had its bid to extend closing times from 2am to 3am on Wednesday rejected. A local resident objected to the "non-stopped continuation of noise and all sorts of nuisance and disturbances associated with the goers of the club".

### Oxford researchers microchip bees

Oxford University researchers fitted bees with the "smallest harmonic radar tag ever" in a bid to explore declining population rates. The system uses LED lights which reflect off the bee's tags and are then picked up by a camera. The research will be used to form conservation strategies.

### New vintage shop opens in Covered Market

Again Garments, a vintage shop run by Ade King, opened a second location in Covered Market. King said that there was a desire for a "more curated style" in Oxford, which his shop would provide. The Gloucester Green location will remain open, with "crossover" between both locations.

## CROSS CAMPUS

### CAMBRIDGE

### Stickers, but not firearms, banned at Cambridge SU Freshers' Fair

Cambridge SU banned stickers on the basis that they "damage furniture and structures... leading to fines" at this year's Freshers' Fair. Stickers found at the fair were to be confiscated, but the societies would not be reprimanded for it. At the same time, the Smallbore Club and Clay Pigeon Shooting Club had firearms on display in their stalls.

### CALIFORNIA UNIVERSITIES

### Legacy admissions banned in private California universities

A new bill passed by California Governor Gavin Newsom bans preferential treatment for those who are legacies at private universities in the state, such as Stanford and USC. In 2023, at Stanford, 14% of students had some "existing connection" to the University. Newsom said that "The California Dream shouldn't be accessible to just a lucky few."

### IMPERIAL COLLEGE LONDON

### BBC One presenter told Imperial student to 'buy ladies' shoes'

Mark Clemmit, a presenter of the BBC's Football Focus, received boos from the crowd of Imperial's sports awards after suggesting an award winner sell her award to "buy some ladies' shoes". Clemmit said that he was simply commenting on the decision to wear sports shoes to a black-tie event, whilst a student said "the air changed a bit" after the comment was made.

# Oriel renovation reveals Viking site

BY JOSHUA MCGILLIVRAY

Excavations on the eastern side of Oriel College have revealed the original Anglo-Saxon borders of Oxford, confirming the hypothesis that the city was originally an outpost for defence against Viking attacks from the north. With diggers, pipes, and rubble, the site can be seen from Oriel students' windows.

The discovery was made when the college started preparing for a refurbishment in the bar and kitchens. Archaeologists extracted deep cores from the earth, and by dating the remains of plants, they realised that the area had once been a ditch, 10ft deep and 65ft wide, dating back to between 880AD and 950AD. It likely served as the outer frontier for a small fortified

community between Mercia and Wessex. It likely served as the outer frontier for a small fortified community between Mercia and Wessex.

Oxford was likely chosen as a location for a Viking community due to its proximity to the Thames. Senior project manager of Oxford Archaeology, Ben Ford, said: "The rivers were used by the Vikings to get inland as well, so to have your defences on those waterways was quite important." From this, Oxford likely developed over time into a town.

These findings align with the 1899 discovery of remnants of a wall in the Clarendon Quadrangle of the Bodleian Library. Along with this year's discoveries, the long-standing hypothesis that the barricade was the northeastern corner of a settlement is well-supported. A southern border

has not yet been uncovered, although if one existed, it is suspected to have passed through the Tom Quad in Christ Church. The recent archaeological revelations mark a major advance in our understanding of the history of Oxford. The City Council archaeologist, David Radford, said that this breakthrough is pivotal in "understanding Oxford's emergence and evolution" in the relationships between Mercia and Wessex.

Meanwhile, the head of construction at Oriel, Colin Bailey, said that the Oriel refurbishment has provided a "rare opportunity" with this excavation to solve a "century-old debate" as the College "continues to surprise us with new discoveries", nearly 700 years since it was built.

Image credit: Joshua McGillivray



# Hertford Principal to leave for new role as UN head of humanitarian affairs

BY EUAN ELLIOTT

Hertford College Principal Professor Tom Fletcher announced he will be leaving his role for a new appointment as Undersecretary General for Humanitarian Relief and Emergency Relief Coordinator at the United Nations, leading the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). His last day will be the 18th November.

In an email to the college, Fletcher recalled how his experience at Hertford "changed his life" in the years he's been "blessed to see Hertford from every angle": as a student of Modern History, a night porter, a barman, a JCR president, a summer school guide, an alumnus, an honorary fellow, and the principal.

After graduation Fletcher served as a UK diplomat in Nairobi and Paris, the foreign policy and Northern Ireland advisor to Prime Ministers Tony Blair, Gordon Brown, and David Cameron, and the British Ambassador to Lebanon. Upon returning to Hertford as an honorary fellow, Fletcher was elected as the youngest ever principal in 2020.

He wrote: "On Monday, the UN Secretary General asked me to take [the OCHA role] on. Millions are in dire need of protection and support, including in regions I know and love. I hope you'll understand why I must go."

Through two stories, Fletcher em-

phasised his commitment to accessibility at Hertford during his tenure. A first-generation university student who got the highest mark in Oxford and is now on the frontline of tackling the climate crisis told him last week that "Hertford is base camp." Another masters student from Syria who got funding from an alumni due to Fletcher's efforts told him that Hertford is her "sliding door moment."

Fletcher continued: "There is a student, born today, who will come to us in 2042. They will have had every reason not to make it. But, somehow, they will. And we will be ready for them. And they will change the world."

During his tenure as Principal, Fletcher oversaw the establishment of the Asseily Scholarship for a student displaced by conflict, persecution, or deprivation, as well as the Sibusiso Scholarship for five African graduate students.

Fletcher was commended by the UN for possessing "strong experience of leading and transforming organisations" and "an understanding of diplomacy at the highest levels", as well as by previous colleague Gordon Brown for his "creativity and resilience".

As Martin Griffith's successor, Fletcher will be the sixth successive British head of OCHA. Prior to his selection, over 60 diplomats and humanitarians wrote an open letter to UN Secretary General António Guterres calling for equal consideration of nationals of all member states in deliberation for the role.

Image Credit: Tom Fletcher.



## Sheldonian series promotes free speech

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to seek the advice from college heads if their events are facing "roadblocks".

Associate Professor Julius Grower was amongst several colleagues the Vice-Chancellor thanked for their help developing the Sheldonian Series. Grower is a signatory of an open letter addressed to Education Secretary Bridget Philipson, which seeks the reinstatement of the previous Conservative government's Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023 that was halted by the Labour government.

The Act gave greater protection to academic freedom of speech; universities that failed to do so could have faced sanctions and fines. It also provided a complaint scheme for academics and visiting speakers if they were prevented from speaking. The Government has said the reason to pause the Act was in the interest of student welfare and to protect vulnerable groups. Grower was the sixth academic to sign the letter. There are now over 650 signatures from academics, among them Richard Dawkins, Kathleen Stock, and seven Nobel Laureates.

Oxford has previously ranked first in positive responses to the question "During your studies, how free did you feel to express your ideas, opinions, and beliefs?", asked by the National Student Survey. Over 90% of respondents felt they were able to express ideas and beliefs, compared to 82% at Manchester, the lowest-ranking of the Russell Group universities. The University website states "Free speech is the lifeblood of a university" and acknowledges "a university may make rules concerning the conduct of debate but should never prevent speech that is lawful."

# Six top Chancellor candidates, interviewed

BY CHERWELL STAFF

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## Janet Royall

Janet Royall was appointed to the House of Lords in 2004, serving as Chief Whip in the House of Lords, Leader of the House, and Shadow Leader of the House of Lords. She has also served as Chair of the People's History Museum, Pro-Chancellor of the University of Bath and Vice-President of the Party of European Socialists. She has been the Principal of Somerville since 2017.

She told Cherwell: "I think that one of the roles of the Chancellor is to be an advocate. I think I've got a record of being able to listen and to achieve consensus,

not always sort of very visible consensus, but consensus behind the scenes. I've done that in various jobs, including as leader of the House of Lords, and so I think that I'd be very good at that. I think that I can do a splendid job." She is keen to "break down those barriers of perception" which uphold Oxford's perceived elitism.

## Lady Elish Angiolini

Lady Elish Angiolini led the Angiolini Inquiry into the murder of Sarah Everard, and has served as Principal of St Hugh's College since 2012. She was Chancellor of the University of West Scotland from 2013 until 2021.

She is keen to be the first female Chancellor in the position's 800-year history,

but she wants to be elected not for her gender but for other qualities such as leadership: "While she is keen to become the first woman to hold the job, Angiolini wants to be elected for her qualities, not her gender: "It's about affection for the university, and its component parts: students, academics, fellows, administrative staff, all the people that make it such a unique place. I don't consider myself standing at the threshold of history – that would be presumptuous; I might get three votes at the end of it."

## Dominic Grieve KC

Dominic Grieve was an MP between 1997 and 2019. His posts include Shadow Home Secretary and Chair of the Intelligence and Security Committee. While at Oxford he was President of OUCA.

He advocates for more funding for the University: "In terms of Oxford's future, it's competing with American universities which are very heavily endowed. Relatively speaking, the £1.3 billion that Oxford has is not a huge amount of money."

He acknowledges that an increase in tuition fees "will make it more daunting for students to consider coming" and pushes alternative funding sources. He is strongly supportive of a freedom of movement deal for young people in the EU: "Allowing young people to travel is a huge benefit to us and our young people as well as our diversity."

## Lord William Hague

Lord William Hague was an MP between 1989 and 2015, Leader of the Opposition between 1997 and 2001, and Foreign Secretary between 2010 and 2014. He came to Oxford from a Yorkshire comprehensive school and, while here, served as President of OUCA and President of the Oxford Union.

He believes that an AI revolution is on the horizon and that Oxford will have to change with the times, telling Cherwell: "In the world of highly intelligent machines that is coming, humans are going to have to make sure that they can work in a kind of co-intelligence with those machines. That is going to require more and more education."

He believes that a higher proportion of the population should attend university, is positive about Oxford's role on the cutting edge of research, and believes that Oxford should be as well funded as top American universities: "What we need is to be able to articulate to the whole world what Oxford is!"

## Margaret Casely-Hayford CBE

Margaret Casely-Hayford graduated from Oxford in 1982 and worked for twenty years with the law firm Dentons, where she was the first black woman to be made a Partner. She was also the first female Chancellor of Coventry University,

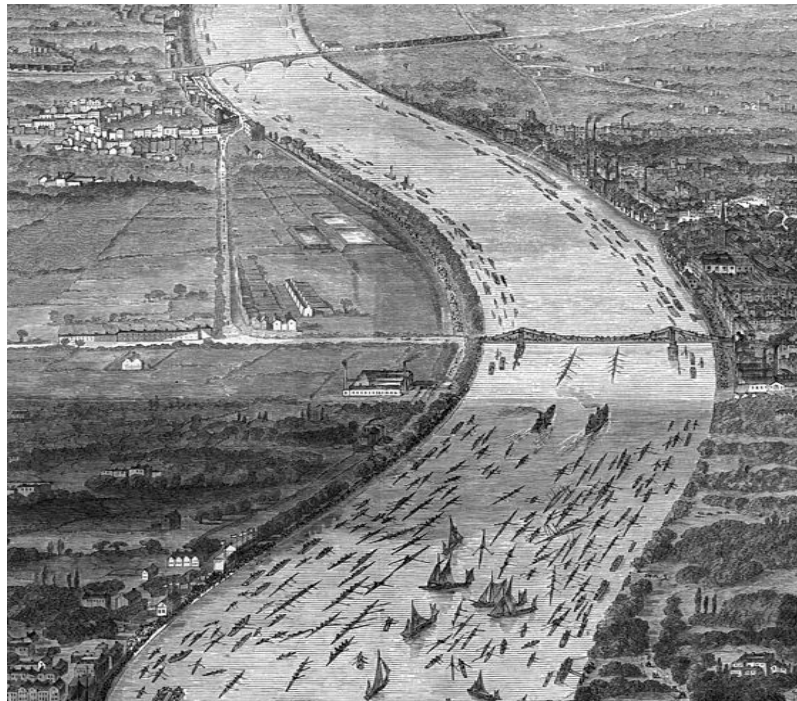
serving from 2017 until 2024.

She is passionate about the role of Oxford Chancellor and believes she has the experience to hold it: "I have been a Chancellor: I understand the symbolic and ceremonial aspects, I love and cherish the historic legacy, but I am also willing to push boundaries, test norms, and would champion those who want to do so within the university, whether it's for the betterment of society, academe, or individuals, or the environment even."

## Lord Peter Mandelson

Lord Mandelson was an architect of the New Labour movement and remains a Labour peer. As an Oxford undergraduate in the 1970s, he wrote for Cherwell, served as President of St Catherine's JCR, and helped to establish the Oxford Labour Students Association. He hopes to extend the University's influence through his connections with the current government: "I want the new government to recommit to higher education in this country. Universities are the source of social mobility, opportunity, as well as a driver of economic growth."

Having advised two Prime Ministers, served in various governmental positions, and been Chancellor of Manchester Metropolitan University, he wants to be available to the colleges to provide help and advice, and to lend dignity to the University as a ceremonial figurehead.



# 152-year-old Boat Race medal found in River Thames

By CHARLIE ROBERTS

A 1872 medal from the Varsity Boat Race between Oxford University and Cambridge University was scavenged in the River Thames by two mudlarkers. It likely fell amid severe weather conditions described as "a pitiless descent of swirling snow [that] was literally blinding" by *The Times*.

The medal, bearing the crests of both universities, is inscribed with the words "University Boat Race Putney to Mortlake" – the same route used today. The reverse side is engraved with the year "1872". It was likely a commercially produced souvenir rather than an official medal awarded to participants.

The find was made at Southwark on the banks of the Thames by Tom Chivers, author of *London Clay: Journeys in the Deep City*, and Nicola White, who posted a video of the discovery to her mudlarking YouTube channel.

Mudlarking is a centuries-old tradition which entails combing the shores of rivers to find valuable items. London is particularly well known for this particular pastime, with the Thames holding objects from the Roman period to the present day. The Boat Race medal is one of many objects uncovered by mudlarkers along muddy shores of the River Thames, where significant artefacts, includ-

ing mammoth remains and Tudor garments, have been discovered by licenced mudlarks such as Chivers and White.

The 1872 Boat Race marked the 29<sup>th</sup> time rowers from Oxford and Cambridge competed in this event, with Cambridge winning for the third consecutive year. That particular race was notable for being the last year to feature fixed seats before sliding seats were introduced.

A snowstorm during the 1872 race led to poor visibility and fewer spectators than usual lining the banks of the river, with *The Times* describing it as "of the most cheerless character" and "in the teeth of a bitter gale and snow storm". The weather conditions marked the worst the Boat Race had seen until 1912, when strong winds caused both team boats to sink – an incident that has not been repeated since.

Now a world-famous event, the Boat Race attracts around 250,000 spectators to the Thames riverbank each year, with millions more tuning in to watch the race on television. Last year Oxford lost to Cambridge, giving the Cantabrigians a 87–81 record for men and 48–30 for women.

*Image credit: 1870 Oxford-Cambridge Boat Race, The Graphic (London), via Wikimedia Commons.*

By CHARLIE BAILEY

The OvarianVax project by Oxford University professors Dr Ahmed Ahmed and Dr Nancy Zaarour has received £600,000 of funding from Cancer Research UK to use across three years for a preventative ovarian cancer vaccine.

On average 1,000 women in the UK are diagnosed with ovarian cancer, with 60% of the cases found in the later stages of the disease, making them harder to treat. There is currently no screening process. Most at-risk are women born with certain genes, such as the altered BRCA2 gene, which can increase risk by up to 65%.

The current treatment for patients with the altered genes removes their fallopian tubes or ovaries. This eliminates their risk of cancer but stops the women from conceiving naturally. If the vaccine's clinical trials are successful, these high-risk patients will be the first to benefit.

Dr Ahmed's project builds on earlier discoveries of the immune cells' ability to

"remember" the tumour. In past years the research involved analysis of 6,000 cells from 16 women, some of whom had cancer. Single cell RNA sequencing allowed scientists to identify new types of fallopian tube cells and notice that some had molecular fingerprints mirrored in individual ovarian cancers – thereby identifying women who are most at risk of ovarian cancer.

OvarianVax will draw from this previous knowledge to use tissue samples from the ovaries and fallopian tubes of people with cancer to recreate the first stages of ovarian cancer. The premise of the research is to train the immune system to recognise over 100 tumour-associated antigens, which are proteins on the surface of ovarian cancer cells. This could increase the ability to prevent the cancer spreading from its earliest stage.

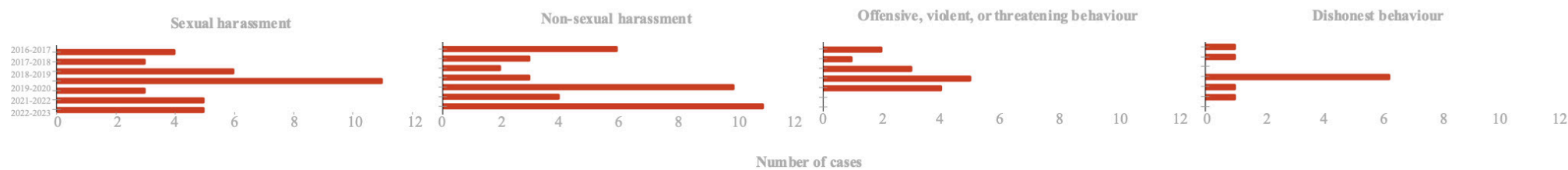
The project benefits from the large breadth of vaccine research which occurred during the Covid-19 pandemic. If the research goes to plan, the next step will be advancing to clinical trials.

The researchers involved women with lived experience of ovarian cancer. Ovarian Cancer Action, a charity that has previously given funding to Oxford's Nuffield Department of Women's and Reproductive Health, created a workshop in which these women shared their opinions on the new study. Researchers intend to continue working with members of the public to find out how popular the vaccine will be, and people's preference regarding how to administer it.

Dr David Crosby, head of prevention and early detection research at Cancer Research UK, has made it clear that it will be "many years" before the vaccine can progress to public use. However, the charity's chief executive, Michelle Mitchell, described funding for OvarianVax as "a really important step forward into an exciting future". Cancer Research UK aims to help 3 in 4 people survive cancer by 2034.

*Image Credit: MRC Weatherall Institute of Molecular Medicine, Jojdavies, via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 4.0*





## Figure one Statute XI and student life: The evolving role of Oxford's Proctors

Continued from Page 1

inefficient and inconsistent procedural methods or moves to centralise their processes to a potentially problematic point.

The following figures are derived from data in Proctor's Reports published in the University Gazette, which provide data related to the Proctor's Office's annual activities. There is no standard format for these reports and some data may not be directly comparable across all 10 years. Proctorial years restart every Hilary Term.

Cherwell was informed that the most recent Proctor's Report, which covers the proctorial year of 2023-24, is scheduled for publication sometime in Michaelmas Term 2024 despite Statute XI requiring that these reports be made at the end of every Hilary term.

### Statute XI

In recent months, Statute XI has become the subject of extensive discussions within the University administration and across the student community after the University Council sought its revision in May of this year. The contents of Statute XI outline the University-wide rules and laws, defining the limits of acceptable conduct for students and other members of the University.

The investigation of both non-sexual harassment and sexual harassment occupies the bulk of the Proctor's Office disciplinary casework on non-academic misconduct, following "engaging in any dishonest behaviour in relation to the University" and "engaging in offensive, violent or threatening behaviour or language".

Across all seven years, the Proctor's Office has reported an average of 5.6 cases of non-sexual harassment and 5.3 cases of sexual harassment, compared with an average of just 6.6 cases not classed as "harassment".

Generally, the class of offence reported every year is not entirely consistent, for instance, a case of "disruption of University activities" only appears in the latest report from 2022-23. The type of breaches reported less than once a year on average include: "possession of drugs"; "breach of library regulations"; "engaging in action which is likely to cause injury or impair safety".

This inconsistency may be partly explained by the rare incidence of these offences, yet it also suggests changes in the Proctor's Office's approach to the investigation of these breaches. Indeed, the decline of reported cases of "engaging in offensive, violent or threatening behaviour or language" may be correlated with the rise in cases reported as "non-sexual harassment", however, this remains ambiguous.

Regarding their jurisdiction for investigating breaches of Statute XI, the current Senior Proctor, Thomas Addock, told Cherwell: "In general, the Proctors deal with things in a University context, for example, University exams or allegations of misconduct between students at different colleges. If something happens within a college then the college will deal with it." This jurisdiction on the margins of the collegiate system is not unique to the handling of student discipline and it defines the position of the Proctor's Office within University life: they exist in the gaps between the colleges.

### From harassment to plagiarism

Over the past five years, the Proctor's Office has reported an average of 73 cases of academic misconduct, compared to an average of 18 breaches of the code of discipline.

The most common form of academic misconduct is reported to be "plagiarism". For context, in 2022-23 "plagiarism" made up 67% of the total instances of academic misconduct, and 70% in 2013-2014.

The largest proportion of the Proctor's Office's overall disciplinary caseload over four different proctorial years is concerned with "academic misconduct" (grey) rather than breaches of the code of discipline under Statute XI (red) (Figure 2). These figures were calculated with the sum of total cases reported as "student academic misconduct" and "student non-academic misconduct" for every year. These exclude any additional cases that were listed as "legacy" or "ongoing" and it does not distinguish between those reported as "upheld" or "not upheld".

The Proctor's Office's approach to resolving instances of academic misconduct appears especially inconsistent across this ten year period. The recourse to refer these cases to the Academic Conduct Panel is only reported in the period between 2016-17 and 2019-20, after this point it appears unused.

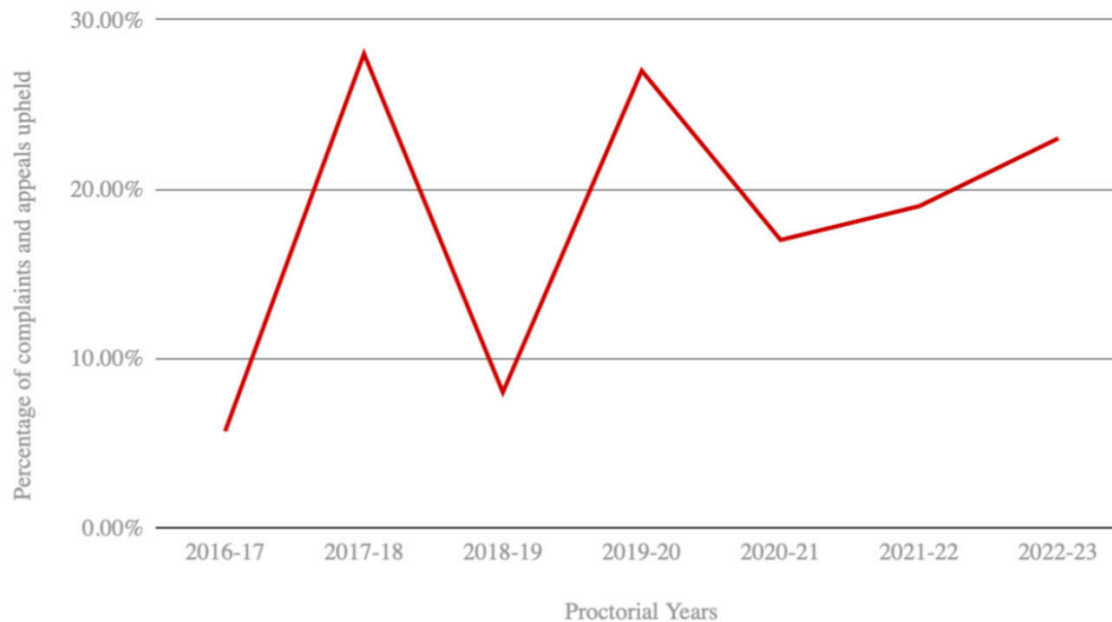
Every year some cases are referred to the Student Disciplinary Panel (SDP), yet an average of two cases were referred to the SDP in the five most recent years of reports compared to an average of 6.8 five years prior. Moreover, 2019-2020 stands out as the only year in which some cases are reported to have been resolved through 'Proctor's Decision'.

Additionally, in spite of the wide diversity of the Proctor's caseload, the institution continues to partly rely on the judgement of the two acting Proctors for the majority of disciplinary cases, appeals, and complaints. In this regard, the Senior Proctor explained: "the Proctors are supported by an experienced team who do the hard work of investigations. They gather the relevant information on which the Proctors make the final decision." In case of serious breaches, "the Proctors will look at the evidence and decide whether to refer the matter to the Student Disciplinary Panel." This implies that despite the yearly turnaround in the head positions of the Proctor's Office, it relies on an established staff of caseworkers.

### Complaints and appeals

To further contextualise this range in the work of the Proctor's Office, it's important to note that figure two does not con-

Figure three



template the significant amounts of academic appeals they receive every year. For 2022-23, the Proctors reported the receipt of a total of 124 academic appeals in addition to 84 reported instances of academic misconduct.

Figure three displays the percentage of students' complaints and academic appeals upheld by the Proctor's Office across the proctorial years of 2016-17 to 2022-23. These figures exclude the cases that have been shown as "ongoing" or "legacy" in the Proctor's Reports.

As shown by figure three, there are some further inconsistencies in the proportion of complaints and appeals upheld by the Proctor's Office throughout this period. There is no clear trend in the data until 2019-2020, when they plateau slightly. Indeed, in 2017-2018, 28% of cases were upheld contrasted by 8% the year after. Yet in the last three years, the proportion of upheld complaints and appeals has been steady.

In November 2017, there was a change in the University regulations, which introduced a three-step process – an informal first stage, a formal second stage and a review stage – for the handling of student complaints and appeals. This meant that a larger proportion of the majority of complaints were resolved without direct intervention from the Proctor's Office. The introduction of this change may explain the evident variation in the percentage of cases upheld between 2016-17 and 2019-20. Implementation of an informal first stage of resolution demonstrates a desire for a partial decentralisation of this process.

There is no detail given in the most recent reports about the nature of student complaints, although some earlier reports cite reasons relating to "maladministration", "discrimination", and "teaching and supervision". In contrast, academic appeals are explained to be largely "against decisions from Examiners" or otherwise related to "examinations" and "research student candidatures".

### Amendment Controversy

The controversial amendment to Statute XI was first published in the University Gazette with an announcement of a legislative proposal from the University Council. Among the proposed changes, the Council sought to add a more detailed definition of "sexual misconduct" into the code of discipline.

A note accompanying this proposal explained that the changes were based on a decision of the University's Education Committee to "widen the Proctor's jurisdiction to investigate more cases of serious misconduct. As more of these often complex cases are now being reported, a range of legislative and procedural improve-

ments are necessary to prepare for further increases that we expect to receive."

Presently, it outlines that the offence broadly consists of "any behaviour of a sexual nature which takes place without consent where the individual alleged to have carried out the misconduct has no reasonable belief in consent". The proposal included a further definition of both "consent" and what constitutes "sexual activity".

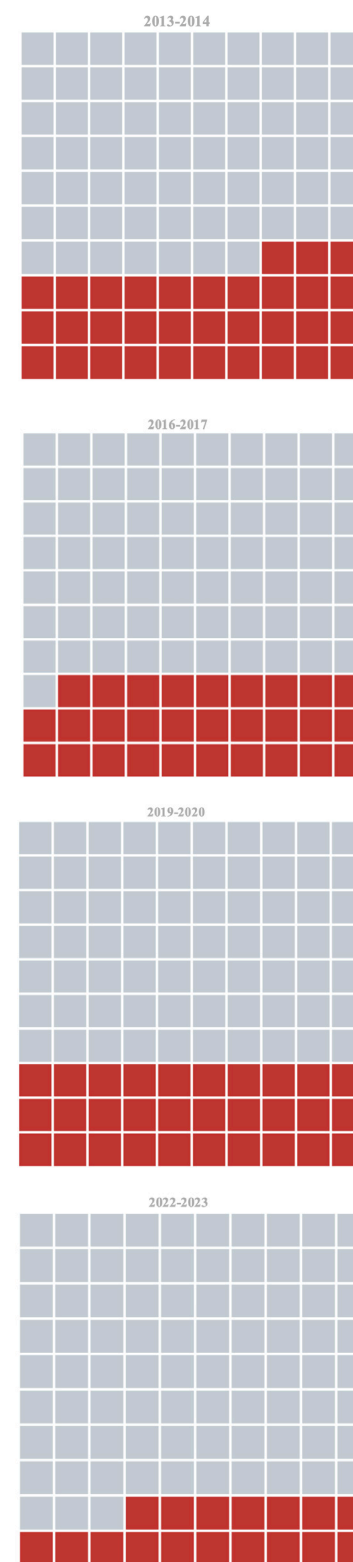
Despite the fact that the Proctor's Reports typically utilise the term "sexual harassment" and that this offence occupies a significant proportion of the Proctor's caseload of non-academic misconduct, (figure two) there is no explicit definition of this term under Statute XI. Likewise, a clear distinction between what is termed "harassment" and what is referred to as "engaging in offensive, violent, or threatening behaviour" is not made explicit. This percentage shows no clear trend until 2019-2020, when a consistency seems to be established. Indeed, in 2017-2018, 28% of cases were upheld contrasted by 8% the year after. Yet in the last three years, the proportion of upheld complaints and appeals has been steady.

Furthermore, in light of the claim that "more of these often complex cases [serious misconduct] are now being reported" used to partly justify the original revisions to Statute XI, it appears that the proportion of cases of non-academic misconduct dealt with by the Proctor's Office is not increasing in any significant (figure two). Yet, the average reported cases of non-academic breaches for the past five proctorial years, that are currently available, is 91, noticeably higher than the five years before that when it was 63.

Other amendments aim to change clauses related to student discipline more broadly: including a new requirement to "promptly inform the Proctors in writing if they have been arrested by the police and released under investigation (...) or if any of the foregoing appears likely to occur, and whether in the UK or abroad." This and similar changes were criticised as "illiberal and antidemocratic" by an open letter circulated shortly after the announcement of the Council's proposal. Before Congregation could meet on the 11th of June, the Council's original proposal was withdrawn and the meeting cancelled.

Recently, Congregation met again on the 15th of October, and passed a resolution to form a "working group" for revising all proposed changes to Statute XI. This initiative was proposed by members of Congregation, and was formulated in response to the withdrawal of the original proposal. As such, this group will be made up of "relevant university officials, a student appointed by the Student Union, and five members of Congregation".

Figure two



Importantly, it also seeks to "consult widely with members of academic staff ... and students."

### Colleigate gaps

The Proctor's Office is caught between the grey areas of Oxford's collegiate system. It is torn between the changing needs of students and the demands of the central University administration, both of which require this institution to continuously adapt and evolve. This is no easy task.

The wide-reaching and diverse range of activities that this role demands can lead to further ambiguities, over stretched-resources, and possibly even foster suspicion on the part of the student community. In this vein, David Kirk, former Junior Proctor, concluded his demission speech by encouraging "the institution to think about ways to enhance the perceived legitimacy of the ways it handles both student and staff conduct. I encourage the institution to put even further thought into prevention."

Image Credit: Ninara/CC BY 2.0 via Wikimedia Commons.

# OPINION

PROF TIM SOUTPHOMMANSE

## Oxford can win on both free speech and EDI

The author is the Chief Diversity Officer at Oxford University and was the Australian Race Discrimination Commissioner from 2013-2018.

Summers in Britain are increasingly becoming a season of discontent: think train, airport, doctor and nurse strikes. This year, the discontent created more than mere disruption. The riots that broke out across many parts of the country were terrifying in their violence.

It is, sadly, a sign of the times. Across the West, anti-immigrant populism and xenophobia have surged. Extremist activity has grown more slippery and social media platforms are enabling disinformation and radicalisation.

Many members of our collegiate University community were understandably unnerved by the summer's racist violence. Which is why, in the days following the riots, the University stood with other institutions in Oxford city and Oxfordshire to condemn racism and discrimination. Bigotry and hatred have no place in Oxford.

We recognise that many in our student community have experienced a challenging time, given the war in the Middle East. Last academic year, the Vice-Chancellor, senior colleagues and I heard from Jewish students and staff about experiences of antisemitism. We have heard from Muslim students about episodes of Islamophobia encountered on Oxford's streets.

As we start Michaelmas, it is essential that everyone in our University understands that we do not tolerate any form of racism. We unequivocally reject and condemn any discrimination or harassment based on ethnicity, race or faith – including antisemitism and Islamophobia. And we expect all members of the University – students, staff, visitors and contractors – to treat others with respect, courtesy and consideration.

This commitment goes hand in hand with our position on freedom of speech and protest. We believe that, within the limits of the law, all views should be given the chance of a hearing. It is part of being a vibrant intellectual community that we hear different views, and be prepared not only to challenge others' ideas but also our own. Protest is something that you can also engage in – provided it is done lawfully, peacefully and in line with our Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech.

We can be proud of our record on free speech. In last year's Office for Students National Student Survey, students were asked, "During your studies, how free did you feel to express your ideas, opinions, and beliefs?" Our score – 90.8% – was the highest in the Russell Group.

On global issues of significance, there will be many in our community who hold passionate views and commitments. Many of you will want to get involved in political causes, or be parts of movements for social change. Universities are, naturally, a place for you to be involved in this, alongside your studies. But our university must also be a place where every student and member can feel safe and welcomed. As we reminded you in a recent all-student communication you – as a student here – have an important part in ensuring we have an inclusive environment.

As Chief Diversity Officer, I appreciate the importance of striking the right balance, especially when matters of diversity and identity are involved.

There is a cultural challenge here. Earlier this year, partnering with UCL Policy Lab and More in Common, we conducted research on British public opinion about EDI. We found that across British society there is strong support for equality and diversity. But there's also nervousness about how to talk about matters the right way. According to our findings, 73% of Britons believe that people are made to feel stupid about not knowing how to talk about diversity using the latest language. And 50% personally worry about saying the wrong thing. How, then, can we go about talking about issues?

Answering this goes to the heart of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan, which the collegiate University is launching this Michaelmas. The plan brings together the vast range of efforts taking place across colleges, departments and divisions in Oxford that relate to EDI. Our aspiration: for Oxford to be a collegiate university where everyone belongs and is supported to succeed, and for us to be a leader on EDI in society.

The student experience and voice are central to our agenda. During 0th week, we ran EDI inductions at 17 colleges to support freshers in having an inclusive student experience. Later this term, through a new training initiative, we will be supporting JCR and MCR presidents on how they navigate challenges around EDI and leadership.

We will also be establishing a racial and religious inclusion task and finish group this term, bringing together staff and students (including the Student Union president and representatives drawn from JCRs and MCRs). It will be tasked with considering student experiences relating to racial and religious inclusion, and how we can strengthen our institutional responses to discrimination.

There is, of course, more that we can do on EDI. And we will. I hope that students in Oxford will join us.

## From the Editorial Board: Oxford shouldn't rest on its laurels

Oxford University has secured its place at the top of one global leaderboard for another year running. Boosted by what Times Higher Education deems to be improvements in its industry engagement and teaching, the University is in an enviable position the start of this new academic year. The question of how we should view these rankings is raised in **Lara Foxon's** piece on their nuances and shortfalls.

Beyond these rankings, students' experiences will be shaped by the University's stances, policies, and responses to this year's challenges. Following a summer of protests and University action, **Morien Robertson** examines changes to the University's protest policies, highlighting the way in which these rules have been communicated. Some University reforms were rejected by Congregation – their supreme governing body – last year. The University has long been an advocate of free speech, and it is vital to take a closer look at how the institution responds to real-time student protest.

The University has also unveiled a new Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) strategic plan, aiming to bring unity and balance through education. **Dr Tim Southphommasane**, the new Chief Diversity Officer and former Australian Race Discrimination Commissioner, reaffirms Oxford's commitment to leading in these metrics.

**Faye Chang** brings attention to the reopening of the controversial Campsfield Immigration Detention Centre, mere minutes away from Oxford's new Innovation District. Recalling the University's claim to be a refugee "place of welcome," they call into question Oxford's position on fervent local opposition.

Elsewhere in the city, the University looks forward opening a new science and innovation district next year. However, questions have been raised over the sustainability credentials of one of its primary venture partners: Legal & General. **May Ho** explores the investment firm's chequered reputation, and the extent to which it aligns with the University's commitment to sustainability and transparency. Is this just another case of greenwashing fuelled by dubious financing?

Questions about student finances aren't disappearing either. **Anita Okunde** walks through Labour's reported plans to increase the university tuition cap, arguing that it is a short-term fix which sends the wrong message. The British education system is creaking, and more fundamental changes are needed. Current plans force students to bear the burden of structural failings. As **Oliver Jones-Lyons** argues, the younger generation faces growing issues, particularly around housing, and requires more attention and aid. Instead, they get little help and less sympathy from politicians and older generations. But antagonism between the old and young helps no one, especially as pensioners begin to feel the sharp end of cuts with the rollback of the Winter Fuel Allowance. The young will one day be old, and we shouldn't celebrate when our nation's grandparents lose out.

There's work to be done to keep Oxford's place at the top – here's hoping we can all do our part.

MAY HO

## Unmask the shady investors

Oxford's partnership with Legal & General raises greenwashing concerns. The investor selection process requires greater scrutiny.

The University of Oxford's new science and innovation district, set to open next calendar year, is a joint venture between the University and Legal & General. The company is focused on financial services, and aims to invest in projects that improve people's lives. The building and design approach of the district – human-environment co-creation hubs – seems promising, offering researchers opportunities to develop practical solutions for social and environmental sustainability. However, it's not clear whether the University has ensured that its investors, such as Legal & General, are genuinely sustainable.

The University states that it proactively ensures investors contribute to addressing pressing issues like climate change and biodiversity loss through its Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Investment Policy Statement. Legal & General argues that the district, which will house the Departments of Experimental Psychology and Biology, serves as a leading example of how pension funds can drive UK innovation in tackling climate challenges. The park website makes repeated references to "sustainability".

Despite these claims, sources such as *Make My Money Matter* and *Money Week* suggest that Legal & General may not be as "sustainable" as it appears. Their pension funds, critics argue, could still invest in fossil fuels.

Legal & General has been heavily focused on launching new funds that exclude fossil fuels and industries violating the United Nations Global Compact. By partnering with organisations such as AP1 to launch the ESG fossil-fuel-free Emerging Market Equity (index) fund, collaborating with the National Trust on fossil fuel diversification, and supporting other sustainability initiatives, they have made significant strides. However, it remains unclear whether 100% of the funds are genuinely sustainable and ethical.

The University would do well to make the selection process for its investors more transparent, ensuring that its sustainability strategy and investment criteria are clearly outlined. This would help answer the critical question: are the investors genuinely sustainable, or is this just another case of greenwashing?

FAYE CHANG

## New year, new detention

The reopening of the Campsfield Detention Centre has encountered local opposition; as a University of Sanctuary, Oxford should speak out.

Half an hour north of central Oxford, you'll find two very disparate developments. On one side, Oxford's new pride and joy, the Innovation District: a £4 billion partnership with Legal & General for a state-of-the-art science area. On the other, Campsfield Detention Centre: a £70 million project by Galliford Try to reopen a facility for 400 immigration detainees. The hypocrisy is glaring.

Campsfield's closure in 2018 was met with significant relief, given its notorious living conditions. In August 2007, 26 detainees fled what was deemed an "unsafe" environment, following a week of hunger strikes, sit-outs, and protests. In October 2013, a suicidal inmate attempted to start a fire in his cell, resulting in two hospitalisations. The Home Office's neglect towards detainees' health was not only evident in their indefinite detention, but also in its failure to install fire sprinklers in the facility.

Plans to reopen the centre have been met with continued protest. An open letter against the reopening in August 2024 represented 50 Oxford organisations, whilst a petition by a former detainee received over 1,400 signatures.

One voice that has been conspicuously absent is the University of Oxford itself. Its recent accreditation as a University of Sanctuary ostensibly recognises Oxford's "sustained commitment to being a place of welcome for people who have been forcibly displaced". The reopening of Campsfield poses both a public health and community wellbeing issue. To stay silent stands in direct opposition to Oxford's supposed commitment.

Alternatives to detention are cheaper, more effective, and more humane. The reopening of Campsfield is unnecessary and unpopular; it's time for the University of Oxford to actually stand behind the sanctuary they claim to provide.

LARA FOXON

## THE ranking, or just one opinion?

Oxford University is officially the best university in the world: with the small addendum that it depends on who you ask. Another Google search will tell you that the Massachusetts Institute of Technology is the world's best university in 2025, whilst another claims Harvard takes the top spot. It seems this coveted spot is not so definitive after all.

Different results should not be a surprise. But the confusion makes clear no ranking can really offer a fully representative picture. The company that ranked Oxford highest, Times Higher Education (THE), even offers a health warning for its own ranking: decision-making is inevitably subjective.

But acknowledging bias only goes so far. THE does claim to focus on metrics that "are not dependent on [universities'] traditional wealth, age or reputational advantages". But 'Impact' rankings are one of these categories, measuring universities' performance against the Sustainable Development Goals: arguably

still a metric affected by the distribution of resources and wealth.

Moreover, press releases and headlines inevitably trade on the topline. Articles extolling Oxford's position don't have to spell out the debate over rankings' validity. There's a disconnect between a methodology which insists on its subjectivities and a market which relies on these rankings being perceived as objective.

University rankings ultimately operate as a for-profit exercise. No amount of disclaimers can change the effect this has on the companies' operation. They will always require massive data extraction – which requires people, energy, and time from universities. They sell consultancy services – for those universities able to afford them.

How helpful any of this really is – for students, staff, and the universities that have to find the resources to entertain them – is questionable.

Image credits: David Hays



# Increasing university fees increases inequality

Raising the cap for tuition fees is a popular solution to growing university deficits. But it's a solution that only widens existing economic inequalities.

ANITA OKUNDE

When writing this article, I logged in out of curiosity to see my student loan balance. I saw a pretty number: £44,644.18, with £1,463.44 in interest. The fact that two years of my household income would only just about cover my university loans thus far, and that I had spent the time missing lectures after ridiculous nights out, was humbling.

However, fear not! Labour has a plan for more accountability, easing the burden on students, and making the university more accessible – a plan which somehow involves raising the undergraduate fee cap to £10,500. As a PPEist, I had learned not to derive hope from a politician's promise: Bridget Phillipson's insistence that she was not upping tuition fees was drowned out by many's concerns that they needed to be increased. It seems like an easy choice, given that in the 2023-2024 academic year, 40% of British universities ran deficits, and we haven't seen an increase in the cap since 2017. However, the implications of this increase in the tuition fee cap have a broader impact on social mobility, and the economic implications on students have not been discussed sufficiently to warrant such a drastic increase.

The rationale behind the proposed rise in tuition fees, as put forward by some policymakers, is cloaked in the language of necessity. The argument goes that universities are struggling to keep up with rising operational costs, from staff salaries to campus maintenance and, of course, funding world-class research. They point to their rankings, research output, and attractiveness to international students as reasons for every-bigger budgets. I understand their plight in needing to balance the books, and maintain quality and status. But is this hike truly necessary, or is it simply the most convenient option for those in power? Alternative funding models should be considered. For example, a return to increased public funding through per-student grants, which has fallen back by 18% in real terms since 2012, could relieve students of bearing the brunt of financial strain. Taxing corporations or high-net-worth individuals who directly benefit from an educated workforce is also viable. Instead, the government seems to prefer to fall back on the familiar narrative that students must pay more to secure the same, or even diminishing, educational experience.

However, tuition fee hikes only offer a short-term fix. It's not as if universities will see a windfall from this and immediately solve all their financial problems. Instead, the more fees increase, students and their families are forced to take on unsustainable debt levels. Meanwhile, the underlying issues remain government cuts to education funding, the underfunding of research, and a dependence on tuition fees that leaves institutions vulnerable to fluctuations in student numbers. This solution doesn't address the root cause: the model of financing higher education is fundamentally broken.

At the heart of this brokenness is the question of whether a reliance on ever-rising student loans and tuition fees is sustainable in the long term. Our system has normalised the idea that an 18-year-old, fresh out of sixth form, unschooled in financial planning, is responsible enough to pay off a £27,500 student loan – many graduates struggle to pay off their debts, with some barely making a dent before the remainder is written off decades later. These figures are fiscally ridiculous. The government forecasts that around 65% of full-time undergraduates starting in 2023/24 would repay them in full. This is more than double the forecast for the 2022/23 cohort – for whom the expectation was 27%. Increasing the fee cap feels like a temporary patch on a gaping wound in the system, a wound that needs more than just another layer of financial gauze to heal.

The broader implications of raising the tuition fee cap on working-class and underprivileged students are also far-reaching and under-considered. It's not just about the immediate financial burden; it's about the message this sends. The more fees increase, the more university becomes an elitist institution that does not help democratise access to information. For those from low-income backgrounds, attending university may now feel like a financial gamble rather than an investment in their future. The idea that a degree is a ticket to a better life begins to lose its shine when the price tag feels insurmountable. Students already weighing up whether they can even afford to apply are inevitably put off by the thought of taking on tens of thousands of pounds in debt. Among families who have used a foodbank in the last year, 39% of those not planning to apply to universities cited high costs as the main barrier. We hear time and time again that education is meant to be the 'great equaliser', levelling the playing field for those who might not have the same social or

economic advantages. But how can that be true if, with every fee increase, the university doors inch further out of reach for those who need it most to advance socially?

For families already grappling with the cost-of-living crisis, the prospect of higher tuition fees adds another layer of financial stress. It's not just about paying for university; it's about choosing between investing in education and covering necessities. Middle and low-income families often rely on loans to send their children to university and will feel the pinch the hardest. With the price of everything from rent to food spiralling, the idea of finding even more money for higher education can feel overwhelming. Coming to university has meant my maintenance loan has often been used to help with household bills or the needs of a house I do not live in for most of the year. This is the reality of many students.

Ultimately, the conversation around raising

the tuition fee cap is about much more than just numbers. It's about the shifting perception of higher education, what it stands for, who it benefits, and who it leaves behind. The government's justification for this increase feels flimsy and negligent at worst. Yes, universities need funding, but we must alleviate this pressure without forcing students and their families into even deeper financial hardship. The reality is that raising tuition fees is a short-term fix for a long-term problem, and it only papers over the cracks in an already broken system. As we move forward, we must ask ourselves: what kind of higher education system do we want? One that widens the gap between rich and poor or serves as a ladder of opportunity? If we continue down this path, the doors to that ladder are slowly closing, locking out the very people it was built to help.

Image Credits: Ninara/CC BY 2.0 via Flickr



## Pensioners' losses aren't young people's gains

OLIVER JONES-LYONS

Shortly after the 2024 election, the newly-elected government announced plans to means-test the Winter Fuel Allowance, a benefit previously given only to pensioners. Reactions amongst young people were mixed. Some celebrated the move as a step toward intergenerational equality, while others saw it as a harsh welfare cut. The reality, however, is more complex.

Whilst Starmer has failed so far to court young voters, several recent policies suggest they're trying to address our concerns. These include means-testing pensioner benefits, setting national planning targets to lower housing costs for first-time buyers and renters, and exploring the reintroduction maintenance grants for poorer students. Policies such as these suggest a rebalancing of intergenerational inequality, which had tipped heavily in favour of pensioners under the previous government due to their reliance on older voters.

But there's a deeper question here: why do the interests of different generations diverge so sharply?

On issues like housing, the reasons are clear. Younger people form 'Generation Rent', facing high-cost rentals, while pensioners enjoy high rates of home ownership. Home owners instinctively seek to preserve their property value, often opposing new reforms that could make housing more affordable for younger generations. On fiscal issues, however,

this generational antagonism makes less sense. The erosion of the state pension (as well as repeated private pension tax raids since the Brown government) have left many pensioners more financially vulnerable, with pensioner poverty looking to increase rapidly. Young people have similar concerns in this regard. There is a growing fear we may never be able to retire – let alone comfortably.

Moreover, the 'tighten your bootstraps and suffer' attitude, common among members of the older generations, correlates with a failure of government to implement policies that expand education, welfare, and infrastructure investment. This lack of investment keeps incomes and therefore tax receipts down, which in turn erodes the safety net for pensioners. We are caught in a frustrating catch-22: a weakened social contract that harms both ends of the age spectrum.

What about the cuts to Winter Fuel Allowance? There should be no cause for celebration amongst younger voters. The aforementioned challenge of the weakened social contract will continue to lead to a crumbling social security net for those of all ages – and we too may one day need the state as pensioners. Crucially, we need to stop viewing intergenerational equality as an either-or situation. Both pensioners and young people are being shortchanged. Fighting for a better social security net together, rather than against one another, is the only way to secure better outcomes for all.

**Both pensioners and young people are being shortchanged**

## Protect the right to protest

MORIEN ROBERTSON

This summer's protests have pushed university free speech policies to their breaking point. Scenes of police being deployed at scale on college campuses across the US have sparked fears of overreach. At the same time, universities need to balance students' fundamental right to protest with their ability to fulfil their function as centres for learning and research. However, Oxford's new Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech, which supersedes the Code of Practice on Meetings and Events, indicates a concerning willingness to curtail protest rights. The changes lengthen the notice period required for events from seven to 20 days and adds that events may be denied permission if speakers express 'highly controversial' views, language not featured in the previous code. Whilst the University has said that the change in language is only for clarification and that policies 'remain unchanged and will be enforced', freedom of speech protects the right to offend except in cases of genuine harm, and it is not clear that the new changes recognise this. Oxford Action for Palestine (OA4P) has criticised the University, arguing that it imperils the right to protest. Violent protest is unacceptable, but there's a lot of room between dangerous protests and restrictions on speech, let alone gatherings. Protests simply are 'highly controversial'; that is in many ways their *raison d'être*.

In May, the University Council suggested amendments to Statue XI, which governs University disciplinary procedures, including the banning of a student from any property of the University for 'up to twenty-one days' on 'reasonable grounds' the person is 'likely' to 'cause damage to property, or inconvenience or harm to other users'. Other vaguely-worded amendments increased the scope for restrictions and penalising measures. The University executive attempted to package the amendments together with necessary reforms on sexual misconduct, a dishonest step which was rejected by the wider congregation. After dissent, it withdrew the proposal.

The new rules, although better than the previous suggestions, demonstrate that, far from retreating, the University executive is set on clamping down. Beyond the content of the changes, what is frustrating is the lack of clear communication and transparency. By firstly trying to ram through changes by linking them to sexual misconduct policy and now taking an executive decision which circumvents the congregation, the Council is evading democratic assessment of the policies, which are profoundly important for all students. Open discussion and consultation may reveal the need for policy changes, but backdoor alterations to vitally important rules are unacceptable.

**Protests simply are 'highly controversial'**

# The ‘cult’ that recruited future Oxbridge students... including me



By LAURENCE COOKE

Oxford-based summer schools for sixth formers are a common sight. But what about a completely free summer school that recruited teenagers to help them change the world? Discover how the Effective Altruism movement sought to convert a new generation through one student’s weird and wonderful personal experience.

So, do you think it’s really a cult?” This question was met with nods of assent among the group I was sitting with, as we sipped our coffees on the second floor of a Berlin conference centre. It had been barely a month since I was introduced to the movement known as Effective Altruism (EA). Thousands of dollars of crypto money later, I was chatting with Oxford finalists, civil servants, and researchers – most of whom cheerfully admitted that there was a quasi-religious fanaticism about the organisation that was hosting us. I was barely seventeen at the time.

I’ll slow down. Effective Altruism defines itself as “an intellectual project, using evidence and reason to figure out how to benefit others as much as possible.” It then seeks to take action on this basis of building a “radically better world”. Its adherents, EAs, endorse the guiding principles of a utilitarian commitment to others, openness (including to potentially strange or neglected ideas), a scientific mindset, a collaborative spirit, and integrity. And yet, unfortunately on this last point, I’m willing to bet that if you’d heard of Effective Altruism coming into this article, it was quite possibly because of convicted crypto fraudster and former EA donor Sam Bankman-Fried who has now been sentenced to 25 years in prison.

In 2022, I participated in the Leaf programme. This was an all-inclusive ten-day summer school hosted at Lady Margaret Hall. Its goal was to direct some young minds towards a career that would produce the most good and so help alleviate suffering. Effective Altruism, through Leaf, spent

a large amount of money – over £2,000 per participant – to target promising future Oxbridge students. We were lavished with job advice, a free residential in Oxford, restaurant meals each night, outings to escape rooms, evenings at bowling alleys, and the like. In exchange, we attended sessions on prioritising causes, identifying neglected suffering, and planning our impactful careers. We chose between helping agonised farm animals and stopping the creation of potent bioweapons. We weighed up whether a malign artificial intelligence and the “lock in” of techno-dictatorship was the biggest threat of all.

We had been chosen, it was rumoured, out of a highly competitive pool of potential future decision-makers. The cost of gathering us in Oxford in this way was outweighed by our potential to do good in our lives. If even one of us could do something really impactful, it would all be worth it. Leaf knew we were probably going to Oxbridge and it knew that this was something that could be leveraged. Indeed, its website now uses this foresight as an advertising tool. We are the alumni – the website proudly declares alongside our glossy photographs – who are now at LSE, Harvard, Oxford, Cambridge. I’m even in their promotional video. This might seem fairly standard among private schools and for-profit application academies. But Leaf was different. I was struck by the overriding ambition of the project: an earnest, secular dedication to producing the most good.

This kind of talk – like the phrase “producing the most good” – will start to sound quite familiar to philosophy students. Effective

Altruism, after all, is just a movement that seeks to apply utilitarianism to one’s career choices. The greatest happiness and the least suffering – whoever feels it, and crucially whenever they feel it. When we arrived at Leaf – not yet inducted into EA’s manner of consequentialist, calculating ratiocination – we were struck by the unintuitive conclusions we were at times led to. I don’t believe we were all convinced that we ought to deprioritise global poverty and climate change over ‘x risks’ – potential extinction events such as an asteroid strike, AI overlord, or nuclear winter that could irreversibly curtail humanity’s happiness. Yet this was exactly the direction in which discussion was headed.

One graduate from Leaf’s comments to *Cherwell* about their experiences highlight the mental training required to adopt an Effective Altruist mindset. “I feel I ultimately came away from Leaf thinking that the EA approach is far too numerical and lacks the human empathy needed to solve the world’s most pressing problems.” Required reading prior to the programme included Julia Galef’s acclaimed book *The Scout Mindset*, which seeks to encourage people to objectively survey the intellectual terrain as “scouts” rather than ferociously defend a pre-existing point of view as “soldiers”. Yet this does not – or ought not – to extend to a sense – even if only among some within the Leaf cohort – that human empathy was sidelined. We were 17-year-olds, assessing problems whose magnitude many would spend their whole lives unable to comprehend, in one hour sessions and group presentations.

Yet we learnt the terminology, the rules of the game. Part of the reason I believe people compare EA’s internal architecture to that of a cult of sorts is because it comes with its own metalanguage and distinct way of making decisions. Cause prioritisation, diminishing marginal utility, expected value: this logic is useful (I may even say vital) in working out where charity money should go. It always boils down to how much suffering can be avoided, and how quickly and cheaply. Give money to fund malaria nets, not expand the donkey sanctuary. But where EA took all this further was by inviting it into our conception of what would make our lives worthwhile. Dedicate all your efforts to tackling the biggest problems, leave everything else behind.

Where this had the potential to go astray was when the pursuit of reducing suffering led to an attitude in which the end justified the means. At Leaf, we were shown promotional videos of Sam Bankman-Fried that presented him as nothing short of a saint. We found his “earning to give” strategy – work in finance to earn as much as possible, then donate it all to charity – blindingly shortsighted. It made no mention of the unsustainable future of cryptocurrencies. Nor of the fact that getting rich quick in the Global North may be reinforcing a highly unequal political system that most ethics – including utilitarianism – will usually condemn. That Bankman-Fried still had pennies left over for a villa in the Bahamas didn’t help convince us either. I think this – one of our first interactions with the movement – would now be acknowledged as a mistake.



Furthermore, EA stunned us with its political neutrality. It was as though we just needed to apply a logical, centrist/social democratic algorithm and our problems would disappear. In some ways, this is very convincing. I do believe that politics neglects issues that lead to a large amount of suffering, not least that of animals in factory farms. Short electoral cycles mean that we never look to the longer term. The problem many people had here, however, was in practice, not principle. By assuming that problems could be magicked away by a sufficient amount of money, I recall a Leaf friend insisting to me, no questions were asked of the systems that produced these problems in the first place. Perhaps in contrast to most centre-left cultural movements, discussions of colonialism, gender, and class were not the order of the day. They made way for galling talk of species, weapons, and robots.

The political blindness of EA's cool-headed utilitarianism may ring some alarm bells when we look at adjacent movements and offshoots. Amongst these is pronatalism, a practice among

## “[they] knew we were going to Oxbridge and leveraged this”

some Effective Altruist couples to have as many children as possible, doing their bit to avert ageing populations and a subsequent demographic collapse. The most fervent pronatalists are allies of Elon Musk and JD Vance, may oppose birth control, and resort to parenting practices that are tantamount to abuse. The overwhelming negative utility of adopting such a Gileadean setup seems to be ignored in the race for more people. More people, more potential for maximised pleasure.

Another, far more influential strand, is that of longtermism. It's the view that taking steps now to affect the distant future is a moral priority. This is because future people, due to their sheer number, are at least as (and probably more) important than people alive today. If you think eight billion can suffer now, just wait till you see the trillions deprived of existence should an extinction event come to pass. Many find that this kind of 'strong' longtermism – distinct from general concern regarding the environmental legacy left to our children and grand-children – could pose some pretty serious risks for individual liberty, democracy, and people living in poverty today.

Yet this is not a philosophy article: I'd refer you to my half-baked 1 AM tutorial essays for that. So I won't say any more on pronatalism or longtermism. The examples serve to demonstrate that Effective Altruism requires some significant moral courage, and a willingness to endorse ideas that many would term controversial, to say the least. Returning to my original anecdote, you can imagine my shock that these 'edgy' ideas were not only endorsed by Oxford students – the people my 16 year-old-self aspired to be – but also by alumni in walks of life as varied as business, tech, the NGO sector, and government. And they all were happy to consider – and perhaps agree – that the vehicle behind all of this may well be quite odd, and actually – some would have it – a cult where basic principles could not be questioned.

Perhaps this comes most clearly to the fore in the supposed 'cause area' of 'community building'. Considered on a similar scale of importance to addressing global risks, it refers to growing the Effective Altruism community with chapters and cause area groups in cities and university campuses across the world. EA website 80,000 Hours declares: “We think work on building effective altruism has the potential for a very large positive impact. It seems plausible that the effective altruism community could eventually save 100–1,000 million quality-adjusted life years (QALYs) per year by causing \$10–100 billion per year to be spent on much more effective projects. As an alternative measure, it seems plausible that the effective altruism community could do good equivalent to reducing the risk of human extinction by between one percent and ten percent. These estimates are extremely rough and uncertain.”

In other words, Effective Altruism believes, or even knows (although through “rough and uncertain estimates”) that it is potentially an extremely significant force on the survival or extinction of humanity. Defined like this, it



seems unsurprising that zealous expansion of the organisation's inner functions would be seen as a priority. Maybe it's here that things go off track. A Leaf alumnus told me: “[t]he core concept of EA is a noble one, but as an organisation it has become far too preoccupied with expanding its membership, rather than actually seeking to help the most people.” The fear, it seems, is that a movement that began to try and address global poverty more effectively becomes far too self-absorbed.

Effective Altruism, since it did have some very rich donors, had lots of money to spend in 2022.

## “At 17, we assessed problems whose size people spend their whole lives unable to comprehend.”

It was their (likely honest) generosity in trying to help people come together to do good that was arguably exploited by others. I noticed this on a personal level too. Leaf taught us how to be EAs, yet I fear that too many of my zealous new co-converts actually had their eyes on essay prizes (which could run into thousands of pounds of spending money) and fully-funded trips to European capitals. In their urge to get the best people closer to the levers of power in order to do good, Effective Altruism had accidentally allowed itself, in some cases, to be exploited by Oxbridge-bound careerists and free-riders who did not care about the question of if a pea plant could suffer, and were not planning on giving their performance bonus to charity. At a personal

level, this is my worry when I wonder how many of my fellow Leaf alumni have internalised what I consider to be one of the most positive upshots of the whole thing: a desire to help others and not just to be a useless corporate spreadsheet-filler.

In boasting of its Oxbridge alumni, Leaf may have simply come to reflect the normal career destinations of most Oxbridge students, which typically do not include selfless donations of the majority of one's wages to charity nor life as an animal rights charity entrepreneur. Instead, my experience was in many ways a portent of my life at St John's College, with its free or highly subsidised trips, the sense of self-importance it gives its students, the idyllic setting, and perhaps most interestingly, the sense that I was mixing with people from a new social milieu. I remember arriving at Leaf and realising that several participants already seemed to know each other: they had gone to the same group of aspirational, LinkedIn-able grammar schools. Leaf alumni now are thriving across Oxbridge: they achieve high grades, study a range of subjects, and help lead student societies like the Oxford Union, *Cherwell*, and *Varsity* [Cambridge's student newspaper].

The experience of Leaf brought benefits for the students present who had not necessarily been destined for such a schooling and career trajectory. “Leaf was the first time I had been exposed to the Oxbridge style of learning, both in the sessions and with the other participants. The intense debates about how best to do good have stuck with me, and continued to influence my thinking about how to do good with my career,” a working class alumnus tells me.

This article has discussed numerous criticisms of Effective Altruism. However, it is undeniable that it has also influenced me very profoundly. While I am no longer formally involved in any way, it is still a priority of mine to have a career that has a positive impact. At the very least I don't want to 'sell out' and contribute to a negative system, all just to earn money that I don't really need. I stop short at quantifying to exactitude the sector in which I must work. Broadly speaking,

EA may have done its job for me. However, I fear that for too many of Leaf's alumni, this was just a stepping stone towards other things. The moral lesson was never truly internalised.

This being said, there is evidence that some Leaf alumni have been directed towards meaningful, moral careers. Jamie Harris, Director of Leaf, when approached by *Cherwell* for comment, remarked: “Leaf often reminds me of many young people's vast potential to help others. We have Leaf alumni still at school researching ambitious questions like how they can improve government decision-making, taking actions that directly make a difference like fundraising for cost-effective charities to help people in poverty, and continuing to explore how they can best help others over the course of their career.”

Since Leaf, I have been vegetarian on the basis of trying to fight industrial factory farming and its colossal toll on the billions of animals who suffer in the most atrocious conditions. I take non-human consciousnesses more seriously. I stress about the meaningfulness of my career far more than I probably would have. I met my girlfriend whom I have been with ever since. If I had not met Effective Altruism, it is unclear whether these things would have happened to me.

Effective Altruism has struggled to shake off negative media attention and nagging worries about its cult-like status. Yet perhaps in the world we live in, to attack movements that seek to demand a higher standard of altruism from us is to play a dangerous game. I still bump into Leaf alumni all around Oxford, and only time will tell whether EA's attempt to change the futures of a generation of Oxbridge's best and brightest will be successful.

EA Oxford were approached for comment.

*Image credits: David Hays for Cherwell (left) EAGAccount/CC BY-SA 4.0 via Wikimedia Commons (bottom right), Laurence Cooke for Cherwell (top right)*

# Students split on latest UCAS changes

The UK's university application body is ending free text personal statement in favour of more targeted questions. *Cherwell* asked current sixth-formers for their views.

By FLORENCE WOLTER

The one-page personal statement has long been a staple of the UCAS undergraduate application process. Readers will likely remember their own drafts and redrafts, and hope that their tutors do not. But this rite of passage is to be replaced from 2026. Aspiring students will instead be faced with three focused questions: Why do you want to study this course or subject? How have your qualifications and studies helped you to prepare for this course or subject? What else have you done to prepare outside of education, and why are these experiences useful?

UCAS' reform comes despite acknowledgement that 72% of respondents to a 2022 applicant survey felt positive about the personal statement in its current format, while 89% found its purpose either "extremely clear" or "clear". The organisation noted, however, that 83% found the writing process to be stressful, with 79% agreeing that "the statement is difficult to complete without support". This survey identifies the two key issues targeted by the reform: students' stress and resource inequity.

The reform attempts to combat this through "scaffolding questions [which] offer students a roadmap, breaking them down into manageable parts." Among a sample group of Year 12 students surveyed for *Cherwell*, 69% agreed with UCAS' assessment, suggesting that this "roadmap" might indeed give students a clearer vision of the end product.

Implied is that resolving students' apprehension towards the daunting prospect of staring at a blank A4 page should encourage more students to write with confidence. Students might also be less reliant on the wildly varying resources of their home, and crucially school, support systems. Access Fellow Dr Matthew Williams told *Cherwell* that "the statement contents are difficult to verify, and there is a correlation between impressive statements and relative economic advantage." The hope, as UCAS phrases with its apt schoolground metaphor, is that "the new scaffolding questions level the playing field".

Tight structure, though, comes at the cost of creativity and individuality. UCAS itself quoted one anonymous student saying that "I felt [the old format] made my application more personal and about more than my grades because I am so much more than just my grades!" The sample group expressed similar views. One student offered a two-sided reaction, demonstrating confidence that "being able to answer more specific questions feels like I can definitely answer what the universities want to know about me." This was balanced by concerns that "I also do want to have the creativity that you get in a personal statement because I like the idea of being able to... talk about who I am as a person". Another student agreed, describing the "zoomed in" questions as "restricting" and lacking

the flexibility to give adequate weight to "other things I probably would have said in a personal statement" which she felt would have given universities "an insight into who they're taking on."

For Oxford, one insight that the reform may enable is "what else [applicants] have done to prepare outside of education". Dr Williams suggested that this "will be especially useful to us in Oxford" as it "will capture data on supercurricular work." Though he cautioned that Oxford "will continue to read the personal statements, but in conjunction with other, more verifiable, data."

This change comes in the wake of broader UCAS reform. In 2022, widening participation questions were added; in 2023, the academic reference was changed to three contextualising questions, complemented by new "entry grade reports" of universities' "historical grades on entry data" for students to better understand offer flexibility. These were not, however, the radical overhaul of the application process that UCAS had wanted to make. UCAS' 2021 Reimagining UK Admissions report called for the adoption of a post-qualification admissions (PQA) system. This means that the university application process would only begin after students had already completed their qualifications and received their grades.

In its response, the Department for Education (under the 2019-2022 Johnson Conservative government) admitted that many "felt that PQA would promote social mobility, remove concerns about the unfairness of predicted grades, or encourage more aspirational choices". Predicted grades – whose inaccuracies disproportionately impact disadvantaged students – would be made redundant. Meanwhile, exam confidence would no longer hinder ambition as applicants could apply to institutions according to their results. However, the Department for Education (DfE) recorded that there were also concerns that PQA would negatively impact engagement in schools' support systems for the duration of the application process if it were undertaken after students had already effectively completed their education there. It listed this concern among its reasons in its decision not to move to PQA despite UCAS' advice and a two-thirds majority of support during consultation.

Rather than redressing resource imbalances, which fundamentally undermine fairness under any admissions system, the DfE hopes to mitigate these effects through small-scale reform: syphoning the personal statement into strict categories. Whether this simplification will meaningfully impact admissions equality remains to be seen, though in the meantime applicants can progress with more confidence than creativity. Which raises the question... DfE, why do you want to pursue this course?

Image credit: Shirley-Anne Somerville/CC BY 2.0 via Flickr



## Where to turn when accessibility fails?

A disability activist and MPhil student shares her story of being failed by the system during her Trinity exams

By MATILDA CARNEGIE

Being deaf since birth, I have never been able to access language in the same way as my hearing peers. My daily life as a cochlear implant user mirrors the experience of those learning a second language, requiring ten times the effort to have only a fraction of the comprehension. This reality is why I require additional time for exams, due to the time pressures involved in contrast to writing essays at home. I was officially allocated an extra 45 minutes of time (15 minutes per hour) to account for the fact that it takes me longer to process language. Here is what happened on exam day.

I took my seat in the smaller room, which is where it all began. Initially, my computer experienced a glitch that prevented me from logging on using my regular SSO details. I tried to seek assistance from the exam proctors, yet remarkably none of them were familiar with operating the computers. In-person computer exams were introduced for the first time this year but unfortunately, no IT support was forthcoming. I managed to find an alternative login method, although it caused a 15-minute delay in accessing the system. This was already 15 minutes off my exam time.

Despite the rocky start, I persevered and completed the first two essays. In the middle of the exam, one of the proctors came up to me to offer an apology for the situation and to explain the absence of guidance on the new computer procedures. The fiasco escalated when the extra time was not implemented, resulting in my exam finishing at the same time as everyone else's: I was locked out of my computer.

Upon realising the error, I informed the proctors about the extra 45 minutes allocated to me, leading them to contact someone else by phone for my re-entry. After about 30 minutes, they informed me that I would resume the exam at 1:15 pm and finish by 1:55 pm. Regrettably, I was misinformed by the proctor, and my exam actually concluded at 1:35 pm, leaving me with only 20 minutes to complete the final paper. I raised my concerns and was informed that nothing more could be done.

The exam proctors said that I needed to submit a mitigating circumstances notice (MCE) to the examiners. I promptly submitted the paperwork for the MCE and hoped that it would resolve the situation. However, I was warned by other students that MCEs sometimes do not offer a sufficient framework for the examiners to consider the circumstances (examiners are not always informed about adjustments and the options are limited by what work was produced on the day).

Regrettably, the cautionary advice held true, and I received my exam result over the summer. It was a passing grade – not as strong as I had hoped – and falling significantly below my usual performance in class. Furthermore, I was informed that no adjustments could be made to

the outcome. I approached the Former Chair of the SU's Disabilities Campaign (DisCam) Theo Sergiou for his take on the issue. He explained that: "In the 2 years of being co-chair and with over 200 students who approached us for help, about 50% were exam related." He told me that my story was "not uncommon", and was prolific "amongst graduates and undergraduates, and throughout colleges and departments."

He could also empathise with the experience: "On a personal note, I am registered partially blind but in half of my final exams the paper was not enlarged, and the online systems could not enlarge the font. IT took up an hour of my time, and the squinting caused me to vomit in one of my exams. The mitigating circumstances form was considered without any changes to my marking."

Whilst nobody has the deliberate intention for a situation like this to arise, my experience certainly underscores how in the hallowed halls of a longstanding institution like Oxford, accommodations for disabled students are often viewed as an afterthought. The incident was the tipping point for me, so I decided to focus on leveraging my experiences to improve Oxford's accessibility for disabled students.

With this objective in mind, I reached out to my department to inform them of the circumstances that had transpired. The situation was challenging as the responsibility did not lie solely with me or the department; instead, it fell on the University as a whole to take action to meet the needs of disabled students. Fortunately, my supervisor supported me throughout this situation and truly advocated on my behalf.

My department escalated the matter to a higher level, engaging with relevant individuals and fighting for increased investment and attention to prevent similar situations in the future for the countless other students who have accessibility requirements. They implemented alterations to the exam protocols, allowing MCEs to be considered in final exam evaluations. This revision enables examiners to review all the various assessments completed by students and make a more comprehensive judgement. Whilst it is not a miraculous fix, it is certainly a step in the right direction, and more than what I expected.

Studying at Oxford University has been a life-changing opportunity and has opened many doors for me personally. I have met so many incredible professors and students – hence why I am passionate about writing this article to raise awareness. Oxford is a formidable institution, so change will not be immediate. However, real progress can be made when there is collective action in advocating for change across all levels and areas of disability equality. As Theo rightly says, "you all can do something about it: stand by Oxford's disabled students and fight with us."

Image credit: David Hays for Cherwell

# John Evelyn

Our dear, infallible leaders, Genghis Khan and Ramses II, have wasted no time steamrolling the ‘recommendations’ of the Reign Reinforcement Commission through Seat-warming Committee and our great House. So generous are they that they gifted members a lengthy 14 minutes’ notice before unveiling their changes—more than enough time, of course, to fully absorb all 130 pages outlining the removal of every pesky, meddlesome check on presidential power.

I must assure you, dear reader, that the ‘recommendations’ of the commission are the product of the most intense, thorough, and intellectually rigorous rubber-stamping and circle-jerking the Union has ever seen. The commission is composed of the Union’s finest minds: Genghis’ DPhil supervisor, Ramses II’s representative during his conviction, Temu JK Rowling, and every sitting Officer and Officer-elect—bar the Gibralt-Aryan and Christ Church Crusader, for reasons that are, I’m sure, entirely incidental and innocent.

His MAA-jesty, seemingly disillusioned with the Union’s path to enlightenment, has stepped back from the process and withdrawn from the Axis of Access. It is unclear whether

his proxy has finally developed Free Will and will break from his lead. Perhaps relatedly, opposition to this grand vision of progress has finally prompted James Cleverly Jr to shed his ideological ambiguity and reveal his true colours—primarily shades of Tory blue. It remains to be seen whether the open support of the 1st elected BNOC will be enough to tip the scales in favour of the Resistance.

Elsewhere, there is trouble in paradise as the rivalry between Judas and Punjabi Pinocchio intensifies. Best friends in the last election, their relationship has soured as they now fight for the support of the new members in the next. As it stands, Pinocchio is well ahead, while the serpent struggles to grasp that this year’s cohort at the Supreme Booze Syndicate isn’t as eager to back an uninspiring undergraduate as their predecessors. However, she is not to be underestimated, especially given Pinocchio’s antics—many of which, fuelled by his nose-related activities, run a strong risk of falling foul of the

rules, if not the law. But if he’s anything like his father, this probably won’t affect him much.

The first social event of the term was indeed very social—though a large portion of the CluelessCabal was notably absent from working it. Don’t be misled, however; they were very much present, exchanging contact information and indulging in some unauthorised drinking with the Freshers. It’s hard to say whether they were laying the groundwork for week 7 or simply sharking, though the two aren’t mutually exclusive.

An otherwise unremarkable meeting of CC quickly turned into a spectacle when the GradSoc Guru put Ramses II and the Insidious Keblite on trial, as they had seemingly mistaken free speech for the free use of other societies’ intellectual property. Meanwhile, what had been shaping up to be an exciting showdown in the Seat-warming Committee left everyone with blue balls, as the next swathe of supposedly ultra-urgent, must-be-done-now rules changes were delayed...



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SCAN ME



# PROFILES

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“There is a romance about Oxford – the architecture, the wit, the fashion.”

## Eileen Gu spoke to *Cherwell* about Olympic skiing, fashion modelling, and studying at Oxford.

By SELINA CHEN

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In China and beyond, Eileen Gu's stardom has reached mountainous proportions. You see her defy gravity with impossible spins as the first woman to land a forward double cork 1440 in freestyle skiing. You see her dazzle at Met Gala and grace the cover of every major fashion magazine. Alongside all this, you see her studying at Stanford and now at Oxford for a term of exchange. (She hasn't been in the same country for more than three weeks this year.)

Gu has won three Olympic medals for China – including two golds in big air and halfpipe – and a full-fledged fashion career. *Time* magazine named her among the world's 100 most influential people, and *Forbes* named her the world's second-highest-paid female athlete. Omnipresent on billboards, the news, and video platforms, she's made over \$30 million in luxury endorsements. But when we chatted at Oxford's Vaults & Gardens cafe over jasmine tea, I was speaking to a 21-year-old girl who is down-to-earth in her demeanour and full of excitement about coming to Oxford.

Gu was raised in San Francisco but began competing for China in 2019, a move which received some criticism. She said that she is “American when in the US and Chinese when in China.” She is also a self-described nerd who signed her email with an affectionate “E”, made light-hearted quips, and asked me questions about everything from punting to subfusc. After our conversation, she headed to the Rad Cam to get some writing done – classic Oxford.

Gu does not comment on politics. For context, Western media has reported on Gu's straddling the Sino-American geopolitical divide (“US-China tension is trickiest slope”, *BBC* and “Cold Warrior”, *The Economist*) while Chinese media portray Gu as crucial to rejuvenating the motherland (“Slalom between US, Chinese cultures”, *China Daily*). She is now the face of at least 23 Chinese brands, from fashion labels to milk companies.

**Cherwell:** *Why did you choose to study at Oxford?*

**Eileen Gu:** I have always valued education deeply. Lots of people around me – other athletes, advisors, mentors, my mum – all tell me to take time off school, but I feel like being an academic is an integral part of who I am, so that's why I've remained a

full-time student throughout my life. I want to explore the institutions that make up our educational landscape globally, and Oxford is definitely one of those. There's also a romance about it: the architecture, the wit, the fashion. Lastly, I'm training in Europe this fall, so Oxford's closer to Austria, where we have training and a World Cup next month.

**Cherwell:** *Between school, fashion, and training, what's your schedule like?*

**Eileen Gu:** I competed in the first World Cup of the season, which was in New Zealand this August, where I was happy to win my 15th world cup victory. I was at Paris Fashion Week before I came to move in, then I'll be doing various shows the next few months. But for the most part it's gonna be training and competing because it's pre-Olympic qualification season. I spend a lot less time on snow than all of my competitors on the professional tour – that's my own doing, though, and it's worth it because school and fashion are deeply enriching. But when it gets to crunch time, aka now, I have to be a lot more focused and intense because every day I'm on snow has to count for three days. The hardest part isn't necessarily producing high quality work while on different time zones or locations, but rather maintaining strong friendships and making sure I get the true campus experience.

**Cherwell:** *What tutorials are you doing?*

**Eileen Gu:** I'm doing a creative non-fiction tutorial because I'm writing a memoir. I'm also taking an entrepreneurship and the arts seminar – that's particularly interesting for me as a member of the creative sphere to understand how people build businesses and value creativity.

**Cherwell:** *There are lots of Oxford traditions, some of which people all know about while others come as a surprise when we get here! What traditionally Oxford things have you done?*

**Eileen Gu:** This is actually funny: we've been to a lot of freshers' events, but all of us on exchange are juniors – a third-year here – so I'm actually not sure how I should meet people my age. [At freshers' week this morning] I signed up for a bunch

of societies: cheese society, running, equestrian, polo, Oxford Union, and squash on a whim. I definitely want to attend some formals – I love fashion so the opportunity to do it in an academic sense is so fun. They sell out really quickly! Every time there's an intersection between my three spheres, it makes me so excited.

**Cherwell:** *Do you plan to pick up a British accent?*

**Eileen Gu:** (With a giggle) I wish it were that easy!

**Cherwell:** *People always want to take photos with you. (At this point two graduate students recognised Gu and asked to take a photo with her). What does fame feel like here at Oxford?*

**Eileen Gu:** Everyone wants to separate their work and their personal life. I think I'm pretty normal, I love making friends, I'm also just a new student here trying to figure it out. But I don't want people to be friends with me because they think I'm famous or whatever – I would prefer for people to be friends with me for substance, interesting conversations, mutual exchange.

**Cherwell:** *Recently people like Chappell Roan have been outspoken about treatment of celebrities, especially women, in their personal lives, to a lot of positive traction. What are your thoughts on this?*

**Eileen Gu:** I feel that part of having a platform is understanding all of its impacts. Her case is a bit different from mine, since I have made it my personal mission to make social impact in terms of sports, using my voice and my platform. Because I do a lot of outreach, I can't really complain about it. I do feel bad when my friends get harassed because they didn't consent to the publicity. If anyone comes up and asks me for a photo, I say yes nearly 100% of the time – I only don't if I'm mid-training. Especially at Oxford, where everyone's so brilliant, it's a two-way street where I'm always curious what other people are doing. But it's really unfair if my friends get the short end of the stick just by virtue of association with me. It's a tough thing – sometimes it's tiring but I feel lucky to have the privilege to do what I do.

*Image Credit: Eileen Gu*



# 'Glitz, glamour, pzazz': *The Great Gatsby* STAGE

Luke Nixon sat down with OUDS alumni Mina Moniri and Peter Todd to discuss their new adaptation of F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, which is coming to London in December featuring a cast of recent Oxford alumni.

This theatrical celebration of "love and lust in the Jazz Age" is coming this winter season to The Cockpit Theatre in Marylebone, London. From an autumnal nook in St. Hilda's College, the rain battering the windows like some prophetic applause, we chatted all things *Gatsby*, the writing and rehearsal process, and the hopes and dreams for the play.

**Why did you decide to adapt *The Great Gatsby* in the first place?**

PETER: The original story is that we were looking to put on a classic and see if we could put our own little spin on it—come up with an interesting twist on something that everyone knows. Today, more than ever, I think we question where things have come from and where they could go.

MINA: We didn't want to do a classic for the sake of doing a classic. We wanted to make sure we were doing something where we had something new to say. When we were looking at things that we knew, novels that we liked, *The Great Gatsby* came up. There is a general queer reading of *Gatsby* anyway, I mean that's not the wa

PETER: Yeah. Nick is often perceived by audiences as being queer because of his infatuation with *Gatsby*, who in most iterations is a man. For our twist, *Gatsby* is a woman. It not only queers the central love story between *Gatsby* and *Daisy*, but also adds a lot of depth to other motifs. There is this really interesting warping of the story in that the green light, usually symbolic of the American Dream, now becomes a call for equality.

MINA: We also decided to explore some of the other characters like *Myrtle* and *George* whose roles we have expanded to start to question the weird, racist issues that do come up but have never really been questioned in any other adaptations. So, those are the two main things we have changed and the reason we wanted to put on the show.

**What is the most striking thing about this adaptation of the text?**

PETER: The thing that really resonates with me is the sense of longing that is imbued in every single character, every single relationship, that you see on stage. The work we have done movement-wise to try and capture that essence will be really beautiful on stage. The text itself has lots of references to nature, very elemental things: earth,



water, air. So when we've been putting together the show, and devising the movement language for the piece, we've worked a lot exploring the elements in terms of the qualities they have, in the gaze, in the body, the sort of movement that they possess. The motif we keep coming back to is longing like waves in the ocean, how longing ebbs and flows like the tide.

MINA: It's a very movement heavy show, so I think in terms of 'striking': people think of *Gatsby* as being very opulent, but for our adaptation the set is really minimal. We've focused a lot more on the movement language of the piece and I think that's something that people will find quite striking.

**What was the most important thing that you wanted to keep from the original text?**

PETER: There are so many quotes that I wish we could keep because the book is just so beautifully written and it's been really hard to choose the ones to let go of.

MINA: 'Her voice is full of money', that's one of my favourites.

PETER: A lot of my favourites come from the early-on Nick narration, like 'I felt that familiar conviction that life was beginning over again'. That's just such a universal experience.

**Was there anything you were looking forward to departing from in the original?**

PETER: What you can expect is the usual glitz, glamour, pzazz that comes from the Roaring Twenties. Some of the work we've done with music is really interesting—we've taken music from a wide

range of sources and we've woven them together into an intricate, jazzy score. I'm really excited for people to rediscover and fall in love with *Gatsby* all over again.

MINA: I'm not sure we have departed from anything too drastically. It's familiar; it just has some additions that we think will really enhance the story and doesn't take anything away.

*The Great Gatsby* is running from 28th November from the 14th December at the Cockpit Theatre, Marylebone, produced by emerging theatre company Scar Theatre with a company primarily made up of University of Oxford students and recent graduates.

Image credit: Luke Nixon

## OUDS All-Stars: Could you be the next Hugh Grant?

By CONNIE HILTON

Oxford University Dramatic Society, founded in 1884, has produced some of the biggest names in British stage and screen of the past century, from the late Maggie Smith to Hugh Grant. Is it a fun extra-curricular or a catapult to greatness?

With Freshers week been and gone and the next generation of OUDS members passing through the hallowed halls of Exam Schools, the Dramatic Society at Oxford can start scouting its next generation of stars. Oxford University holds worldwide prestige for its research and academics, but also integral to its global fame are the spectacular alumni that the Dramatic Society has produced.

It is surprising how many of Hollywood's most successful stars have spent their university years working in shows with the talented team at the Dramatic Society. Hugh Grant's first ever performance was in an OUDS production of *Twelfth Night* in which he played the role of *Fabian*. Of course, Grant has not forgotten

his roots at Oxford, even having returned to New College seven years ago to relive his glory days. (See at Cherwell online: a 2017 video of a 56-year-old Grant doing a shoe with New College Rugby Club).

Although women couldn't formally join OUDS until 1966, there are multiple notable actresses associated with OUDS. Maggie Smith left Oxford High School to study acting at the Oxford Playhouse, where she starred in a 1952 OUDS production of *Twelfth Night* at the age of only 17.

Rowan Atkinson also began his stellar career on OUDS stages. He met Richard Curtis during his time with the Oxford University Dramatic Society, and has continued working with him ever since. He gained huge attention for his comedy with *The Oxford Revue*

at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in 1976, kickstarting his fame before he had even graduated from the university.

Beloved *Goggleboxer* and ex-politician, Gyles Brandreth, directed OUDS during his time at New College, Oxford, and even dabbled in student journalism. He stated that before he arrived, one of his ambitions was to direct the OUDS, and he certainly made an iconic name for himself as an eccentric leader of the society.

Undoubtedly, while OUDS is a great society for those hoping to get involved with drama at the most relaxed level, it is also one of the biggest catalysts for successful stage and screen careers. So, for those with even the slightest interest in theatre, joining the Dramatic Society is not an opportunity to miss.



## What Oxford's Watching

### IN THEATRES



#### THE SUBSTANCE

Demi Moore and Margaret Qualley star in *The Substance*, in which an aging actress uses a mysterious chemical to regain her youth, temporarily...

### TO STREAM



#### MONSTERS: THE LYLE AND ERIK MENENDEZ STORY

Ryan Murphy returns to Netflix with *Monsters*, dramatising the Menendez brothers' 1996 murder trial.

Image Credits:  
[The Substance] David Shankbone/CC BY 3.0 via Wikimedia Commons  
[Monsters] Orsf/CC BY-SA 4.0 via Wikimedia Commons

By HASSAN AKRAM

## REVIEW: JOKER: FOLIE À DEUX

In 2019, Todd Phillips' *Joker* made a stir both with critics and at the box office. For an audience of comic-book fans accustomed to watching grown adults in swimsuits laugh at their own jokes and float around exploding skyscrapers, *Joker*, a serial-killer thriller masquerading as a piece of social realism, was a refreshing break. It was a film "about society", and that vague appellation was enough to distinguish it from the general crop of popcorn cinema.

Few fans realised that in heaping praise on it they were in fact commending two earlier Martin Scorsese/Robert De Niro collaborations – *Taxi Driver* and *The King of Comedy* – from which the better parts of *Joker* were plagiarised. The film had excellent source material. But it was destined to join *American Psycho* and *The Wolf of Wall Street* as the latest in a subgenre of "incel flicks". Any chance of realism or nuance vanished in a film in which a serial killer dressed up as a clown is interviewed live on TV by Robert De Niro and makes a staggeringly on-the-nose monologue whose final line is: "What do you get when you cross a mentally ill loner with a society that abandons him and treats him like trash?"

The musical sequel, *Joker: Folie à Deux*, is out now in cinemas. It contains few of the redeeming features of the original – none of the "will he/won't he" suspense, none of the sympathy for victims of state austerity. It is a marriage of two dead genres – the musical and the superhero movie – while also dipping into courtroom

drama.

The story, with spoilers, is this: two years after the murders shown in the first film, Joker is in prison ("state hospital"), where he meets a fangirl named Harleen Quinzel (Harley Quinn), who, like him, endured a traumatic childhood. Joker's court trial acts as the centrepiece for the film. Here we are treated to the return of familiar faces from the first film, and to the twist that Harley Quinn is pregnant. The court is adjourned and for a time Joker returns to hospital, where he is beaten by guards who then murder his prison mate. When he returns to court, he decides to renounce the Joker persona, and to become Arthur Fleck once more. The film concludes with a devastating blend of rejection and murder, leaving "The Joker" dead and "Fleck" now isolated, vulnerable, and utterly alone.

The film is as nonsensical as the summary suggests. It seems far too concerned with itself, trying self-consciously to defend Phillips's decision to make it a musical, for it to provide much drama or entertainment. The ratio of music to non-music is also troubling. I counted sixteen tracks. Joaquin Phoenix sings like a chain-smoker. Watching him try to pour out his soul, I could not have been the only one praying that he would swallow some cough syrup, and the film soundtrack is unlikely to make the charts.

Phoenix, who won the Oscar for his portrayal of the title role in the first film, returns looking gaunter and older; it is unclear how much of this is make-up and how much the natural pro-

gression of time. In truth, his attempts to look dead inside end up rather more on the McDonald's-worker end of the spectrum and less of the psychopathic-clown.

The performance of Lady Gaga as Harley Quinn is better worth praising. She sings better than Phoenix, naturally, and often is more convincing than him in the intensity of her performance: when she leans against a window and tells Joker in a hoarse croak with transfixed eyes how much she admires him, she – more than the music or the prison setting or the subtle inclusion of cigarette-smoke in the shot – thickens the moment with atmosphere. She freshens every scene in which she appears.

Unfortunately, neither she nor Phoenix can save the film. Unlike the first one, which aimed, however clumsily, to issue a political statement, *Joker: Folie à Deux* is ultimately too disjointed and unnecessary to win Oscars or make headlines. (It's only topicality, indeed, is unintentional: "Arthur Fleck is a monster, and his depraved acts led to riots all over the country," Harry Lawtey declares. He might have been talking about Nigel Farage.) It deserves to be seen in the cinema – not because it is a film "about society" – but because in view of its poor box-office performance it is the last *Joker* film that we are likely to get.

## FILM AND TV

# The Graduate took on generational divides

By SEBASTIAN HALL

From its start, *The Graduate* shows its audience that Ben is alienated from the older generations. At the party his parents throw to celebrate his graduation from college, he is aloof and indifferent – in both his physical detachment from the party and the emotional distance he embodies. His university is an invisible but powerful symbol of his youth, and his intellectual and physical vigour of his achievements – cross country and debate – are contrasted with his present muteness, in the face of a sea of fawning adults. University would also by the late sixties become the most recognisable site of an entire generation's social removal from its elders, in its embrace of sexual freedom and anti-war protest.

It is when relaxing on a floating pool bed that this generational fissure becomes all too clear. The camera angle shows Ben's father towering over him when he objects to Ben's slovenly lifestyle and demands aspiration and hard work, or at least movement. In the world of film, movement is an integral part of youth – think Jonah Hill and Michael Cera dancing in the opening credits of *Superbad* – but Ben seems happy to reject it. In reality, his affair with Mrs. Robinson keeps him moving around nightly. Not only does Ben not participate in the plans of his parents, but he symbolically disrupts that very cabal that overlooks him in the pool. His use of the alter ego Mr. Gladstone at the hotel rejects his parents' name, and by implication their plans for his life.

Ben is something of an anti-hero. The actions

he takes are often far from admirable, while his apathy (for most of the film) detaches him from the chivalric standards celebrated in America's World War Two veterans. Yet perhaps this is what a disillusioned generation demands. *The Graduate* portrays in stark terms the removal from the moral compass of previous decades, foreshadowing the social breakdown of the late sixties. The final scene, as Ben and Elaine flee from her wedding, fittingly symbolises the destruction of the most fruitful safeguard of post-war American prosperity and society. The uncertain expressions on the faces of Ben and Elaine at the close of the film, however, make clear that this catharsis remains full of uncertainty.

In this superficial world, Ben seeks meaning and connection, pleading with Mrs. Robinson for some sort of conversation. While Ben's scuba suit obscures the world around him and distances him from it, his affair represents physical contact that confounds the values of the society. In this act of rebellion, he still seeks some sensibility and good manners, reflecting some youthful optimism that he can make and participate in a different world. But Mrs. Robinson is resigned to the affair as a fleeting transgression: both she and Ben are trapped in unhappy lives in Pasadena, both alienated from a society characterised by aspiration and patriarchy. If Arkady rebels against his father's provincial gentry origins in Turgenev's *Fathers and Sons*, having been inspired by his charismatic university friend Bazarov, Ben's symbolic rebellion fails because he can't establish this sort of meaningful relationship outside conven-

tional society with Mrs. Robinson.

His escape with Elaine at the end shows he must commit absolutely to a non-reified life; while he once forced her to confront her own sex's reification at a strip club, now he sticks the holy cross in the door to prevent the wedding guests from pursuing them. He can't have his reified cake and eat it: if his rebellion is to work this time, he must detach himself from every symbol and embody that meaning himself. The bus passengers overtly staring at Ben and Elaine demonstrates this shift, with her wedding dress transplanted into the cold soil of de-reified realism. Will it survive? Maybe

not – as their uncertain faces betray at the very end – but at least they can now pursue the authentic meaning of the self, distanced from suffocating convention. The essentialist tone which *The Graduate* strikes at in its conclusion cannot but presage the generational reckoning of the late sixties – and depicts perfectly the perennial youthful conflict between confusion and absolutism.

Image Credit: Ron Cogswell/CC by 2.0 via Flickr



# Celebrating two centuries of the National Gallery

ART

*Flo Walter reflects on the impact and legacy of the iconic institution, now in its 200th year.*

By FLO WALTER

In *Skyfall*, the Bond franchise's 50th anniversary film, the passing-prime protagonist sits alone in Room 34 of the National Gallery. In a moment of reflection as he waits to meet the young and tech-savvy new Q, he gazes at Turner's *The Fighting Temeraire* (1838). Though unacknowledged, there is a quiet camaraderie between him and that "bloody big ship".

Turner's painting invites viewers to evaluate the nature of modernisation, and to question what role rusty battleships and dusty institutions have in an ever-changing Britain. At this milestone in the National Gallery's life, marking 200 years, we reflect with Turner's honey-hazed nostalgia on what this great British institution means to us today. The gallery was established in 1824: 38 paintings and an address of No.100 Pall Mall. Two centuries later, it is home to 2,300 works, host to over 4 million visitors a year, and at the heart of the nation in Trafalgar Square, it is far from being towed to the scrap yard.

For many, the National Gallery's appeal lies in part in its name and founding ethos; unlike most European national collections, the gallery was not the product of the nationalisation of the royal collection. Rather, it was established through Parliament on behalf of the British public, with whom ownership still resides today.

The British public has been actively involved ever since: the gallery's collection has been stabbed, stolen, shot, and – most recently – souped. Velázquez's *Rokeby Venus* has been attacked in protests divided by over a century, while the only successful art heist (a Goya, burgled 1961) resulted in a high-profile trial. Kempton Bunton, bus driver turned art thief, was



found not-guilty of stealing the painting - but guilty of stealing the frame.

It is not just the vandals that make the National Gallery ours, but the visitors. As a small child, the National Gallery was a soggy Saturday sanctuary to me, traipsed through on many a rainy weekend, hand in hand with my art-loving dad. Over a decade later, long after my family had moved out of London, I would catch the train into the city and pay a pilgrimage back to the National Gallery, which became my school each Saturday.

The gallery hosted my education for two years during sixth form, in collaboration with Art History Link-Up. The AHLU is an educational charity which

provides free A-Level and EPQ instruction for state school students. Currently only eight state schools throughout the UK offer art history. Yet since AHLU's foundation in 2016, 400 young people across 200 schools have had the opportunity to study the subject, including myself.

The National Gallery is a stunning place to study. While the gallery did provide a classroom in the traditional sense, my favourite hours were spent wandering through the collection. Huddled around paintings, we would discuss Caravaggio's chiaroscuro, and I would try to capture something of its effect through inked words and blurry sketches in my notebook's margins.

The collaboration with AHLU demonstrates the ideals of outreach and inclusion that make institutions such as the National Gallery enduringly vital in modern Britain. In a country that has yet to foster comprehensive cultural accessibility, having nationally owned, publicly accessible art galleries is an investment in the idea that the nation's treasures, that of culture and education, are everyone's to share in.

Indeed, this year saw the launching of the National Treasures programme, which has since allowed people at 12 regional centres across the UK to admire the well-loved masterpieces at their doorsteps. Works of national importance such as *The Fighting Temeraire* and Constable's *The Hay Wain* (1821) travelled to Newcastle and Bristol respectively. In Oxford, recent visitors to the Ashmolean Museum might have spotted the addition of the sumptuous Gothic Wilton Diptych, the first time it had left the Gallery since it was acquired in 1929.

And while I came to love Turner's grand visions of national change, Rembrandt's gentle brushwork and tender observation in *A Woman bathing in a Stream* (1654) impressed on me the significance of the personal, of the insignificant people that mean the most.

Ultimately, the National Gallery is an institution built from the people of this country, but it is certainly built for them, too. Though it has been suggested that Rembrandt's painting was simply a study for a larger biblical work, the National Gallery believes 'the most likely possibility is that Rembrandt knew and loved this quiet, gently absorbed woman and shared her delight in an unguarded moment of pleasure in some anonymous Dutch stream'.

*Image Credit: Morio/ CC BY-SA 3.0 via Wikimedia Commons*

## ARTS CALENDAR

# What's On.

### MUSIC

**Kyan Quartet**  
(Balliol College Hall, 20th Oct.)  
This string quartet, formed of talented former students of the Royal Academy of Music, promises a delightful evening of Haydn, Shaw, and Shostakovich.

### ART

**Money Talks: Art, Society & Power** (Ashmolean, until 5 Jan.)  
Incorporating works by Banksy, Andy Warhol, and Rembrandt this exhibition reflects on the place and state of physical currency in the 21st century.

### FASHION

**Oxford Vintage Kilo Sale**  
(Oxford Town Hall, 26th Oct)  
Arrive between 11:00-17:00 to pick up vintage thrifted pieces. Perfect for freshening up the autumn wardrobe on a budget.

### STAGE

**Anna Karenina** by James Hunter  
(Michael Pilch Studio, 22-26 Oct.)  
A new stage adaptation of Tolstoy's seminal 1878 novel from Tallinn productions. Featuring all Oxford talent. Not to be missed.

**The Oxford Imps – Improvised Comedy**  
(Jericho Tavern, 14 Oct.)  
After an impressive stint at the Edinburgh Fringe, Oxford's very own improvised comedy group is back at their iconic venue - The Jericho Tavern - to bring in another year of comedy madness.



## Review: *The Safe Keep* by Yael Van der Wouden

By FLORENCE HALL

As suggested by the title, this book has an intense and sustained focus on things and objects. Set in the Netherlands during the 1960s, a decade still coming to terms with the lasting effects of the Second World War, fragments of crockery, and inventories of cutlery and tableware is how main character Isabel reconnects with her family past, as she lives alone in the inherited family home. *The Safe Keep* by Yael Van Der Wouden is a brooding and eerie story of connection, but one that I felt fell short when it comes to style and character creation. Van der Wouden's book has also recently been shortlisted for The Booker Prize – much to my surprise.

The 'thingness' of *The Safe Keep* was a genuinely enjoyable aspect of this novel, and, despite its flaws, this is definitely a piece of writing that could interact well with Thing Theory. There is no doubt that Isabel suffers from loneliness, regardless of how much she might either deny this, or believe that she is happy in her loneliness. Her solution to this, it seems, is to meticulously organise, record and clean the house's inventory of plates and silver cutlery. The plates, decorated with leaping hares is a clear and artistic image that recurs throughout the book, and left a lasting impression after reading. The motion of Isabel passing her hands over these prized objects and comparing them to her handwritten lists demonstrates one of the cornerstones of her character – that she is meant to be observed, rather than liked. Isabel isn't necessarily a likable character, or one that readers naturally warm to, but this is a bold move on Van Der Wouden's part that does pay off. In not necessarily liking Isabel, we are free to understand her, even if this understanding does boil down to something rather simple.

Once finishing this book, one may look in hindsight at the

entire plot, and realise that not really that much actually happens. This, of course, is not necessarily a negative thing – not much actually happens in *Mrs Dalloway*, but Woolf's literary genius still shines through by means of her skillful prose. In the novel's early pages, Isabel is introduced to her brother's newest girlfriend, Eva, at a restaurant, a meeting that is intended to demonstrate Eva's clumsiness in social situations, and Isabel's coldness. Van Der Wouden does indeed accomplish this, but not with great subtlety. Only sentences after Eva is introduced, she knocks over a vase of flowers in trying to shake hands with Isabel, drinks slightly too much wine, and struggles to keep up with conversation. It is moments like this, that wouldn't necessarily feel out of place in an American teen rom-com that makes the developing relationship between Isabel and Eva seem inorganic yet predictable. In, again, a slightly unrealistic plot point, Eva ends up coming to stay with Isabel indefinitely, as Isabel's brother is away travelling for work, leaving the two women alone in the house that still holds so many undisturbed memories of Isabel's parents and her childhood.

Not long after staying with Isabel, elements of Eva's prized inventory start to go missing. This, as well as the two women being the antithesis of one another, creates a hostile tension between the two that soon develops into something romantic and sexual. The relationship that develops between Eva and Isabel isn't itself surprising, but I believe that Van Der Wouden went too far in trying to establish the women's differences, as I was left feeling that there was something acutely wrong with this particular pairing – they appear to have very little in common. Despite this, I enjoyed seeing Isabel flung into this relationship that delt so intertwined with her attempting to regain control over her world that was starting to be dismantled by Eva's intrusion – the explanation for which is revealed towards the end of the novel.

BOOKS

# FASHION

## AUTUMN À LA MODE

By CERYS BENNISON

**F**ake fur and feathers, textured knits and tweeds, and billowing coats: behold the autumn wardrobe in all its cosiness. Autumn's arrival is a money machine for the fashion industry. Adverts run riot in magazines, boosting the biggest brands alongside proclaimed 'wardrobe essentials', which nevertheless seem to change yearly. Soon, luxury fashion knock-offs appear on the high street, enabling all to be properly suited and booted for the new season.

Inevitably, this surge in profits is anticipated by the entire industry – and nothing heralds its coming quite like the September issue. It is a source of much competition and deliberation: each fashion magazine seeks to release a blockbuster edition in September, outshining competitors by bagging the most illustrious cover star. *Vogue*, as the established leader of such publications, continues to reign supreme with 11.1 million print readers alone. But where Kylie Jenner is now framed by the iconic font, there would have been a slightly different cover a century hence. The 1920s were the golden age of fashion illustration, fusing historical art practice with modern seasonal glamour.

It depicted a fantasy world, but was coloured with enough reality to make it feel obtainable. The lissom silhouettes and lively scenes positively dance with humour

*“There is a certain whimsy to these drawings that no camera can achieve.”*

– albeit edged with a certain Art Deco hauteur. Instead of a perfectly coiffed Jenner, autumn *Vogue* covers of this period show women catching leaves or chasing their hats across the park in a relatable reference to the season. Such illustrations make the couture elegance of celebrities seem achievable, without airbrushing autumn's weather-related quirks. Take, for example, George Barbier's *L'Air* image: an unexpectedly windy day is threatening to – or succeeding in – dislodging the hats of pedestrians; yet despite the mishap. Yet they still look fabulous.

The magic of fashion illustration lies in its creative freedom. Fashion illustrators can emphasise specific bits or make them up entirely, posing them somewhere between commercial artists and designers in their own right. A 1924 *Vogue* illustration by George Wolfe Plank evidenced this. The model sports a long coat that intentionally – and rather hilariously – resembles a rooster. Huge puff-ball sleeves and talon-like gloves emphasise this zoomorphic effect, with the pictured deer apparently accepting the wearer into its animal kingdom. It is more likely that this garment sprung from Plank's imagination than any Parisian atelier, but it pokes fun at fashion's seasonal sales pitch and its never-ending quest for novelty.

As fashion photography began to usurp fashion illustration, artists were forced to confront reality and focus on the material. Nonetheless, there is a certain whimsy to these drawings there no camera can achieve: the real and imaginary are often intertwined, meaning the pictured fashions of 1920s illustration idealise seasonal style. *Vogue's* September issues of the 1920s sell a fantasy of everyday life, and yet the illustrated models – chasing hats, catching leaves – seem more relatable than the celebrities pictured on its cover today.

# Ticketmaster hurts student concert culture

By SARA LEE

**C**ompetitive, difficult, and opaque. All words associated with the Oxbridge admissions process. More recently, however, they have been used by disappointed Oasis and Coldplay fans in relation to Ticketmaster. It's devoted fans with less to spend (read: students) who suffered most.

After the recent release of tickets for Oasis and Coldplay tours, the company has been accused of 'advertising misleadingly'. Many have blamed the confusion on the website's dynamic pricing model, where the price of a ticket varies to reflect changing market conditions, shooting up exponentially when met with great demand. This can be particularly detrimental to devoted fans, a large number of whom are students. The result is significant financial strain, resale market impact, and uncertainty surrounding the elusive nature of these tickets.

Knowing this, it is easy to feel hopeless at the prospect of joining the Ticketmaster queue system. However, hope is on the horizon for eager fans, as provisional legislation could aid demographics with less disposable income, such as students, to have their shot at bagging a ticket. Following the Oasis scandal, the Competitive Markets Authority (CMA) launched an investigation into Ticketmaster operations. The organisation will evaluate whether the sale of those tickets have breached consumer protection law, which states that ticket sales sites must be transparent in their deals with consumers and must relay clear and accurate information about the price they pay for a ticket. As part of this, they check if Ticketmaster has engaged in 'unfair commercial practices', particularly looking into the transparency of their dynamic pricing model and the impact of time and pressure when paying for these tickets.

Whilst dynamic pricing is not automatically unlawful, its inherent changeability means that it is prone to

fall into grey areas. In this case, the CMA is concerned with the potential lack of transparency when marketing these tickets, questioning if the information buyers were given about prices before checkout aligned with the prices they actually paid. A glance at X (formerly Twitter) reveals the frustration many fans felt during the process, with a sense of being 'unfairly' treated being a common theme. Some complain that one price was shown at the time of selecting a ticket but that they were confronted with doubled figures at checkout.

Another emphasis of the investigation is the pressure put on fans to finalise their purchase within a short period of time. Heightened moments of pressure thwart customers' ability to make coherent and rounded judgements, and when coupled with what are high prices for most of the population, people are more prone to make rash decisions that have heavy financial implications. Ticketmaster has used a timed element to control consumers' perception of scarcity and demand, which potentially sways their purchasing decisions in

the company's favour. It is a system that verges on the exploitative.

The problem doesn't lie exclusively within dynamic pricing, however. Fan frustration also clearly stems in part from Ticketmaster's lack of transparency. One way to resolve this would be to declare the rate in which prices will rise based on consumer interest. By displaying that 'this might be £70 now, but will go up in x number of hours after x number of tickets are left', some fans are left still having to endure a premium, but they will at least know what they are getting into, enabling them to make an informed choice as to whether or not to remain in the queue. This is surely preferable to being ambushed by an extortionate price tag at checkout, having committed hours to the wait.

*Read the full article at [cherwell.org](http://cherwell.org).*

*Image Credits: Will Fresch/ CC BY-SA 2.0 via Wikimedia commons*



## TILE SOURCE

By MOLLY CARTWRIGHT

‘warþ gasric grorn, þær he on greut giswom’ [Fish sad when washed to shore]

– The Franks Casket

*hronæsban*

sorrowful, weeping tears of salt  
taken, hunted, harpooned  
from my blue lagoon  
crafted by you into this box.

*hronæsban*

carve me, recalcitrant though I am  
may my banhus tell both your story  
and mine.  
unsure which is which,  
unsure who is who.

*hronæsban*

why are you scared of me?  
climb upon my back,  
or inside of me.  
i'll bite you; i'll eat you.

*hronæsban*

scratch your runes and your faces  
deep within me  
your knives penetrate bone and  
flesh.

*hronæsban*

reach your hands within me,  
violate me,  
stick your pins and needles inside of  
me.



## Are students the perfect subculture to reclaim underconsumption?

*Madelina Gordon discusses the resurgence of thriftiness – and the surprising forces behind it.*

When it comes to consumer culture in 2024, most would agree that TikTok is among its most infamous drivers. TikTok itself claims that its users are 1.7 times more likely to engage in e-commerce behaviour than the users of any other social media or video platform. TikTok's model is explicitly designed to incentivise consumption. On the user side, the platform's proprietary algorithm provides users with personally appetitive content on their video feeds and rapidly circulates popular videos so that they can go 'viral' in a matter of hours. On the seller side, 'TikTok for Business' conjoins the addictive user model to an advertising function – its website entices businesses to begin their TikTok advertising journey by citing that 1 in 2 Gen Z users are likely to purchase something from the app.

Accordingly, there is no doubt that TikTok has been both a beneficiary and subsequent bolsterer of capitalist overconsumption. Consumption isn't a side effect, it's front and centre of the user experience. Users are exposed every few scrolls to massive haul videos; boxes of products gifted to influencers by advertisers; and product recommendations from regular users. Overconsumption is an embedded feature of capitalism, but on TikTok, the problem is incessant.

So it comes as a surprise that TikTok, the very platform which so readily supports consumption, has played host to the 'underconsumption-core' trend that emerged this summer. The trend entails people showing the parts of their lives that reflect an ethos of underconsumption, or as many videos cite in brackets, 'normal consumption'. Think: reusable coffee cups, revamped second-hand furniture, three-product skin care routines and keeping scraps of veggies for soup stock. To the untrained eye, these might just be seen as routine habits anyone might adopt to save money. Yet culturally, this trend represents a grander, paradigmatic shift.

Reducing consumption is not something new. It's been performed by millions of families for centuries, as it is today. Moreover, this isn't the first time saving money has been trendy (Depression-era feed-sack dresses weren't just cost-efficient; they were fashionable). But the glamourisation of these lifestyles, that lend themselves to recycling, reusing and reducing con-

sumption of excess products, on social media, has the potential for exploiting the 'jumping on the bandwagon' effect of TikTok trends to encourage sustainable consumption on a level so far unachieved through public information campaigns.

The question I ask, though, is to what extent is this trend really taking off, and does it, albeit still in its nascent stages, have any potential as a countering force to the massive engine of overconsumption? A TikTok trend will not unravel the entire capitalist system that exists today. However, 'underconsumption-core' marks the beginning of a process of cultural reclamation – one that students might be the perfect subculture to catalyse.

University students are almost all on budgets, seeking to save money in a host of creative ways. Students don't have large disposable incomes to spend on luxuries, let alone additional items above and beyond essentials. In efforts to reduce expenses, students naturally limit themselves in what they consume, and many look to how they can reuse and revitalise things they (or others) already own. Some sell and buy clothes and furniture on Vinted and Facebook Marketplace; many own only single sets of dishware and only one or two sets of sheets. Living at university – with lives bundled completely and entirely into 4-by-4-metre rooms – requires prioritising the necessary. In doing so, students learn vital skills, which retain relevance even in their futures when they might indeed have more money or more space.

So many people say that their university years are the best in their lives. Is it a coincidence that these years are the ones where they consume the least? Where the emphasis is on connections, people, and ideas rather than the things that are owned? The ability to live perfectly happily, without constant gratification from an excessive abundance of things in a one-bedroom accom room, creates the space for introspection and relationships that ordinarily compete with material distractions.

A TikTok trend will not dismantle capitalism. But the student experience – and the simple joys of our university years – offer us a glimpse into what life could be if we rejected our capitalist-rooted impulses to constantly consume.



## Stockholm syndrome, reversed

*Carla Hollier introduces a new condition of the captured.*

Stockholm syndrome (*noun*): feelings of trust or affection sometimes felt by a victim towards a captor.

Education folklore has it that for many years, students at MIT have scrawled the acronym 'IHTFP' (I hate this f\*\*\*ing place) around campus in an attempt to express disdain for their university. After two years at Oxford, I can now report that students here often experience similar feelings. After all, when so many of us grow up with idealised dreams and expectations – of wandering the cobbled streets, eating in the grand dining halls, and experiencing some of the best teaching the world has to offer – it's no wonder that we can end up feeling disappointed or disillusioned with our actual experience in the 'city of dreaming spires'.

Personally, I had envisioned myself studying at Oxford for so long and I held it to such high esteem in my mind that perhaps it was inevitable it did not meet my expectations. In my first Michaelmas, I quickly discovered that the hours were long and hard, and the volume of work too much to bear. I felt stuck between two equally bleak options – spend all my time in the library, trying desperately to understand the content and complete the endless list of work – or risk failing my exams. Whether I was sitting in the library, explaining work in a tutorial, or measuring and testing in the lab, I felt completely inadequate and utterly convinced I should never have been offered a place; perhaps my acceptance email had been an admin error my college felt too guilty to reverse. This feeling followed me around, and no matter how much I tried to ignore it, it felt impossible to get rid of. I was completely trapped in a city I had once loved.

Then there is the social side of Oxford. I have met many fantastic people here, but have still experienced my fair share of alienating experiences. There was the time when, at a crew date with another college, the first sconces included "I sconce anyone who compared the homeless people on Cornmarket street to rats". The group erupted in shouts and jeers, while a few of us laughed in a state of shock. There was no

evidence of anyone feeling embarrassed or ashamed, perhaps a slight sheepishness at best, maybe only at revealing too much in front of the wrong crowd. This was normal to them – they had their own culture, their own traditions, their own punchlines, running alongside our own. This vicious underbelly, this poorly-kept Oxford secret which rears its ugly head once in a while (often only when fuelled by copious amounts of alcohol) was suddenly illuminated, right there, standing on chairs towering above us in Jamal's. This is something I found difficult from my arrival – the pretence that institutions like Oxford are no longer dominated by circles of students from elite backgrounds. There are only so many times that you can watch the light leave someone's eyes when you inform them that there are no mutual private school acquaintances to bond over, because you did in fact attend a state school in the middle of nowhere. This is another reason I often feel trapped in Oxford, and even though I have met many lovely people, I regularly find myself longing to be back at home.

Oxford is an interesting place to go to university. The highs are incredibly high, the lows devastatingly low. There is possibly no better feeling than being sat in the pub after finally completing a problem sheet or feeling the sun on your face in Christ Church Meadow after a long library session. I think we are all oscillating between being entirely alone and entirely connected – terrified one minute, hopeful the next. We all have our own ways of coping, of dealing with the relentless work and convincing ourselves that it will all be worth it in the end. For many of us, it often feels like too much to withstand. I suppose, in a way, we are experiencing a reverse-order Stockholm syndrome – after longing to achieve a place and finally making it, we find ourselves desperate to escape.

Is the prestige of institutions like Oxford always inextricably tied to a high-stress environment? Or can it reconcile a world-class education with a more enjoyable student experience?

*Image Credit: Senanur Ceylan//Pexels*

## HOROSCOPES



**Aries**

Dress to impress in your tutorials. It'll pay off in unexpected ways.



**Taurus**

Do it. Start listening to Christmas music already. You know you want to.



**Gemini**

If you find yourself stuck, turn to every student's trusty friend: ChatGPT.



**Cancer**

Take an eastward walk to see the Headington Shark. No headphones allowed.



**Leo**

You are your emotions no more than you are your sensations. Own your brain.



**Virgo**

Take time to rest and relax... Fight all that freshers' flu!

## HOROSCOPES



Libra

Avoid oscillating between extremes; find a middle ground that works for you, and stick to it.



Scorpio

Seriously? Wow.



Sagittarius

Keep your chaos contained.



Capricorn

A strong start will lead to good habits that your future self will thank you for.



Aquarius

It's not too late to go back. Don't fall for the sunk cost; reach out to those who have worn your shoes.



Pisces

Stay in your lane and sweep your own doorstep first.

## A comprehensive guide to Oxford student stereotypes

By CHLOE SMITH

The facts of Oxford are far ahead of its fictions, creating a peculiar disjunct in the identities of its undergraduates. Each student must battle with either "I'm not your stereotypical Oxford student!" or "I am your stereotypical Oxford student!" So, students. What do you see around you? A load of people, some similar (too many, or too few, for better, or worse), some different from you. But still always that one person in a V-neck jumper, shirt, slacks, and brogues... some things never die. Here are the people I've seen – the modern Oxford stereotypes. Watch out! You may become one.

*The Part-Time Art Historian.* They might not care about art history, but I think you can catch the vibe. If you want to hide silently in Hall, reserving a table for your friends, think again – Mr. Art Historian will slide up next to you and ask how you really feel about the representations of Zelda and F. Scott Fitzgerald (real story). One cannot successfully imagine him having sex. If one tries hard enough, one can imagine him (always male – call him Francis) whispering into his beloved's ear from above: "Isn't this compelling?"

*The Moocher.* One of my favourite types of Oxford student. The Moocher retires from a two-hour slog in the library (if they've gone to the library at all) to their cosy room, which is littered with duvets and jumpers and crisps. They're funny and highly intelligent, but they care more about having first-class friends than first-class thoughts. If a Scholar tries to tell them how rubbish their first-class essay was, the Moocher tells them to "touch grass". You hope that they'll get a stellar job as soon as they leave university – they deserve it.

*Militant Northerner.* Even as a Yorkshirewoman, I live in fear of the Militant Northerner. They joke about making Yorkshire independent and say "ey up" when you pass them in the street. There are two types. First, the country bumpkin with their satchel and penchant for a hat, who finds being at Oxford difficult because it takes them away from the lambing. Thinks they're James Herriot or similar. Second, there's the "I love Greggs" Northerner who, on being

asked where they're from, will remark that the locals "know how to have a good time". Both types are united by complaining about the price of Oxford pints.

*The Pampered Swot.* They relish the work's intensity which, supported by their ever-loving parents, provides an ample excuse to never cook, even pasta. Wasabi and Pret are their tea-time friends, so they plump for a deliciously expensive college room with no hob; who needs to cook anyway? The scholar's gown makes it all worth it. Probably will become a spy.

*Confused Northerner.* (Me.) A class nomad; different at core from the Militant Northerner. Called "posh" at school due to a rootless accent and seeded rye sandwiches, the Confused Northerner arrived at Oxford as the only successful applicant from their Sixth Form. Scunthorpe behind them and Crankstart in front of them, they spend the first year unconsciously speaking right broad about selected topics such as redundancy, the mills, and their single mother, before admitting in first-year Trinity that they can ski.

*The London Girl.* Sambas or boots, heavy silver jewellery, sunglasses always on hand, tight top, low-rise jeans. Not wearing a bra is part of the outfit. Possibly even ventures into wearing a hat. Instagram is full of salads and Hampstead.

*Not Your Usual Oxford Student.* "State-school educated", they claim, ignoring their private sixth form and secondary schooling at the best grammar school in the country. They love to talk about how their mum is a self-made woman. Their College year group now have an image of their mother Jessica as some freak North London woman who self-spawned one day, equipped with a flapjack and leggings.

*Oxford Edgy.* Trying to be Effie from Skins, she's actually Efferelda Mary Hamilton, third-gen Oxford – and the only smoker in the world, obviously. Carries cigarettes (sorry, a "blem") around "just in case" someone might be secretly watching. Edgy in Oxford but as edgy as a smartie anywhere else, where it is not cool to openly love Twilight and complete all your Donne reading on the train. Beloved by all.

People are a bit odd, and Oxford is a marvellous place for it – in fact, uniqueness is encouraged. Be a bit peculiar. Why not? There are so many types of people to be. Not everyone is "classic Oxford" (a changing standard) but hopefully we all soon will be – a bunch of unique, quite weird, students, who all know that they belong.

## 100% Pasta: (almost) 100% delicious



By AMANDA LI

This week, my friends and I wanted to get pizza at Bbuona, but found ourselves next door at 100% Pasta, owned by the same people. We were intrigued by the premise of eating 100% pasta (and decided to calculate how much pasta we'd have to eat to become 10% pasta) and were grateful for the lovely service by our waiter Georgio, who pulled up an extra table for us and put up with our "100% \_\_\_" jokes all night. The restaurant was not too packed despite it being 8pm on a Sunday, but the tables surrounding us were full. The decorations were cute, with a pasta centerpiece at each table and a pasta machine in front. We were a bit disappointed that the menu wasn't 100% pasta, with appetizers like burrata and zucchini flowers, but couldn't complain. We, of course, got pasta.

The options were broad: between pesto, ragù, and carbonara, 100% of the classics were covered. The table ordered a broad range: meat options, pesto, cheese, seafood, and each dish arrived warm in a mini pot. The portion was a good size, but less than the "one serving" you make at home. I found my tortelloni di ricotta well folded and not too thick, with a delicious filling. The Parmesan flakes were a treat to find when dipping the pasta in the pecorino sauce; the balsamic was a bit overpowering but didn't lose the rest of the flavors.

One of my friends ordered the spaghetti all'amatriciana with guanciale and said it was "full of tomato-y goodness." I stole a bit and found it not too heavy, though it could do with a bit of spice. My friend that can actually cook said his tagliatelle with ragu was nice and meaty, though still tomato-ey. Other comments on the pesto and carbonara pastas were "very pasta" and "yummy yummy." I called it a day.

Surprisingly, what stood out was the non-pasta. After promising to "only get one drink," my friend had two Italian beers and loved them. I thought the limonata would be some form of San Pellegrino, but was pleasantly surprised by the Italian beverage I got. We also decided to splurge on a sweet treat after dinner. One of us got a double espresso at 9pm and the only slightly jittery comment he could make was that it was "very energizing." I had a pistachio tartuffo: probably not the best choice to get gelato, but so worth it. I love pistachio and this was full of it. Though not too sweet, the ice cream had a crunch from the almonds. But the real star was the tiramisu. Two of my friends got it and you could see the light enter their lives again.. When I asked the friend who could cook how it was, he said it was "creamy and thick in the best way possible." If the restaurant was 100% tiramisu, I think he would've gone every day. It certainly would be dangerous for my bank account. All in all, not a bad dinner to have out, though being students, it's easy to eat 100% pasta during term. My friends and I had a nice time: it was excellent. The pasta was good too.

Image Credit: David Hays

## Agony Aunt:

I'm chronically late to everything – I am concerned how this will impact life when I have a job that actually matters. Pls help.



Dearest concerned student, We can all sympathise with this most common, and most insufferable of maladies. Every Oxford student has, at least once, experienced the pain and torture that comes with awkwardly shuffling into a tutorial, while your peers and tutor watch on in dismay. Or the torture that is finally finding a seat at the very back of a very full lecture hall, only to manage to untuck one's chair in the loudest, most conspicuous manner. So what, we all wonder, is the remedy to this pain? Never fear, dear readers, your Agony Aunt is here.

The answer, rather simply, is to do nothing about your tardiness. Spend those extra few minutes brushing your teeth until they positively shine; prepare yourself the yummiest most convoluted breakfasts; allow yourself to stroll, in leisurely fashion, to your destination. Life, dearest reader, is about the little things.

The solution is to re-conceptualise your thinking. Tap into the classic Oxfordian over-confidence and apply it to every aspect of your life – you, dear reader, are never, ever, wrong. So perhaps "time" and "the clock" may imply that you are "late" – but really, what is being late? Conformity? Repression? An all-encompassing dictatorship by that most unyielding force that is "Father Time"? Exactly. Do not yield!

So really, dear reader, the solution is to wear your lateness like a badge of honour, as evidence that you have surpassed the material, and even the conceptual. Well done you! And, if you are worried about your future "job", the very least you could do is prepare a bank of reasonable, if slightly convoluted explanations (excuses) for your time management. Either way, keep being you.

Lots of Love,  
Your Agony Aunt

## PORTER'S PICKS

### Top 5 Drippiest Colleges

#### 1. Wadham

I fear this needs little explanation.

#### 2. Magdalen

They're elegant, edgy and classy. Occasionally intimidating. Magdalenites effortlessly give deer-park chic.

#### 3. New

The little sister of Magdalen. She's constantly trying to match her big sister's fashionability, and does a pretty good job at it. She's younger and a bit more spunky, bit more sassy and always on trend.

#### 4. Trinity

They're chill and laid back, but you know it when they enter the lecture hall. Their vibe is 'what this old thing? I just threw this on!'

#### 5. Jesus

Understated but solid and nothing to complain about on the Jesus fashion front. They know what goes with what, and how to pull off a look.

## NIGHT OUT SPOTLIGHT

### Quackers @ Plush



Wednesday night saw the debut of Plush's new Wednesday student night and hey it wasn't half bad. Definitely a different vibe to sports night, but honestly could be coming for you Parkend. Watch out.

# Oxford kebab vans: For the uninitiated

Amanda Li unlocks the well kept secrets of Oxford's midnight dining scene.

Oxford students are loyal to two things: their college and their kebab vans. There are quite a few scattered around the city, appearing from around 7pm until 3 or 4. Before you pick which one you will exclusively eat from for the next three years, here's a guide to who serves what, where.

Most people will go to one of five vans for a drunk midnight snack: Hassan's, on the corner of Turl and Broad Street; Hussain's, on St. Giles next to the Ashmolean; Soloman's, next to it; Ali's, on Woodstock Road; and Posh Nosh, next to Westgate. I've tried all five; yes, they taste different. Whilst each van has a similar menu, serving grilled doner or chicken in a wrap or pita, alongside variations of chips, burgers, chicken nuggets, mozzarella sticks, and falafel wraps, don't be fooled into thinking they're interchangeable. Each van offers a unique culinary experience - you'll never get the same kebab. Below is *Cherwell's* completely unobjective guide to the vans that feed our late night cravings.

#### Hassan's:

**Location:** Hassan's is the most convenient to get to (unless you're at St. Hugh's), within a 5 minutes' walk of most central Oxford colleges.

**Food Verdict:** My college parents took me there the day it first opened during 2022 freshers week. They said it would change my life. It did. I have remained a loyal customer ever since. They've even met my dad.

**Queue:** Normally there are five or six people in the line at once, but it can wrap around the corner at 1 AM on the night of a ball.

**Merch:** Sweatshirts are £15.

#### Hussain's:

**Location:** North of Tesco on the Ashmolean Museum corner; it's closer to Worcester and John's.

**Menu:** It has a larger selection, including things like onion rings. For chicken-lovers, Hussain's has got you covered; popcorn, tenders, grilled, Hussain's leaves little room for imagination on the chicken front. My friends have said they would die for the mozzarella sticks at Hussain's because the breading



"just hits different", and the barbecue sauce is nice. **Good to know:** The line is not horrendous until there's a bigger event on, when you could wait up to 30 minutes to get your fix. The staff, like Nadiya, are lovely, sometimes drawing hearts on the lids of our chip boxes.

#### Ali's:

**Location:** North, near Somerville, St. Anne's and St. Anthony's, but have honestly only gotten it when near Anne's (maybe twice in the last two years.)

**Food Verdict:** When I did go, it was around 2:15 and the midnight rush had long passed so there was no queue. I love their burgers, they remind me of home a bit. With ketchup and chips, they go a long way.

#### Soloman's:

**Location:** Hussain's

**Food Verdict:** I often mix up Soloman's with Hussain's, but I like Soloman's burger sauce more. We've heard a few horror stories about their garlic mayo, but ultimately that's really just a problem with garlic mayo as a concept.

**Queue:** They're normally less busy than Hussain's but are equally good; if you're in a rush, it's fine to pop by there. They're owned by the same family and

the vibes between the two are always jovial.

#### Posh Nosh:

**Big Plus:** A pound cheaper than the others, with a small chips at £2.50.

**Location:** It's close to St. Peter's, just down New Inn Hall Street, but most people who go are coming back from Atik (RIP) or Hank's.

**Food Verdict:** Their chili sauce has a texture akin to pasta sauce; it's certainly unique but goes better in a kebab than on chips. My friend swears by the cheesy chips.

Once you receive your order, eat it either on your way back home or sit in a public space nearby and chat. Radcliffe Square and the little memorial across from the Ashmolean are common choices. Both have public bins in their vicinity, which are a far more preferable alternative to having the lingering smell of last night's kebab stuck in your bin for the next week. Kebab vans are staples of Oxford culture, so don't be afraid to try them all—your drunk self will thank you!

Read the rest online at [Cherwell.org](http://Cherwell.org)

Image Credit: David Hays

# Cherpse.

Oxford blind dating.

[A Friday morning at the Missing Bean. One very enthusiastic birdie might have found her happily ever after- but does he feel the same?]

#### Keen Bean:

##### First impression?

He immediately seemed really lovely! I saw him and knew we would hit it off. I found his hair really attractive (call me superficial but it made a lasting impression). Honestly, he reminded me of Prince Eric.

##### Highlight?

The moment he brought our coffees over to the table. He just looked so effortlessly caring, and everything felt so natural. It felt like we'd been a couple forever, and this was just a normal thing that we would do.

##### Most embarrassing moment?

I was just so engrossed in the conversation that sometimes I think he didn't know what to say.

##### Did it meet your expectations?

Dreamy, romantic, Disney.

##### Will there be a second date?

I really, really hope so.

#### Prince Eric:

##### First impression?

She seemed a bit unimpressed, but I think it was because I was having a bad hair day. I'm considering a buzzcut if there's the second date. She said something odd about Prince Andrew I think too? She seemed nice though.

##### Highlight?

She explained the Little Mermaid lore to me after 5 minutes of small talk (really getting down to the nitty gritty)

##### Most embarrassing moment?

I asked for her Instagram and she didn't hear.

##### Did it meet your expectations?

Disney, fun, different.

##### Will there be a second date?

Yes, but I think she would like it if I watched Tangled first.



# THE EPIC HIGHS AND LOWS OF UNI HOCKEY

## Why do students put themselves through the trouble of running uni sports clubs?

By SEBASTIAN PAGE

It can be incredibly frustrating to see the vast resources of various colleges, and how little of that money makes its way into centralised, university-wide activities. I'm sure you or someone you know has had to beg their respective JCR or MCR for some funding for dramatic or artistic projects. Why is it, then, that people choose to self-fund clubs that they know will end up being run by themselves, with little help? Some want to be part of something bigger, some want to take on new responsibilities. No matter how ridiculous it seems that someone would volunteer for death by Google Sheets, ours is not to reason why when such a selfless service is provided.

Splitting up into two factions, club members take on either coaching or committee roles. Committee positions give you the chance to pad out your CV, twisting into LinkedIn jargon that suddenly turns the checking of an Excel document into 'managing a high-profile group of assets on behalf of 50+ stakeholders'. But the more puzzling of the two to take on is coaching. From the perspective of someone who can only just make a university sport team, having student coaches can make or break how enjoyable a season is. You can absolutely have a great time with your teammates, even if your coaches are about as (physically or mentally) present as the people

in your 9ams. Good coaches, however, will make a great season amazing, even if most Wednesdays or Saturdays are spent silently returning to Oxford from some exurb of London after losing a third game in a row.

I was lucky enough to have coaches like these in my first year, to ease the growing pains of moving to university sport (shoutout Dez and Rosie). They've even come back for an unprecedented second stint this year. Selflessly giving up upwards of six hours a week to watch eleven (relatively) unskilled and unfit blokes mull around an astro at 7am in the depths of January is a Herculean task that the masochists seem to have enjoyed enough to return. It may be the opportunity to get out of S&C... but I'm sure it's just love of the game. If you're really lucky, they may even try to get on your team's table instead of their own for the End of Season Dinner. The patience of coaches doesn't simply extend to the frustration of watching their masterfully crafted tactics wasted on us, but regular scheduling changes can make it understandably difficult to buy in. They're likely only one year into the club or university, at a point where it is easy to become disillusioned. It's frankly astounding that they're so keen to try and impart their wisdom onto deaf ears.

You always seem to see professional athletes reunited with their childhood coaches, later on in their career – famous interviews include Ian

Wright's (former Arsenal and England footballer) meeting with his former teacher, Sydney Pigden. I don't think even divine intervention could get people like me to professional level, but it's certainly true that many can remember important teachers or coaches that inspired them academically or in sport. It may be difficult to consider someone your own age (or sometimes younger) to be inspirational, or to provoke the same kind of reaction Ian Wright may have had. It is not impossible, though, to appreciate how coaches affect the culture of the team, and your enjoyment in the process.

It can be a fragile ecosystem, both in reference to coaching and student sport committees. Training comes at awkward times and it becomes increasingly difficult to stick to the commitment that you promised at the beginning of your term. Not even a few weeks into captaining my hockey team and I've already had what some anonymous teammates may describe as 'the worst organised cars' he had ever seen. Regardless, it's easy to forget that these are students with very little management experience and an insane workload. Besides, a little drama is always fun. As a wise man once said, without experiencing a bit of in-club tension: 'you haven't known the triumphs and defeats, the epic highs and lows of [university hockey]'.

*Image Credit: Hugh Shilson*



# SPORT

## MATCH OF THE WEEK

# 8-1

Oxford vs Brookes  
Hockey

Oxford defeated Oxford Brookes last week in a rousing victory for the Men's Blues. This is the third win in just four games this season, with the star continuing to be fresher Caspar Beyer, who scored 4 goals in the match, taking his season's tally to 10. This takes them to fourth on the table.

## HALL OF SHAME

# 46th

Formula Student  
Oxford University Racing

This year's Formula Student races, held at Silverstone on the 20-21st July, resulted in an abysmal 46th place for Oxford University. In the Design event, Oxford came 48th. In two of the big Dynamic events in Acceleration and Sprint, Oxford finished DNA. The misery is compounded by the added shame of being pipped by Oxford Brookes, who came 6th place.

## SHOE THE TABS

It seems pretty clear that Cambridge rely on boats in order to be vaguely effective in or on the water. Maybe they're hiding their inability to swim? There's no better proof of this than water polo varsity last year. For most, three is a lucky number. Not for Cambridge, who conceded a multiple of three in every game, with the Women's Blues game particularly standing out at a 21-3 loss for Cambridge. Overall, the 51-17 aggregate score was probably pretty flattering for them, considering they were brushed aside in all four games. It was particularly kind of the Oxford Men's Blues to break the tradition of only conceding three, just to make the game slightly more interesting in their 9-8 win. Let's just hope that they don't fall in at any boat races any time soon, or they might be stuck for a while...

# COLLEGE MATCH HIGHLIGHTS

## FOOTBALL

Men's Blues win the Varsity match

The Men's Dark Blues defeated Cambridge's Light Blues in the Varsity match, held on the 26th March, in a nailbiting thriller.

The match finished in normal time at 1-1, with Joey Dalton from Oxford scoring in the 7th minute. The match went to penalties, in which the Oxford keeper, Harry Way, saved two penalties to award Oxford a 3-0 victory on penalties.

## LIFTING

Junior powerlifters shine at the World Championships

Gwen Marsden, from St Anne's, broke four Junior World Records at the Junior World Championships in Malta on the 31st August. She won Oxford Sportsperson of the Year.

OUPLS' President, Rhonda Tse of St Peter's, participated in the same competition, representing Hong Kong, and breaking multiple HK for squat and bench press.

## RIFLING

Oxford wins the 2024 Humphry

The 2024 Varsity Rifle match was a tight affair in which Oxford ultimately prevailed. Cambridge had taken a three-point lead at 1000 yards, which Oxford managed to reverse to a one-point lead right before lunch.

There was a 7-minute wind bracket, but Oxford pulled through by just 6 points, with a final score of 843.90 to 837.68.

## SWIMMING

Oxford finishes 9th place in the BUCS Teams 2024

Oxford University finished 9th place in the 2024 British University Championships' Teams event at Sheffield on April 20th.

The best results were 6th place in the 100 Fly, 200 Free, and 50 Fly. There were a number of personal bests swum, as well as five Blues times across the 100 Free, 200 Free, 100 IM, 50 Fly, and 200 Free.

# Coffee Break with Cherwell

Puzzles of varying difficulties and types, do stay with us and give them a go...



## CLASSIC SUDOKU

Fill the grid so that the numbers 1 to 9 exist in every column, row and section ONCE

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

By JOE DUNN

## American Crossword

1		2		3		4		5		6	7	8	9
10								11					
12				13						14			
19			20							17		18	
										21		22	
23													24
27		28											
										29		30	
		31	32		33	34		35					
		36						37		38			
39													
40										41			

## Cryptic Crossword by Alessandra Edwards

1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8
9						10								
11												12		
16		17												
18														
21														
25														
27														

- Across:**
- Tied up former Prime Minister with Erectile Dysfunction (7)
  - Chaotic deuce in contested finals came to a conclusion (7)
  - Supply problem (5)
  - Performers kind of average during function (9)
  - Determined garden host in ruins (10)
  - First sign of disease I have contracted from fall (4)
  - Performance anxiety causing present alarm (5,6)
  - Brain component examiner, vet, is sued secretly (5,6)
  - Long for constant direction (4)
  - Regiments strike with claws capturing one (10)
  - Furiously tail Con MP in objection (9)
  - Good party leading to burial place (5)
  - Direction recalled put on attack (3,4)
  - Extension incorporated paint, ultimately, no longer in existence (7)

- Down:**
- Body parts are crazy sight around hospital (6)
  - Remove from office topless nun's snack (6)
  - Resist pet's abandoned sibling (10)
  - Furnishings are essential inside corridors (5)
  - Solicitors relocate dad's men to protect Queen (9)
  - Guy gives faulty direction (4)
  - Desires French wine amongst rugged cliffs (8)

- Made point of setback in final courses (8)
- Eco lamp is a signal to proceed (5,5)
- I'm in a state of excitement (9)
- Examines bug eating apex predator second (8)
- Pass on smart tin for a change (8)
- I am going north in fellow territory (6)
- Agreement as emailed (6)
- "Breast" the French call it (5)
- Hit mates up (4)

**Across:**

- The Blue Planet (5)
- Vegetarian gelatine substitute (4)
- Sustenance energy measurement (7)
- To support for gain (7)
- Refuse abruptly (2)
- Unit for the strength of alcoholic spirits (5)
- Continental collaboration (2)
- Continent of 18 Across (6)
- Eight-legged scaremonger (6)
- Profane, to disrespect one to another (6,4)
- Columbus' landing ground (10)
- Bodily reaction accelerator (6)
- Name of state prosecution in a US trial (6)
- PhD owner's prefix (2)
- Very popular, a \_\_\_\_\_ hit (5)
- 2 in the Roman world (2)
- Must be a giant leap for them! (7)
- Professional instructor (7)
- Cutting and carving to create (4)
- 71% of Earth's surface (5)

**Down:**

- A person's preferred environment (plural) (8)
- System detecting via pulses (5)
- The update to 'standard dynamic range' (3)
- Woozy malt concoction (4)
- Amazon's flagship home assistant (4)
- Excellent condition (4)
- Purpose of an earth wire (6)
- Example being ChatGPT (2)
- To deliver a judgement (6)
- Street name for methamphetamine (5)
- Percussion, strings, winds and brass (9)
- Closed palm (4)
- Islands north of Scotland (6)
- Between blue and violet (6)
- Paper planning assistant (8)
- Twinned with 'his' (4)
- Letter one in greek (5)
- Money and property after death (6)
- Sign determining qualities (apparently) (6)
- Tip of the dagger (5)
- Plentiful assets (4)
- A swampy stretch (4)
- Feeling of excessive pride (4)
- The present moment (3)

## Crazy Eights by Julian Xiao

Fill in the blank squares to make valid 8-letter words

	Z	M	L	H		H	M	L	I								
	E	E	O	O		O	E	A	R								
P	L				I	C			R	E							
J	A				N	O			C	Y							
N	E				T	E			U	T							
O	R				O	X			C	H		R	Y				
					R	O	L	E						P	A	T	A
					Y	R	E	W						E	L	E	D

**American Crossword Answers**

Across: 1)Ark, 2)Cornmarket, 3)Ice, 4)LDN, 5)Leone, 6)Uniparks, 7)PC, 8)Course, 9)Elite, 10)SOS, 11)pH, 12)NF, 13)ST, 14)SIS, 15)LAB, 16)Matriculation, 17)Nile, 18)Rum, 19)Ode, 20)LR, 21)LG, 22)Mahou, 23)Public, 24)AD, 26)Bodleian, 27)Cheap, 28)KFC, 29)Hub, 30)Sheldonian, 31)KTS

Down: 1)Radius, 2)Oink, 3)Milligram, 4)Ace, 5)Reopen, 6)TB, 7)Class, 8)Mucus, 9)Dre, 10)EB, 11)No, 12)Pro, 13)Bulrushes, 14)Club, 15)Pic, 16)Floodlights, 17)TMI, 18)Sixth, 19)And, 20)All, 21)Term, 22)Lug, 23)Nova, 24)Uncle, 25)Mulch, 26)OBE, 27)Ada, 28)PDF, 29)AI, 30)DC, 31)Okra, 32)EFL, 33)Pho, 34)PS, 35)UK

**Cryptic Answers**

Across: 1)Scrambled Eggs, 8)Polish, 9)Nickel, 10)Spades, 14)Rage, 15)Fold, 17)Mini, 19)Pious, 20)Snoop, 22)Enchant, 23)Envy, 24)Square

Down: 1)Second, 2)Loop, 3)Glass, 4)Alcohol, 5)Press, 6)Flame, 7)Margain, 11)Perfume, 12), 13)Slug, 15)Flaunt, 16)Drill, 17)Minute, 18)In play, 21)Fair

World Wheel 9 Letter - Algorithm

Get in touch - If you have any suggestions for future issues, ideas for puzzles do let us know at [puzzlescherwell@gmail.com](mailto:puzzlescherwell@gmail.com)