Find our Freshers Guide 'Keep Off the Grass' inside!

In conversation with David Mitchell "Comedy is humanity's highest art form" Profiles > page 8

Bottom of the pile: freedom of speech at Oxford Cherwell explores the state of free speech at Oxford Features > page 13 The unwritten (until now) Oxford dress code A guide to how Oxford students dress Culture > page 19

Friday 6th October 2023



\oplus cherwell.org \bigcirc cherwelloxford

Vol.299

Independent since 1920

College rents sees up to 13.6% spike amidst cost-of-living struggles

Izzie Alexandrou reports.

Cherwell investigation has found that the average rent increase among Oxford colleges for 2023 sits at 8.62%, up from an average of 7.6% last year. The increases could be anything between 5% to 13.6%, and these are set to provoke hardship for some in the coming year amidst the cost-of-living crisis.

St Peter's College is facing one of the heftiest rent hikes, at 12%. The college faced criticism last year when they unveiled the proposed rent prices of two new accommodation blocks – the cheapest room in these accommodation blocks being £5589 for a 27-week lease. On the other end of the scale, St John's College and St Queen's College (the first and fourth most wealthy colleges, respectively) increased rent by only 5% this year.

Wadham is another college facing large rent increases. After an initial proposed 14% increase, which would have resulted in extortionate hikes of between £682.20 and £922.74 annually, the JCR negotiated their increase down to 11%. Wadham SU wrote an open letter to Wadham College Trustees, declaring the increase "inexcusable" on the basis that it would provoke extreme financial hardship among students. Within this open letter, Wadham SU threatened action such as withholding of rent or an SU boycott of college food if rent negotiations could not be reopened, before agreeing on the final 11% figure.

Many colleges use the Van

Noodern Index (VNI) to determine the rent increase for the coming year, however recently there has been a shift away from the VNI figure. The index measures "collegiate inflation" and has been criticised in the past for a lack of transparency. Furthermore, in a recent investigation, *Cherwell* revealed that VNI presents consistently higher figures than standard inflation indices. For example, the VNI for 2023 came out to 13.6%, nearly double CPI in June 2023, which stood at 7.9%.

Christ Church is set to have the highest rent hike across colleges for the second year running, strictly following the VNI figure of 13.6%. However, Christ Church offers extensive financial assistance schemes - there is a 50% and 25% discount on rent and "season tickets" for college dinners, for which the household income threshold has been raised in line with the VNI figure.

A *Cherwell* poll of 356 students found that 45% were "very concerned" about accommodation costs, 42% were "mildly concerned", and only 9% were "not concerned at all." When asked how the rent increases would affect them, many students said they would not be able to live in college accommodation due to rising prices, seeking private rental instead, with most saying they would have to make cuts to their budgets. One student also added: "Many many less pints." *Continued on Page 5*

St Hilda's purchases £12 million accommodation

Martha Smith reports.

S t Hilda's college has purchased two spacious Victorian homes to convert into accommodation for post-graduate and visiting students. The new properties, 14 and 16 Norham Gardens, were bought at a combined cost of 12 million pounds, being funded by St Hilda's endowment funds.

The purchase of 14 and 16 Norham Gardens is a further addition to St Hilda's growing portfolio of student accommodation. In 2022, St Hilda's bought 11 Norham Gardens and 38 St Giles', finalising the plan to offer accommodation to all undergraduate students for the duration of their degree.

The property is located in the vicinity of University Parks, surrounded by a landscape garden of 0.6 acres. The building itself has over 1,600 square metres of space. Initially, 14 and 16 Norham Gardens will contain 13 ensuite bedrooms and by early 2024, Norham Gardens accommodation is expected to house up to 45 students following further renovations.

College Bursar, Chris Wood, told *Cherwell*: "St Hilda's College has a reputation for providing a welcoming and supportive environment for its students. *Continued on Page 3*

Freshers greeted with climate protest

Cem Kozanoglu reports.

he annual migration of students into Oxford coincided with the Extinction Rebellion protest at Cornmarket Street on Sunday, marking The protesters chanted and played the drums outside the local Greggs to raise awareness about the government's recent go-ahead for the development of the Rosebank oil and gas field by Norwegian oil giant Equinor. The decision to open up the Rosebank field was announced on 27 September, a week after the Sunak government's decision to U-turn on key climate targets. The licence includes a £3.75bn tax cut for Equinor's investment in the project. On Keir Starmer reiterated Labour's position: "No new licences to be granted when we're in power, but we won't revoke anything", which drew the ire of climate activists. *Continued on Page 2*

Artwork by Madeleine Storer



News Shorts

Oxford Tube Expansion

The Oxford Tube bus service is due to increase the number of Oxford Tube buses leaving from central Oxford in order to meet high demand, especially on weekends. It is also due to open



new routes to London leaving from west Oxfordshire from 23 October. The new stops include Carterton,

Witney, and Eynsham as well as High Wycombe. Buses will be leaving for London from the West Oxfordshire stops on four mornings a week, bypassing the Oxford City Centre.

£8,800 spent on additional Proctors

The University has con-firmed that it spent £8,800 on additional Assistant Proctors in the 2022/23 Academci Year, a Freedom of Information request by Cherwell has revealed. The University said it did not record any post-exam celebration clean-up costs, which were done by College staff as part of normal duties. They did note. however, that £8,000 was additionally spent on Assistant Proctors, but it is unclear whether this was directly linked to 'trashing'.

New wine bar opens on High Street

xford Wine Cellar, a new wine bar and eatery is set to open on 4 October. The Wine Cellar can be found on Oxford High Street on the corner of King Edward Street. The Wine Cellar is owned by Oxford Wine Group,

family-owned business already responsible for several establishments in Oxford such as Sandy's Piano Bar and The Oxford Wine Café.

Oxford local authority with second highest cycling rate

Oxford comes second to Cambridge as the locality with the highest cycling rate, shown by new data revealed in the Department for Transport's Active Lives Survey. 35% of Oxford residents cycle at least once a week, in Cambridge, 50%. Despite its high-ranking position in the survey, Oxford has witnessed a decline in cycling for leisure, from 23.2% to 18.6%

Rough sleeping in Oxford up by 13%, Kerslake report shows

Rufus Hall reports.

ough sleeping in Oxford is on the rise, the latest report from the Kerslake Commission has shown. In 2022, there were 27 people recorded as rough sleeping in the city, up 13% from 2021.

The UK is currently experiencing the highest rates of people living in temporary or unstable accommodation on record. Rough sleeping, the most visible form of homelessness according to homelessness charity St Mungo's, increased by 26% nationally in the period June 2021 to 2022, government statistics show. As opposed to other forms of homelessness such as staying in temporary or unstable accommodation, rough sleeping involves sleeping on the streets.

This has led the expert panel consulted in the latest Kerslake Comission report to conclude that the current picture will render the government unable to reach its target to end rough sleeping by 2024. According to the commission, any government attempting to deal with homelessness should take measures to prevent people from being at risk of homelessness; incentivise a cross-sector effort to make timely and effective interventions that prevent those at risk from sleeping rough; and provide a route out of homelessness for those that find themselves on the streets.

The report recommends that the government increase its social housing provision, likening the

scale of the problem to that of early 20th century Britain. In the short term, the report advises that the

site states: "We spend more than to survival mode, trying to keep £143,000 a year to help provide day services for rough sleepers in Ox-

warm and find food to eat. I felt constantly on high alert, I was fear-



government increase the housing benefit, which has remained frozen since April 2020 amid rent hikes that have "pushed the number of homes on the market that can be paid for through welfare down from 23% to 5%", the Guardian reported in June.

Overall, figures from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities show that 79 households were homeless in Oxford in the first quarter of 2023. This was an increase of 43 households on the previous year.

The Oxford City Council web-

ford. We fund Homeless Oxfordshire, The Porch day centre and The Gatehouse to provide these services."

Curtis, aged 42, was on the streets in Oxford for just under six months. He said he had no alternative but to sleep on the streets after circumstances changed overnight when his relationship broke down.

He said: "I found myself unexpectedly homeless. After a year of living with my girlfriend our relationship ended, and I found myself homeless overnight. I started rough sleeping and had to switch

ful of getting hurt. You feel invisible and that no one believes your situation. 'I was on the streets for 20 weeks

and it felt like forever, the world can be cold, and you could easily find yourself going down the wrong path. Thankfully, I am strongwilled and kept myself strong until I was able to get help.

"I am now trying to heal, find myself a job and become part of the community here in Oxford."

Image credit: John Tyson via Unsplash

Freshers greeted with climate protest

continued from front page

response, In Extinction Rebellion has called for residents to send a letter to East Oxford MP Annaliese Dodds calling on her to "press the Labour Party to commit to stopping the development of the field should it win the next election". The urgency of climate action was underlined: "After the

hottest summer on record, your duty to protect ordinary people's safety is more pressing than ever. There is no time to waste."

The sentiments of the letter were echoed by Ruby, a third-year Hertford engineering student. She addressed the magnitude of the project's carbon footprint: "The emissions of the project will be the same as those of the 28 poorest countries last year" further stating that "the

government claims to be on target to net zero, but this project would shatter any chance of reaching that goal."

Daniella Tramonti, a resident of Oxford talked about the importance of climate action: "Maybe a lot of people think it is pointless, but we are still hopeful that changes can be made. Every action we take is worthwhile." She said that even small actions are important: "Sometimes what

we ask is quite simple, just use a template to send an email to your MP.

When asked about all the noise being made by the protestors and whether it was disrupting business, a worker in a local shop replied: "It's a common busking spot, doesn't make any difference to us who's using it, we just close our doors.'

Image credit: XR Oxford



Historical criminology mapping project reveals medieval Oxford to be a "murder capital"

Julia Amann reports.

Cambridge digital project mapping medieval murder cases in London has added Oxford and York to its catalogue and deemed Oxford "the murder capital of late medieval England" for its unusually high rates of violence.

The study, led by Manuel Eisner and Stephanie Brown, both criminologists at the University of Cambridge, estimates the homicide rate in late medieval Oxford to have been 60-75 per 100,000 – 4-5 times higher than in medieval London or York, and some 50 times higher than current rates.

Oxford's student population was largely responsible for the violence. At the time the city of 7,000 was home to 1,500 students, nearly all men between 14-21. Together, they were "by far the most lethally violent social or professional group" in any of the project's three cities, making up nearly three quarters of the city's perpetrators and victims of murder.

The project attributes the student culture of violence to young male tendency towards risk-taking mixed with newfound freedom and easy access to weaponry. It suggests that small skirmishes often escalated in part due to a "medieval sense of street justice" and sense of responsibility to protect "male honour" and maintain public order. Coroners' rolls, jury documents detailing sudden deaths, reveal the motivation behind many of the incidents of violence. While in London and York the sources of conflict were often commercial in nature, such as between artisans in the same profession, Oxford's diverse student population often turned violent over personal and regional frictions.

Most of the murders in Oxford escalated from altercations between "Town and Gown", or within the student body between northerners and southerners as well as between the English, Irish and Welsh. "They really, really hated each other," said Eisner.

Though the project focuses on violence, Eisner wants his maps to

"They really, really hated each other"

show that medieval urban life was "by no means lawless."

The community often upheld their legal responsibility to loudly alert bystanders to crimes with a "hue and cry." And criminal cases usually progressed through a jury of local men who investigated the crime and delivered indictments.

The digital project is available for viewing online.

Image credit: British Library via Picryl



St Hilda's purchases £12 million accommodation for graduate

continued from front page

"We aim to provide a platform for our students to succeed, and to improve their experience at Oxford.

"Providing student housing at rents generally lower than those in the private sector is very important in this regard. We now have sufficient accommodation to house all of our undergraduate students for the whole of their courses, if they wish, as well as a good supply of graduate room."

The Norham Gardens properties were formerly owned by the Catholic Charity, The Society of the Holy Child Jesus. Wood also told Cherwell that the two parties "worked together closely to ensure mutually beneficial outcomes".

As a former women-only college and as a college founded by a woman, St Hilda's has been keen to draw attention to the blue plaque found on the walls of the new property, featuring social reformer, Violet Butler. Butler was an advocate for women and young people in Oxford in the early 20th century. Wood told Cherwell that Violet Butler "very much lived her life in the spirit of St Hilda's motto "non frustra vixi", which translates to "I lived not in vain."

On 21 September St Hilda's announced the purchase of 14 and 16 Norham Gardens on the college website, explaining that the College is continually working to house more

Solar and wind energy could fulfill energy demand 10-fold, study finds

Jakub Trybull reports.

xford's Smith School of Enterprise and the Environment has unveiled research that indicates that wind and solar power could not only meet but vastly surpass the nation's energy demands, providing a compelling pathway towards a greener, more sustainable future.

The primary finding of the study asserts that wind and solar energy have the potential to generate a staggering 2,896 terawatt-hours (TWh) of energy annually. Putting this into perspective, this amount

perspective, this anion is nearly ten times the current electricity demand, which stands at 299 TWh per year. Furthermore, these estimates have been made intentionally conservative whilst addressing concerns such as land use and the

visual impact of renewable energy installations.

The lead author, Dr Brian O'Callaghan, stated in a press release that "this isn't merely a technical question but a matter of ambition". He argues that the UK should embrace renewables with the vigour seen in the United States, which offers generous incentives for renewable energy adoption, while simultaneously preparing the nation's grid for the impending surge in renewable energy production.

Battcock Professor of Environmental Economics, Cameron Hepburn, finds a silver lining in what he has described as "an unfortunately poor set of policy announcements from the government this week". Professor Hepburn identifies a glimmer of hope in the form of initiatives designed to accelerate renewable projects and with the policy brief asserting that renewable energy can play a leading role in Britain's journey towards achieving net-zero emissions. It suggests that while nuclear power and other renewables may also have their role, it is entirely conceivable to power the entire nation using wind and solar energy alone.

dents

Professor Hepburn, however, cautioned against relying solely on wind and solar to reduce emissions, pointing out that other measures, such as transitioning to electric vehicles (EVs), can deliver substantial carbon savings.

The analysis in the report anticipates that offshore wind energy could serve as the backbone, contributing a substantial 73% (2,121 TWh/year) of the energy generated. Onshore wind, occupying a mere 0.07% of the country's land, is projected to provide around 7% (206 TWh/year) of the energy. Utility-scale solar power is ex-

pected to make up about

19% (544 TWh/year) of the energy, with rooftop solar covering 8% of Great Britain's roof area and contributing 25 TWh/year. This diversified approach ensures a well-balanced and more secure energy

mix, which may aid both in environmental causes and reducing vulnerability to external economic shocks.

One significant challenge highlighted in the policy brief is the need for substantial grid upgrades to accommodate the surge in renewable energy. Scaling up energy storage is also a pressing task on the road to a sustainable energy future. However, the authors expressed confidence that these challenges can be overcome, particularly with the ongoing reduction in renewable energy costs.

The recent commitment by Prime Minister Rishi Sunak to eliminate bureaucratic delays in renewable energy and storage projects could be seen as a promising sign of government support for this transformative transition. However, the Government was equally criticized for U-turning on other environmental policies and pushing back net-zero targets. Sunak was also criticized last week for claiming to have "scrapped" government measures that appear to have never existed.

Image credit: Charles Cook via Flicker /CC BY 2.0 DEED

postgraduate and visiting students but the college hopes that they will than ever before. St Hilda's currently form a St Hilda's community in the has approximately 200 graduate stu-

The Norham Gardens properties Image credit: Edward Hart / Attribuwill act not only as accommodation tion 4.0 International via Wikimedia



Cross-Campus

Harvard acceptance rates reach approximate crossgender equity

he Harvard Crimson reported nearly identical acceptance rates of women and men to Harvard's Class of 2027, 3.24%, despite women com-prising 54% of the applicant pool. This is an exception to the rest of the Ivy League and other top universities, where female applications have been met with lower acceptance rates for women and gender parity in the resulting class. This summer the Supreme Court also declared race-based affirmative action in college admissions unconstitutional but did not address gendered admissions preferences.

Cambridge Supervisors boycott Undergraduate Supervisions

Hundreds of Cambridge supervisors are moving forward with the upcoming Boycott of Undergraduate Supervisions (BUS). The BUS was called by Cambridge UCU under their Justice for College Supervisors campaign in July and aims to "prove how reliant the supervision system is on the labour of exploited, precarious workers." Their demands include restructuring supervision pay to include preparatory time. A recent survey by Varsity showed that 81% of Cambridge students support the boycott, though most are increasingly frustrated with the disruption to their education.

Bristol SU criticised by UK Defence Secretary after army group banned from Welcome Fair

Bristol Student Union (SU) has faced criticism for banning the army-affiliated Officers' Training Corps (OTC) from their Welcome Fair. UK Defence

Secretary Grant Shapps called the ban "absurd and indefensible". The

OTC, which recruits for the Army Reserve, is affiliated with the university but not the SU. The SU reviews Welcome Fair applications on a case-bycase basis and noted that the OTC offers similar benefits to their affiliated groups and is "therefore in direct competition" with them. Critics viewed the decision as a broader sentiment toward the army. Shapps commented "It is our servicemen and women who - rejected by these students today will save them tomorrow."

Oxford researchers observe dark spot of Neptune from the ground

Cem Kozanoglu reports.

team of scientists led by a Professor from the University of Oxford, Patrick Irwin, observed a dark spot on Neptune's surface from the ground for the first time in a momentous display of the capacities of Earth based telescopes. "Since the first discovery of a dark spot, I've always wondered what these short-lived and elusive dark features are," says Irwin.

The new findings have shown that the dark spots are not caused by a clearing of the clouds but most likely the darkening of particles in a deeper layer of the atmosphere. Furthermore, the researchers also made a surprising discovery, finding a bright spot right by the dark spot, composed of a rare bright cloud type never identified before.

Neptune is the outermost planet in the solar system and its distance of 4.5 billion kilometres from the sun makes it difficult to observe closely from the surface. Dark spots on its surface were first detected by the Voyager 2 probe on its flyby in 1989, however, their examination from Earth remained elusive since they dissipated after a few years.

More recently, in 2018, the Hubble telescope discovered the latest series of dark spots which inspired Irwin and his team to set about observing them from the Earth's surface before they disappeared again. The team used the European Southern Observatory's "Very Large Telescope"(VLT) in Chile for their discovery.

The telescope's system of automated mirrors is able to self-adjust to minimise interference from Earth's atmosphere in its observations. Furthermore, the VLT's new measurement devices allowed the researchers to obtain a 3D spectrum, a detailed record of the wavelengths (colours) of light reflected by Neptune.

According to study co-author and Berkeley planetary scientist Michael Wong, the new observations herald a new stage in humanity's power to observe the universe: "This is an astounding increase in humanity's ability to observe the cosmos. "At first, we could only detect these spots by sending a spacecraft there, like Voyager. Then we gained the ability to make them out remotely with Hubble. Finally, technology has advanced to enable this from the ground."

> Image credit: European Space Agency/CC BY 2.0 via Flickr

Labour leaves Oxfordshire council coalition

Anika Gupta reports.

ecently, in late September, the Fair Deal Alliance between Labour, the Liberal Democrats and the Green parties broke down when Labour exited out of the coalition.

This coalition had run Oxfordshire's council since 2021. Despite the Conservatives winning 37% of the popular vote in 2021, which was higher than the Liberal Democrats' 26% Labour chose to align themselves with Lib Dem policies, claiming that it would be the best course of action for the council.

However, Labour's public statement outlines that while prior Conservative-led governments had "let our residents down", they can no longer participate in the c

Indeed, the Labour Party's senior leaders have since communicated that problems existed within the coalition since its inception, claiming that the recent turmoil was merely the last straw and breaking point of a "long sequence of events."

Tensions are believed to have

reached a critical point in early September when Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission published an unfavourable report into Oxfordshire's concerning special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) services.

Labour has stated that they are "proud to have secured extra funding for SEND" and fought to save transport services for SEND families when they were under threat.

They added: "We'll continue to support and fight for Oxfordshire residents from opposition."

The Oxford Labour Club told *Cherwell* that they are "saddened to hear of the break-up of the Oxford-shire Fair Deal Alliance. We have the pleasure of campaigning with some of the most dedicated and passionate county councillors who always work hard to represent the residents of their divisions."

"Despite the changes at County Hall, as a club we are looking forward to continuing our strong support for and partnership with the amazing Labour councillors on Oxfordshire County Council in helping to build a better county."

Analysis: Resignations or accountability

Alicia Martínez Patiño comments.

xfordshire's failure to guarantee effective services for SEND children and families has not only caused a crack within the governing coalition, but also highlighted a deeper problem of performative accountability as a replacement for real change in policies and methods.

After Cllr Liz Brighouse's work on SEND was proven ineffective by Ofsted's report, county council leader Liz Leffman was quick to back the call for resignation coming from fam-ilies across Oxfordshire. Additionally, in light of Cllr Damian Haywood's subsequent resignation as a member of the Labour Party, which he attributed to Labour's failure to provide for children with additional needs, Leffman almost immediately commended him for his "brave and principled stand." One must wonder whether Leffman did in fact hold the same 'principled stand' when overseeing the achievement of the council's objectives (including SEND) or acting as representative of her cabinet, as is her job as Leader of the Council. A coalition government, or even an ordinary cabinet, should not be about simply putting the blame on one of its members in order to save the team. Ofsted's findings were both a failure of Cllr Brighouse and of the County Council as an

institution – they should both take accountability accordingly.

The Labour Party has indeed, as Cllr Haywood argued in his statement, failed in doing justice to their own pledges to advocate for children with SEND. The choice to exit the governing coalition was chalked up to a discontent with the Liberal Democrats' desire to put the blame on someone rather than take collective responsibility. While this is a valid criticism, the choice to leave the coalition is problematic. Cllr Brighouse began her time as deputy leader by declaring Labour's aim to prioritise SEND. Although it would be naive not to expect confrontation in politics, with representatives focusing on strategy and power rather than policy, any political party would surely also be interested in making the most of a chance to push for policies that honour its voters' needs.

Coalitions have the unique advantage of allowing a party to keep another one accountable from within the same government. The pressure Labour is capable of exerting in order to make better SEND policy is far more powerful in a coalition than from the Opposition benches. Accountability to one's constituents is a basic element of representative democracy – this is not achieved by simply resigning and waiting for another time to shine.

Oxford University Boat Club unifies men's and women's sides

Jakub Trybull reports.

he Oxford University Boat Club (OUBC) has announced that it will be unifying its men's and women's squads into one boat club. The unified club will represent Oxford in races in 2024.

News of the changes were shared by the OUBC over X, formally known as Twitter, stating: "We have decided to unite into one Oxford University Boat Club (OUBC). For the 2024 Boat Race and beyond, men and women from both the openweight and lightweight squads will represent Oxford University Boat Club." Their social handles will also represent the unified squad.

Previously, the men's squad was represented by OUBC, whilst the women's squads were represented by Oxford University Women's Boat Club. Cambridge used to have a similar arrangement but decided to unify the squads in April 2020.

OUBC told *Cherwell*: "Over the past few years, the clubs have been aligning to support each other in our shared goal of beating Cambridge."

The two squads have been training at the same facilities at Iffley Roast and in Wallingford for many years and receive equal funding from The Topolski Fund.

Âccording to OUBC, the executive

committees came to the decision after an extensive consultation process with their respective clubs, coaches, and athletes. The change aims to "reduce operational complexity and improve governance", which the club says will benefit all athletes' focus between sports and studies.

Despite Oxford's crushing defeat in the Boat Race last year, where both the men's, women's, and reserves squads lost to Cambridge, OUBC told *Cherwell*: "The atmosphere at training is electric and the outlook is positive for The Dark Blues in the 2024 Boat Races and beyond."

Image credit: Katie Chan CC BY-SA 4.0 DEED



College rents sees up to 13.6% spike amidst cost-of-living struggles

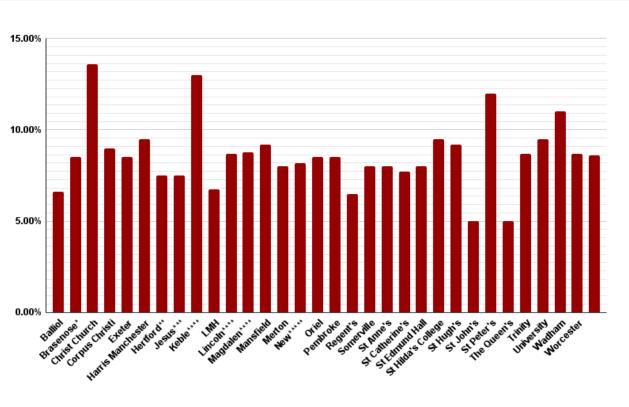
continued from front page

With student maintenance loans set to increase by a mere 2.8%, many students fear it will not be enough to tackle rising costs. One Pembroke student told Cherwell: "With my maintenance loan increasing by around 3% and rent by 8.5%, it means my loan no longer covers my accommodation costs... Even with having got very lucky on the room ballot, I am entirely dependent on what my parents can contribute and my job as a private tutor to fund food, socialising, and everything else. It means this year is going to be a lot more difficult than last and I'm going into it not thinking about

"Wadham SU threatened action such as withholding rent or a boycott on college food"

my studies but of the tight budget I'm going to have to keep to."

When considering the effect of the increase for the future, the



St Catz JCR President and Vice President told *Cherwell*: "As St Catz was founded as an access college, our founding principles of equality and fairness must be reflected in our rent. We believe that further rent increases should be paused or heavily subsidised following recent years' adjustments (11.8% rent increase in 2022 and 7.7% rent increase in 2023). It is essential that onsite accommodation remains an accessible option for all students regardless of background or financial circumstance."

Some colleges have opted to increase their hardship funding as a result – for example, Balliol has increased the maximum award for their Student Maintenance Grant from £1000 to £1500 per student, and the maximum award for their Hardship Grant has increased from £500 to £1000. However, some students have expressed concerns about accessibility to their college hardship funds. For example, whilst the hardship fund at St Catz has been expanded, students have argued that it "ignores people's financial realities" to require students to Investigations | 5

have less than £1000 in their bank accounts to be eligible.

"...it ignores people's financial realities."

The St Catz JCR President and Vice President added: "We acknowledge and welcome College's recent commitment to expanding the hardship fund as it is a lifeline for some students. We call upon them to translate this commitment into tangible and immediate actions, including reforming the way 'hardship' is assessed. Expanding the hardship fund should not remain a symbolic gesture, but a practical step towards ensuring that no student is hindered by financial constraints - as was the aim of the College when it was founded."

*Between nil and 8.5% depending on the banding

**Rents have moved by different amounts, for different accommodation options. Most increases will be around 7.5% or less.

***Rent has increased by 7.5% for onsite accommodation and 4.5% for off site accommodation.

****Unofficial figure obtained from student data.

*****Undergraduate rooms only.

University Church moves to evict Oxford cafe as petition passes 8000 signatures

Sloan Getz reports.

he University Church of St Mary the Virgin has begun legal proceedings to evict Vaults and Garden Café, a popular coffee shop located within the historic building. A petition by its owner against the closure has reached over 8,000 signatures.

Located across from the Radcliffe Camera, Vaults and Garden has been a popular spot for students and locals for just over 20 years. It has also been lauded in recent years for its commitment to sustainability and ethical business practices and won the 2017 Oxford Restaurant Award for most sustainable Oxfordshire restaurant. Will Pouget, the owner of Vaults and Garden, has started a petition to protest the proposed eviction and "intend to vigorously defend any possession proceedings" over the fate of the cafe.

The University Church's Parochial Church Council (PCC), which oversees the use of the space the café occupies, announced plans to renovate and conduct conservation work in the space in a press release and confirmed that Vaults and Garden cafe had been given notice to quit in May of 2023.

The plans come as part of the Church's Vision and Strategy, which was set out earlier this year. They aim to "significantly reduce energy usage, improve accessibility, enhance security, and ensure that the Grade 1 listed building is fit to welcome all visitors well into the future". It also involves the current café closing in the next few months, and it is hoped a new café, operated as a social enterprise, will open its doors in Spring 2025.

When asked if Vaults and Garden would be able to sign a new lease after the renovation the PCC told *Cherwell*: "It is not clear to us that Fresh Connection Ltd [the company that owns Vaults and Garden] is a social enterprise. Following redevelopment and at the point the PCC comes to appoint suppliers or issue catering licence(s), these will be an open commercial process."

Mr Pouget, who has strongly protested the church's move, is calling the notice to quit "unfair". He told *Cherwell*: "We hope to remain in occupation and would be delighted to work with the Church to achieve their stated social and ethical aspirations. We have twenty years experience of operating as an ethical business with a foundation of environmental and socially positive actions."

Cherwell has received conflicting statements from both parties concerning the nature of the current relationship formed between Vaults and Garden and the PCC, and the nature of the Church's role in the property. According to both parties, the café and the Church had a 15-year licence agreement from 2003

which elapsed in 2018. Since then there has been significant disagreement between Vaults and Garden and the PCC over the terms of their agreement after this. Vaults and Garden argued that the notice to vacate was unfair and

"do not reflect the twenty years [they] have spent building up a substantial and thriving business."

However, representatives for the church council claimed they acted within the scope of the agreement, adding: "While it was not a requirement for the PCC to give notice, 3 months' notice was provided and this was after prolonged attempts to achieve an amicable resolution." PCC also claims that the renovation plans have been in development for the past two years.

Furthermore, Vaults and Garden maintains that the Church intends to shut the café down "before it has applied for planning permission and listed building consent before it has performed the required public consultations."

PCC, meanwhile, have told *Cherwell*: "The plans have been reviewed by the Diocesan Advisory Committee (which reviews planning applications for church buildings) and the Church Buildings Council. The PCC has also sought advice from the local planning authority and consulted with heritage organisations and user groups. The PCC will move to public consultation as soon as [Vaults and Gardens] is out of the café."

Vaults and Garden has remained



open for business since the threemonth period elapsed. They are hosting celebrations to mark their 20th anniversary.

The dispute has now become a legal proceeding, a spokesperson

for PCC has confirmed, with the initial hearing listed for early November.

Image credit: Ash Chuan / CC BY-SA 2.0 via Wikimedia Commons

0th Week | MT 23

Tute notes...

The post-club tute is likely an experience familiar to many. A dizzying headache, nausea, the music from last night still pounding through your ears... it definitely does not make for the most comfortable tute. This was the state I was in during an English tute last Trinity - only the hangover was far, far worse. As it was getting to my turn to comment on the topic for the week, I could feel last night's soup of alcohol bubbling up in my stomach. My turn came. I blurted out some literary analysis. I could feel the cocktail creeping up, menacingly, tauntingly. Excusing myself, I ran to the nearest toilet, barely making the





Hertford library renovations to incorporate water park complex Further details have been revealed about the currently-underway £16m renovations of Hertford College library, which will incorporate a large water park complex, including four open-air swimming pools, several waterslides, a wave pool, and something called 'The Supersonic Splashinator 5000'.

The complex will expand outwards

into the quad and much of neighbouring All Souls College, for a total area of approximately 25,000m2.

Hertford have regrettably had to scrap their plans for reading rooms, charging ports, an issue desk, or any shelf space whatsoever. The college's vast collection of books will instead be stored in tall stacks around the pools, catalogued from driest to wettest. Students will be able to use the lazy river as a study space.

When announcing the renovations, Hertford stated their current library was 'unfit for purpose'. Their intended 'purpose' has now been clarified to

week 7's election – JE is confused as he thought sharks have spines.

Many ballots were eaten, lost, and erased, after that fateful Friday election, and the RO's favoured candidate duly emerged primus inter pares, eyes set on the scribe's seat. Caesaraea moved quickly and before the ink had dried on the RO's stamps, had built a slate, with the Ama-

built a state, with the A teur Dramatist (who enjoyed curious sleeping arrangements with Caesaraea during vac days) and the Legitimate Librarian's Lover as her co-triumphers. JE reminds all that no matter how convivial slate socials are at this early stage (whether

organised to snub less-indoctrinated committee or otherwise), the term is young, and the Gods of Frewin Courts' lust for blood is far from satiated. Captain Jack didn't perform quite poorly enough to be the worst hack we've ever heard of (and sadly we have heard of him). JE wonders if he will go down with his vote count mean 'a source of aquatic recreation'. Hertford have also noted they have kept their promise of having temperature-controlled areas and communal spaces for group work, i.e. the changing rooms and shower facilities. Asked to justify the college's decision, principal Tom Fletcher simply yelled 'Splishy-splashy fun!' with childlike glee, then stripped to his trunks and cannonballed into the pool with a joyous 'Whee!'. Unfortunately, the pool did not yet contain any water, and Mr Fletcher is currently in hospital with several broken bones.

(as good Captains should), or try to sail to Crimea in a desperate attempt to regain relevance.

Despite hosting Ben Shapiro and Katie Hopkins, this term the Union has only the second most egregious line-up of regrettable right-wing demagogues. A reinvented OUCA, finally free of its embarrassingly pathetic civil war, has somehow

Hunted the Chancellor and Lizz Truss - if only jealousy rather than misbehaviour and coups in the chamber were the reason they aren't hosting P&P at the Union anymore.

So welcome one and all to the ¿Triumphant? conclusion of the Union's Bicentenary Year – there has

never been a better time to get involved (although JE cannot advise that there is ever an optimum time to wade through piranha-infested water either), sit back, relax, and enjoy the show. *Qui vivra verra*.

Yours, bemusedly John Evelyn



6th of October 2023

Welcome back Hacklings past and present. Greetings to Hacklings future – we can't wait to get to know you.

. The Dick is departed, the Phallocrat gone - long live Gynocracy. Oxford may be nearing Winter, but Frewin Court is in full #Bloom, courtesy of the Venus Flytrap. She's spent the summer incubating a Termcard that will be difficult to forget (as unread copies will litter porters' lodges for the next 8 weeks) and will attempt to steer us though the next term, avoiding setting both a personal and Michaelmas record for removal from office. She rules alongside a highly Developed spy whose two personality traits both involve being beaten by Norwegians (Magnus Carlson and REDACTED), and the Trizzurer. JE is impressed by the multitudinous discounts at Park

the Trizzurer has arranged: make good use of these offers, night owls, and you might be able to bag a fresher, just like him. Caesaraea completes this mismatched officer team – she's been busy with the Regency ball – given her concerns over the accessibility of stash, JE wonders if she'll make a donation of dresses from her own extensive collection to the many less fortunate members.

End, Bridge, Plush, and Sandys, that

Heckling you as you browse the Freshers Fair are the elect(ed unopposed) team – This Barbie can Debate, The Panda, and the Ketchup Kin/k/g, who we hope are planning to have more positive #Impact than they did on turnout. Trinity's Election appears to have set a short-term trend towards rather wet Omnislates; word on the street has it that the Trizzurer is following his secretarial successor, and is chickening out of contesting

SUPPORT OUR SISTER PUBLICATION

The Cherwell Team

Editors-in-Chief Thomas Bristow & Suzanne Antelme

Deputy Editors-in-Chief Jakub Trybull, Bintia Dennog, Olivia Boyle, Adam Saxon, Kobi Mohan, Anuj Mishra & Anya Biletsky

News and Investigations Editors

Anika Gupta, Cem Kozanoglu, Faris Firoozye, Julia Amann, Martha Smith, Oliver Adelson, Rufus Hall & Sloane Getz

Features Editors

Amelia Dovell, Fatima Tariq, Jui Zaveri, Paul Furey, Sophia Andreoletti & Toby Charmichael

Comment Editors

Alicia Martínez Patiño, Freddie Maud, Kate Monaghan, Oliver Sandall, Raghav Chari, Tosin Olusoji & Violet Aitchison

Profile Editors Freddie Evans, Kate St. Francis & Sophie Magalhaes

Culture Editors

Ananya Parakh, Charlotte Lai, Eden Kilgour, Katie Saunders, Kelsey Moriarty, Kiaya Phillips, Lilian Trickey, Lucy Derrick, Matt Unwin, Naomi Finapiri, Rachael Cummings-Naylor, Rufus Jones, Shaan Sidhu, Grace Park & Zainab Rashid

Life Editors

Grace Allen, Lottie Tellyn, Maryam Mazhar & Phin Hubbard

Sports Editors Jess Cullen

Puzzles Lewis Callister & Sarah Beard

Creative Team

Yuan-Yuan Foo (Director), Cyril Malik, Ella Carran, Amelia Dovell, Yuhao Wang, Francesca Tozzi, Sean Hartnett, Daniel Stick, Nikola Boysova, Rachael Naylor, Michael-Akolade Ayodeji, Malaikah Butt & Madeleine Storer

Business Team

Maggie Wilcox (Head), Ailish Gaughan, Alice Grant, Charlotte Renehan, Hana Bashir & Joel Bassett

Get Involved! **Follow Cherwell Commissions on** Instagram





Thomas Bristow Editor-in-Chief

Welcome back everyone for another year of trials and tribulations at the world's greatest(?) university! It's a real privilege to be Editor-in-Chief this term, though you'd hope I would have done something remotely noteworthy by 4th year ... Anyway welcome also to the incoming freshers, whose eagerness for clubbing will soon be destroyed upon setting foot in Bridge. Please understand that there are slightly better alternatives available, and that if someone proposes "Bridge later?" you should just politley decline. However, if an unnavigable corridor of people swaying to awful music takes your fancy then Bridge is just what you're looking for! Speaking of the 'slightly better alternatives', Park End (or Atik) can

that is until the DJ starts inexplicably handing out pizza and you're just left stood there wondering how every decision you've ever made has led to this moment. A quite sobering experience indeed. I could also recommend Plush, and interesting and somewhat cavernous venue which has the unique ability of raining down humanity's collective sweat from it's barrelled ceilings. Take your pick ...

But a good night out can be had by all without having to venture to Oxford's outstanding clubs. I cannot recommend a college bar crawl enough. You get to experience the quirks of each college (and perhaps their unique drink) all for a cheap price, and become increasingly sloshed along the way (if that's your thing of course). My top picks would have to be St Catz enormous bar, Peter's infamous Cross Keys drink and perhaps even Magdalen's impressive medieval kitcken which now houses their bar (their bops aren't half bad too if you can sneak in). See our Freshers Guide, Keep Off the Grass for further recommendations!

You may have got to the point where you're wondering "What is he waffling about?", and I'd quite understand. On that note I'll end this here. Don't take any of my advice seriously (except about Bridge), as this city really has so much to offer. Experience as much as you can. Here's to a good Michaelmas term!

amount of staff still on low-paying

fixed-term contracts, it would be a

12

13

Arriving back in the UK, I'm thankmiracle if the next year were to run smoothly. This, alongside the inevitable Union controversies, will surely lead to a busier-than-ever year for the Cherwell news desk. And yes, all the strikes, boycotts,

for instant relief.

and protests are tiresome. And not receiving the grades you need to apply for graduate study, jobs, or to simply know if you passed, is absolutely appalling. Especially at a university like Oxford - the eight-yearlong champion of the Times Higher

But a lot of our anger is misplaced. The protesters often end up becoming the scapegoats, while those re-

sponsible go scot-free in the end. This is also why I sympathise with the so-called "Klimakleber" (translated: climate gluers), a source of invariable annoyance and scrutiny in Germany.

But sympathising with these causes doesn't mean you shouldn't be angry – rather the opposite. If we don't complain, or report, we lack the awareness that necessitates change. Both the marking boycott and the climate protests are supposed to generate frustration; but we must remember to blame those responsible rather than those who speak up.

ful to have made it without encoun-

tering any strikes or delays on the way - a stroke of luck nowadays. And yet, I only narrowly missed another gathering on Cornmarket Street, where protestors welcomed the first incoming freshers with drums and chants.

Starting second-year is strange enough in itself, but it's even more peculiar doing so without having received all of my exam results. The effects of the marking boycott Education ranking. are still apparent and given the

ACROSS

- 3. Boulder overhead arriving spontaneously (4,2)
- 6. Short memory and intellectual organ
- allegedly needed for osmosis (8)
- 8. Banquets without an echo mean the opposite (6)
- 9. An Athenian without Romeo is a bit of a
- nerd (4)
- **10.** Lincoln in the 50s is a marker (5) 11. Puncture concealed by instability (4)
- 14. Ate a piece (3)
- 16. The cat with a French accent wrecks South American civilisation (5)
- 17. Takes to court amid issues (4)
- 18. The first really ugly mackerel is
- consumed by pirates (3)
- 21. Most whirled is a play on words (4) 22. Yes about afar expedition to see animals
- in their natural habitat (6) 23. Seat introducing itself confuses Mexican
- band (8)24. Colouring a business accessory is
- something a hippie would do (3,3)

DOWN

- 1. Sounds like some fellas keep you dry (9) 2. Game show without no deal is a nightmar-
- ish experience (6)
- 3. Chorus sounds like reef precipitation (7) 4. Charlie and a Scottish girl form a study group (5)
- 5. Among cult radicalising the extreme (5)
- 7. To my ear, a massive chunk of food is a lot of information (8)
- 12. Technological gin mixer has a lot on it's plate (8)
- 13. Dark letters make offers you can't refuse (9)
- 15. Heavenly citrus replacement (7)
- 16. Golden fruit reportedly helps take care of children abroad (2, 4)
- 19. Japanese eel initially under neighbourhood apartment gets identified (5) **20.** Kiosk is upright (5)

Suzanne Antelme Editor-in-Chief Dear Freshers, welcome to Oxford - and to Cherwell! This city is a strange place, full of juxtaposition and oxymorons. Old buildings interwoven with concrete eyesores, drunk students in white tie, the occasional full-body chicken costume, and an absurd number of

tourists. I think Cornmarket, with

which you will all soon be famil-

iar, is really the best microcosm of

the Oxford experience. Undenia-

bly tacky-looking and sandwiched

amongst much nicer buildings but

– I argue – gifted an odd charm by

the ever-present buskers, this short

street is a randomness generator of

note. Feeling underwhelmed by the

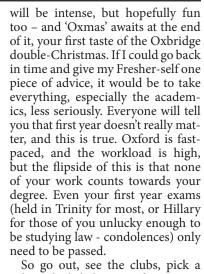
routines of life? Visit Cornmarket

And all this highly saturated in

academic pressure. Your first term

0th Week | MT 23





side in the kebab van turf war, over-

subscribe to societies and clubs, and

try to get to know a bit more of Ox-

ford beyond the holy trinity of High

Street, Broad Street, and Cornmar-

ket. In first year Oxford feels like it

might last forever, but here the days

really do drag while the years fly -

and before you know it you'll be a

boring finalist contemplating exams

that may actually matter and a life

in the big bad world bereft of Corn-

market Street. In the meantime,

though, please take a moment to ab-

sorb the sage advice from Cherwell's

very own Freshers Guide, Keep Off

the Grass (after page 12), as produc-

ing it has shaved at least five years

off my life expectancy.



Deputy Editor-in-Chief

Cryptic Crossword, by Sarah Beard

23

10

22

17 19

"Comedy is humanity's highest art form"

Freddie Evans and Sophie Magalhaes interviewed David Mitchell on comedy, the enduring appeal of 'Peep Show', his new history book, and his advice for aspiring actors.

avid Mitchell has been a reassuring fixture on British television screens for over two decades. You'll most likely be familiar with his face and characteristic wit on display in his appearances on a variety of beloved British panel shows like 'Would I Lie To You', the popular series 'Peep Show' which he co-created and starred in, or his witty and insightful Observer column. Beyond his creative pursuits, Mitchell's passion for history often influences his work, making him a unique and multifaceted figure in the world of arts and entertainment. His new book on the English monarchy, 'Unruly: A History of England's Kings and Queens', is to be released 3rd October

You've had a successful career in both comedy and drama. How do you approach balancing these two genres, and do you prefer one over the other?

I definitely prefer comedy. I think comedy is the best thing. I think it is humanity's highest art form. I definitely count myself as a comedy person first and foremost. I suppose in terms of performances, I haven't done straight drama – most of the things I have done, there is something funny about it. I would probably make the argument that there aren't many great dramas that are absolutely devoid of humour – a bit of it really helps. I would put myself as a comedian first and foremost.

You've had a long-standing partnership with Robert Webb; from 'Peep Show' to your comedy duo work. How important is comedic collaboration?

It certainly helps. There are different forms of artistic expression, some of which you can do on your own, others of which you can't. There is stand-up comedy, which I have never done – a solo form of comedy that you can craft on your own. Television comedy or drama, or any form of broadcasting, is a team thing. You need lots of people to make it happen – lots of people working hard to bring a television programme together, and you do well to remember how much you rely on the other people.

In terms of writing and performing, Rob and I found it incredibly helpful to not be on our own – especially at the start. It hugely helps - you are just massively less likely to be totally wrong about a comedic notion if one other person says, "No, I like that".

Comedy often addresses societal issues and challenges. How do you see the role of comedy in commenting on or addressing important topics, and do you believe there are any boundaries when it comes to humour?

The thing about comedy is you never know how it will go down. That is part of why it is fun – it's risky in that sense – you can never be certain in that way. I don't think there are any subjects which are inappropriate for comedy, but there are definitely jokes that

"I don't think there are any subjects which are inappropriate for comedy, but there are definitely jokes that shouldn't have been made."

shouldn't have been made. Ultimately, it is an art form that is entirely justified or otherwise based on whether or not people laugh and like it. Comedians go out there to please a crowd ultimately. If people think it is offensive, ulti-



mately it isn't successful.

I don't think there are arenas where comedy shouldn't go. Comedy should push boundaries - we, as a species, have an impish nature - we want to say the things we are told we shouldn't say just for the rebellious thrill of it. Comedians will always go into those arenas, and it is a difficult time for

that, largely because of the internet, which allows any piece of material to be plucked out, decontextualized, and then placed in former of the user

in front of thousands of people who might, in that decontextualized state, find it horrific. That doesn't necessarily mean that when it was originally performed with an audience that was expecting more of that sort of thing, it wasn't a perfectly OK thing to attempt to amuse with. But I think it is only a different manifestation of an issue that comedians have always faced because they have an urge to be edgy and different, and sometimes that works well, and people love it, and sometimes it goes wrong. Social media and the internet provide a whole new

way for it to go wrong, but it is an old problem. 'Peep Show' is considered a

cult classic and has a dedicated fan base. What do you think it is about the show that resonated so well with viewers, and how has it impacted your career? I believe the reason [the show] is popular and re-

mains so is hopefully because it resonated with people. It is a sitcom about two young men trying to figure out their lives, and a lot of people have had that experience. Even for people who haven't, there are elements of it that reflect on the whole human condition – or at least the human condition in an affluent way. I speculate that's why people liked it initially, and that's what still draws people to it, particularly young people.

One of the endearing qualities of it, I was obviously a lot younger when I was in it, and people of my age liked it, and I am very glad that people of the age I was then come to it and like it. That makes me very proud. But obviously, at the time, the scripts that Jesse Armstrong and Sam Bain had written were brilliant. We knew we were shooting it in a slightly unusual way because that might get it a bit of attention, but we didn't know, and we just wanted to make a series that people didn't think was terrible. We were very pleased that

"... [show business is] a difficult, insecure profession..."

people liked it, and it grew from there.

At every point, we thought it

was a good thing that we were doing, but we didn't realise how far we would take it. It was the first thing in my career that was hugely successful and is hugely important to me. I was very lucky to stumble into a project like that so early on in my career. I am very, very proud of it. I am very happy to talk about it because it's a difficult, insecure profession - show business. To have anything that succeeds is unusual, so I think you have to cherish those things. Obviously, I want to do other and different things, but I am very happy that it is a part of my life.

I think the type of comedy that is in 'Peep Show' is always something to which I will be drawn. I

"... you have to do what you think is good and funny, what you would enjoy if you were watching it."

neither want to go avant-garde nor mainstream. It's the kind of show I wanted to make and has kind of been the only guiding principle of my career, i.e., don't go wasting your time making the sort of thing you think people will like but you don't like yourself. Just make what you like. There will be other people like you who will enjoy it if you make a good one. People often ask me how you carve your comedy for audiences, and I think you can't - you have to do what you think is good and funny, what you would enjoy if you were watching it. If you really enjoy it, there is a fair chance other people will.

Panel shows often require quick wit and improvisational skills. How do you prepare and what's the secret to a successful panel show appearance?

I don't think you can really prepare for these types of situations. If you're going on a show like 'Have I Got News for You,' sure, you can keep up with what's happening in the news. It's hard to be funny if you haven't heard of the politicians or events being mentioned. My feeling is that you can't go in with a set of jokes you want to make because there are parts of my brain that remember things and parts that make things up, and they don't work well together.

When I'm going into a situation where I might want to say something specific,

I won't listen to what other people are saying, and I'll miss opportunities to say things that come out naturally in the live conversation. These off-the-cuff remarks often turn out better because they are of-the-moment. I believe this is the essence of the justification for the genre of television panel shows. It generates material that no one could have written – it's the alchemy of the people involved and the conversational situation they are put in that leads to comic invention different from what those people would have invented at home.

The best panel shows, in my opinion, come from individuals who show up in good spirits in front of an audience they are eager not to disappoint. They try to engage in funny banter within the structure provided by skilled program makers. When it comes to the parts of the show that aren't as good as the rest, you can always • edit them out later.

One of the strengths of

shows like 'Would I Lie to You?' is that the format turning over these cards when we don't know what's on them, precludes excespreparation. sive don't know You what you'll be talking about, so you can't come in with a set agenda. The few times

people have tried, it rarely works out, and the material often comes across as insincere and is usually edited out.

'Unruly: The History of England's Kings and Queens'. What inspired you to explore this topic, and what can readers expect from the book?

I hope it's a funny book, but it's also a proper history of England's monarchy from the Anglo-Saxons to 1603. It's funny not because I've inserted jokes about medieval gore or primitive laboratory

"I attempt to find the funny, ridiculous, daft, and infuriating in the news and apply that to events from a long time ago."

practices, but because the past, like the medieval ages, is funny, or, as the American subtitle suggests, "ridiculous." There's a lot to find absurd and funny about it because, obviously, living then was dreadful, and most people lived in depths of misery that we can

of misery that we can barely conceive of today. But it was a long time ago. So, looking at it with a lens of absurdity and humour,

with a lens of absurdity and humour, I think, without being offensive to the poor people who had to live through it, the comedy naturally arises from the truth of it. This approach is like my *Observer* column, where I attempt to find the funny, ridiculous, daft, and infuriating in the news and apply that to events from a long time ago. History has always been my favourite subject and at university and albeit not very assiduously at the time and it has obsessed me my whole life.

All humans, in a way, want to see the world explained, and for me, that comes through history. A situation is best explained by what the people were doing before the situation what they were

间

回

氳

doing in the situation I want explained. In my comedy, I've written many sketches about history because I find it both

funny and interesting. During the lockdown, I was lookfor ing cresome ativities to come from it and thinking

about the Vikings and realized that their sudden coming and terrorizing of the English coastline was a bit like COVID – something that came out of the blue and ruined people's lives. Viewing it that way was strangely comforting and quite funny. It reminded me that history isn't just about great men and women or grand trends; sometimes, something random happens and screws things up for a lot of people, like rain at a garden party.

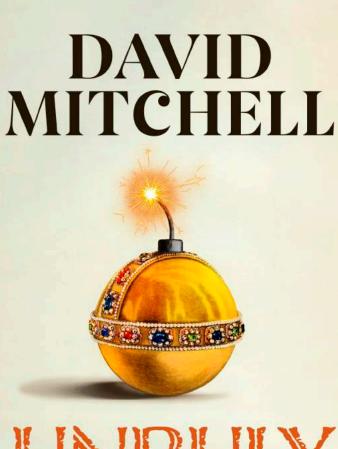
I enjoyed writing about it and had reached about 30,000 words on the Anglo-Saxons. I thought, "Well, maybe there's a book in this." I decided to focus on England's monarchy, starting from the Dark Ages and medieval times, leading up to the merger with the Scottish monarchy in 1603. It's not too superficial and not too long. I then finished it off and gave it an overall shake.

What advice do you have for young individuals aspiring to make a career in the entertainment industry, and how did you navigate the early stages of your career?

Rob and I had each other. We both wanted the same thing, and we were committed to working together, so that was hugely helpful. Finding collaborators whom you like, admire, and are willing to commit to, and who are willing to commit to you, is a great way to enter into the world of comedy.

I think if you want to perform, also try to write if you can. Writing gives you significantly more leverage and control – you can always be writing, but you can't always be performing. If you aren't getting performance opportunities, writing can help you create them for yourself.

The Edinburgh Fringe was a huge thing for Rob and me. We went there every year, and it's a



A HISTORY OF ENGLAND'S KINGS AND QUEENS "It's an insecure profession, and you're more likely to face rejection than success. But if you're determined to pursue it because it's your passion, then go for it..."

place where many influential people in show business attend. They often check out new talent. There are genuinely nice opportunities at that festival. The key thing is to keep trying. Don't give up unless, of course, you can give up, in which case, explore other options. But if you feel deeply that this is your calling in life, then go for it, keep trying. It's an insecure profession, and you're more likely to face rejection than success. But if you're determined to pursue it because it's your passion, then go for it, keep trying, and the more you roll the dice, the more likely you are to get a favourable outcome.

I recall someone from my university years who wrote to a very famous actress (I can't remember who) seeking advice about becoming an actor and expressing concerns about the profession. The reply was quite brutal: "If you think of being an actor, don't. If you have to be an actor, go for it, and I wish you luck." There's some truth in that. It's an insecure profession, and if you must do it, then go all in. However, if you're thinking it seems fun and want to know how to apply officially, it doesn't work that way. You need a bit of luck, and to have luck, you have to be there for a long time, waiting for your opportunity. The key thing is, if you know in your heart that you want to be in this profession and you're willing to keep trying until you succeed, then go for it - try everything, and you'll get there. But if you're think-ing you don't want everything to be miserable and disheartening, there are other enjoyable professions with more certain paths to secure employment.

Images courtesy of David Mitchell & Penguin Random House

David Mitchell will be interviewed by Jeremy Paxman live on stage at New Theatre Oxford on October 16th. Tickets (beginning £24) can be bought at the box office or at https://www.atgtickets.com/ shows/unruly-in-conversationwith-david-mitchell-about-hisnew-book/new-theatre-oxford/. Tickets include a copy of 'UNRULY: A History of England's Kings and Queens'.

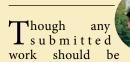
How much should we use AI to help us with our degrees?

Freddie proposes that AI complements us

Whilst it is inevitable that AI will occu-

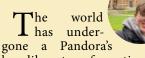
py an ever-growing part of our lives, this does not mean it should make us think less. If anything, we should use AI where it gives us more time to think and to be creative. ChatGPT should not be writing our essays, but it could be used to recommend a book or article that might give us a fresh perspective on questions posed to us. If AI is to enhance the human experience, it must make us more curious - to believe that infinite knowledge is within reach.

Oli argues that AI hinders our learning



your own, AI could help you by organising your bibliography, diagrams, or contents page. A degree can be made more convenient by the help of AI, but a degree - whilst also serving as a qualification - is also about how much you learn from doing your tasks, whether you score 40 or 75. This 'learning' is also not limited to academia; as a young adult taking your first steps into the 'real world', you should treat every day as an opportunity to make new experiences and learn. AI can surely only hinder this.

Adam discusses the ethics of AI



box-like transformation in the last year or so. The reality of AI is that now it has been unleashed upon the world the priority should be to use it for good, and limit its wrongful use. The result of this will be a reordering of the jobs market, creative fields and the way things like University studies are undertaken. AI can be a useful tool if it used to complement studies. The aim should still be to learn, but to enhance the experience of doing so by condensing information, simplifying tasks and making the process more efficient.

Is the minority still the majority?

Violet Aitchinson

t has been years since infamous private member societies such as 'The Bullingdon Club' or 'The Piers Gaveston Society' have reigned supreme at Oxford; the university and students alike condemning their behaviour. It has also been around twenty years since the proportion of state school-educated students surpassed that of privately educated students. On paper, it looks like the tables have turned on those educated at the most elite schools in the country, but as a state school-educated member of the university it doesn't always feel that way.

I was lucky enough to attend an extremely high-performing state comprehensive. In 2021, when I won a place at Oxford, so too did fifty-one other students from my college. This is an extremely impressive number for a nonselective school. However, when you take into account that there were one-thousand six hundred students in my year group, that's actually only 3.25% of the student body. In the same year, St Paul's Girls School, one of the top-performing private girls' schools in the country, had a staggering 46.9% success rate.

But facts have never made good news stories. Since the proportion of state school students at Oxford has risen, so has the number of screaming headlines in the national press. Papers such as The Times love to shout about private school students who've 'lost out' on their chances in the name of equality. 'Private pupils shunned by Oxbridge are being 'driven overseas', 'Going private is putting our children's Oxbridge chances at risk, parents fear', and 'White private school boys are the new disadvantaged, says Cambridge academic' are just a few real article headlines which have been published in the past couple years.

The reality of the situation is, of course, a little more complex. Only seven percent of the population attends private school and yet they make up around 30% of Oxford students. However, the crux of the issue isn't so much about the weight of the name of your school in relation to your success, but about the things you've learned there which give you an advantage. In my experience Oxford is still very tailored towards the culture of these schools; before these pupils even attend

"Before I went to Oxford I had never really been asked where I went to school."

Oxford or Cambridge, they know the secrets. And it's this that really makes it feel as if, despite statistics, state school-educated pupils are still in the minority.

Before I went to Oxford I had never really been asked where I went to school. The question at first surprised me. Why would anyone know of my school and what relevance would it have to our possible friendship? However, I quickly learned that for attendees of those

top London private schools, it held a meaning, a sort of secret code. It provided an instant bond, an opportunity to discuss mutual friends and experiences only available to those who attended those types of schools. Which also, for those of us who were not a part of it, unknowingly created a divide. Subconsciously, these initial alliances create a feeling that there is a 'group' you could never be a part of, or rather one that you would have to work to understand. And indeed, you do. Never have I known the names of so many independent schools in and around London, nor been able to add to a conversation by adding an anecdote of another friend at the university who attended the same place.

But the issue is not just in the where-did-you-go-to-school conversations. There are so many other traditions which new students have to familiarise themselves with. Before coming to Oxford, I wonder how many of you had heard of matriculation, formal hall, or sub fusc. For each of these things, I felt words like this made me feel completely in the dark. What was the dress code, and how should you behave? Luckily for me, I had a friend from school who went a year earlier than myself who told me I needed to get hold of some 'black tie' wear for formal. Black tie was not a concept I was familiar with, and only after some research was I able to look online for a formal dress that would be appropriate. My only experience with 'formal' dress before coming to Oxford was prom in year eleven or the

"Eventually, putting on 'black tie' becomes as easy as putting on your pyjamas..."

occasional wedding. Despite being assured that many others were in the same position as me, my lack of knowledge made me feel stupid. Surely by nineteen, I should have known how to do something as easy as get dressed in the right clothes. *Image credit: Ninara via Flickr/CC*

BY 2.0



The Debate Chamber

Tosin and Raghav go head to head, debating whether freshers week is more fun for second years

hile, as the name suggests, the freshers week framework is indisputably designed for the incoming university cohort, it is certain that more fun is had by second years.

Firstly, second years have the same opportunities to join new societies and take up new interests introduced to them at freshers fairs, but with the useful benefit of hindsight. Whether you are a three or four year course (or however long a medic's is), at the beginning of second year you still have plenty of time at the university to gain new experiences and join new communities. However, unlike a fresher who has just entered this new gigantic and overstimulating universe alone, you have a somewhat in-formed understanding of the makeup of these societies and clubs, and will probably have a few friends in some of them. This makes weighing up your options for teams to join a lot less daunting and more exciting. Moreover, the nights-out element

is a lot more fun when you already have a group of friends to accompany you, rather than simply the pressure to make them. All of the same freshers events at Oxford's cursed clubs are still open to second years, but with the comfort of already having a space for prinks with your friends. For first years, freshers week doesn't have to be a lonely experience, but I'm sure it would have been much easier if you were entering university with all of your friends by your side. My opinion may be biased, as

My opinion may be bias my initial freshers week was robbed by the COV-ID-19 thief and replaced with online bops and online freshers fairs. At the very least, however, freshers week is a great opportunity for second years to nick a second round of free things from the freshers fair. t's easy to see Freshers' Week as a 'free' week. There are no classes or deadlines that have started yet, and there are lots of fun events to attend; you can just kick back and enjoy. But come on, there's something to be said about the novelty of it all.

As a fresher, everything that happens during the week is truly new, and every day is genuinely more full of possibilities than ever else in your time at uni. Second years can participate knowing

that they have found good friends and understand the city well, but the instability of Freshers' Week is also the freedom one can find in it. Each night, you could make a new friend that'll be by your side through all your years at uni. Beneath sweatthe soaked ceilings during an ill-advised night at Plush, you can create a truly new beginning for yourself.

As second years, it's also easier to be more jaded about the uni. Freshers' fair is staffed by your friends, and you've heard their stories about how terribly mismanaged their societies are. When you walk through and see a stall run by the Union, one only thinks of controversy after controversy. As a fresher, everything appears shiny and new. The societies are places to find friends and learn things, and there are only good stories and positive words to be said by the staff at the stalls.

The experience of being a fresher is so unique because you only do it once. It sounds pithy, but it's true. You can never again be a wide-eyed, hopeful kid trying to remember when your matriculation slot is. I think being a fresher during Freshers' Week is something we all wish we could go back to.

Of course, though, these traditions are not something you have to buy into, and it's not as if you'll be penalized for not taking part. Wadham is a shining example of a college that rejects them by replacing balls with 'Wadstock' and scrapping formals altogether. Wadham might prove that things have shifted, and that the University is taking steps to move away from the focus on private school culture. But the very fact that Wadham has chosen to reject these traditions is very telling. Surely we only need to reject the things that impact our lives. Wadham's rejection in fact shows just how entrenched the rest of Oxford is in these old-school

traditions. All of which fits nicely in with what students from private schools have spent years preparing for.

Inevitably, these feelings also slip into the academic life of Oxford. As someone who is used to classes of thirty-plus pupils, tiny tutorials at first felt uncomfortable and exposing to me. In the first few weeks, I held back ideas and stumbled nervously over my words. Private schools by contrast pride themselves on small class numbers and much more individual-focused learning, which I can assure you is something I wish I had had more experience of in that first tutorial. I had never envied the private school experience before an Oxford tutorial, but I had to learn quickly how to build up the confidence to effectively communicate my ideas. This was a confidence that had been instilled into my counterparts for at least five years. It didn't take long for me to get a handle on this, but there were certainly many awkward silences and cringe-worthy moments in the first few weeks which made the process feel more difficult.

Eventually, putting on 'black tie' becomes as easy as putting on your pyjamas, and a one-on-one tutorial is simply part of your weekly routine. However, that doesn't shake the feeling that you're often playing

catch up with this culture. And the onus is on the state school students to adapt, learn the codes, and build up our confidence to a private school level. Not all of this is bad, but it is different. The media can keep on saying that the system has changed to favour state school pupils, but the truth is that I spent my first year striving to adapt to the lifestyle at Oxford. This isn't to say that I didn't also have a great time - it has in fact been one of the best years of my life so far. But it's also undeniable that many of my privately educated peers didn't have to waste time thinking about this, feeling comfortable from their very first day.

politics, states the following: "I'm

not interested in politics. I've nev-

er been interested in politics. I'm

interested in ideas and I'm inter-

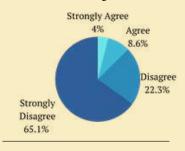
ested in people."



Cherwell asked your opinion on the latest issues, big and small...

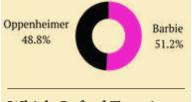
"Rishi Sunak changing the government's key environmental pledges was a good idea

An overwhelming 65% of our readers strongly disagree with this, whilst only 4% felt the complete other way and strongly agreed. A mere 9% agreed, and the rest (22%) disagreed.



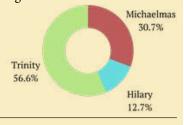
Barbie or Oppenheimer?

According to our intrepid Instagram poll, you prefer Barbie over Oppenheimer by a narrow margin of 51.2% vs 48.8%.



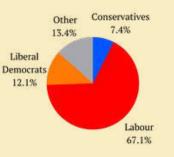
Which Oxford Term is the best?

We asked our readers what their favourite term is. Trinity came out on top with 56.6%, whilst Michalemas took second place with 30.7% and Hilary was the forgotten term with 12.7%



How would Oxford vote?

We asked our readers how they would vote in a general election. Labour dominated with 67.1% of votes, the Conservatives tailed with a humble 7.4%, whilst the Lib Dems claimed 12.1% of the vote.



Trump, the American left and political Voldemorts

Jessica Tabraham

rump burst onto the American and global political landscape eight years ago and it feels as though we have not stopped talking about him since. I understand the resultant reticence to discuss Trump, especially given the recent cultural discussion regarding platforming. However, I think the political left, both in the US and the UK are in danger of playing into the hands of Trump and others like him.

A year out from the 2024 Presidential election, I think we need to change the way we talk about Trump and the populist right.

Trump is on track to become the Republican nominee and a recent ABC poll not only projects a Trump victory in the Republican primary but a Trump victory against Biden by ten points, comfortably above the margin of error. This article is not intended as a hack piece of scaremongering, but, I do think we need to at least consider the worst outcome. We need to stop talking about how ludicrous the idea of Trump running is, and instead work out how to fight him if he does.

In January 2021, during the aftermath of the Capitol insurrection, both Facebook and Twitter banned Trump from their platforms. At the time I welcomed this decision. I thought that both companies made the decision far too late and only made it when they realised Trump was no longer their moneymaker; but, I thought the most important thing was that the decision was made. The brief period of time where Trump was absent from our media discourse is also the time where the political left learnt an ostensibly valuable lesson: that talk- ing about ed to

-

Trump only addhis power and creating endless discourse about him gift

e d

him a status and political validity he did not deserve.

At the time, I agreed with the collective lesson. I was bored with Trump. The media landscape was oversaturated with him. I just wanted him to go away. Now I'm not so sure this is the lesson we should have learned. The reticence to discuss Trump as a mainstream political figure has imbued him with an almost Voldemort-esque quality (not He Who Must Be Named but He Who Must Not Be Talked About). Before his Musk-sanctioned return to Twitter, Trump created his own platform Truth Social which appeared to be a failure. Trump did not have access to a mass audience: however, this does not necessarily constitute a failure and could in fact be an integral cog in his political strategy machine. Post-insurrection, Trump has aligned himself even further with the alt-right community which now includes alleged rapist Russell Brand, who has somehow managed to shapeshift from a Marxist to the ally of Tucker Carlson and Ron de Santis.

Russell Brand's YouTube channel 'Stay Free' operates with the same faux-martyred ethos as Trump's 'Truth Social'. For years, Brand has been cultivating a cultlike following whom he feeds with rants about the 'mainstream media' of which he is very much part. Brand was able to undergo such a transformation right under our noses because we do not take the alt-right community seriously enough. We need to interrogate it as we would any political discourse because nonchalantly dismissing it has not worked.

Attacking Trump on the insurrection has not resulted in his political condemnation. In the first Republican primary debate seven out of eight candidates pledged to pardon Trump. When Trump

left office, pollshowed ing that 38% of Americans approved of his job performance. Now, that same poll has found that 48%

placing our faith in the rule of law "Indictments may have helped Trump more than

of Americans approve of his job

performance. I think it was impor-

tant to impeach and indict Trump,

they have hindered him."

and democratic systems. However, we need to come to terms with the fact that the indictments may have helped Trump more than they have hindered him. Trump is using the insurrection and its subsequent indictments to recreate the way he entered the political landscape in 2016: as an outsider. It was ridiculous that in 2016 a wealthy businessman was able to label himself as an outsider; but, it is even more ridiculous now

when that man has been the President of the United States. Trump built said rebel-outsider status

by denouncing the Washington 'blob' and emphasising the history of the Clinton name in American

politics. Now, his attack line is hauntingly similar with the weaponisation of Hunter Biden and the moniker of 'the Biden Crime Family'. We did not take Trump seriously in 2016 and we suffered the

consequences. The left were complacent in 2016 and we cannot enter the campaigning period with that same complacency.

We are living in a political world that is rapidly being divided into 'the establishment' and

'truthtellers'. In an attempt to find a chink in their armour, I decided to try and listen to what these 'truthtellers' had to say. Russell Brand's channel boasts 6.5 million subscribers and one of the most viewed interviews is his hour long episode with disgraced Fox News host Tucker Carlson. Within the first five minutes Carlson, a man who has made his career in

Flip this, and you have the solution to fighting him and all the tenants of the alt-right house. Trump will attempt to trick the electorate into thinking he is not a politician and it is from this engineered outsider status that he will aim his attacks. This man was President of the United States. Stop fighting Trump the person

and start fighting Trump the politician. Trump is part of a growing right-wing movement which shuns mainstream media and the scrutiny that comes with it. Boris Johnson refused a long form interview with Andrew Marr in 2019 and Liz Truss refused any type of long form interview during her premiership. Increasingly, the political right are trying to evade the spotlight of the mainstream media because they are trying to hide the fact they are politicians. As politicians they owe the public the right to scrutiny. Trump, Johnson and Truss label themselves as 'ideas people': as radicals, rebels, martyrs and misunderstood geniuses. They are none of the above. They are politicians and it is time we started treating them as such. The success of alt-right media has been its relative insularity.

Politicians of the left and centre do not touch it. The 'truthtellers' preach on their independent platforms to their cultivated choirs. The way to beat them is there- they just don't think we're listening. Naomi Klein's new book Doppelganger details the existence of the alt-right 'Mirror World', which functions as a palimpsestic underbelly to mainstream political discourse. Instead of being scared of this world we need to interrogate it.

Interrogating is not platforming, we are way past that point, altright rhetoric does not feel so alternative anymore. Instead, I suggest we take Klein's metaphor and hold up a mirror to this world and its people. It is time that we held a mirror up to Trump so that the electorate can see him for the politician he really is.

£27,000 for a library card?

Kate Monaghan

'm writing this over the summer vac in the library of my local university, which is considered to be in a league below Oxford. I'm sure this is true in some respects, but sitting here I can't help but wonder what really makes Oxford better for my degree – history – than anywhere else.

I love Oxford, but I love it predominantly for reasons other than the education, which feels somewhat wrong. Anyone will attest this is a common Oxford theme: everyone loves to talk about how they wrote their last essay in five minutes. Literary Oxford is arguably more famous for hedonistic layabouts than devoted academics: Evelyn Waugh's alcoholics and drop-outs (and Waugh himself, who despised Hertford and confessed 'I do no work here and never go to Chapel'); Martin Amis characters who 'read sex at Oxford'; the many now successful people who regarded their degree as more of a distracting hobby and graduated with flippant thirds.

While writing this I came across a Times article by Giles Coren that describes just what I'm talking about, reading in part: 'One goes to Oxford precisely because the teaching is rubbish, nothing is compulsory, tutorials are optional after first week, and nobody ever, ever talks about careers. If you want to be taught and pass exams and become a lawyer, don't you go to a red brick? Or Cambridge? Oxford is for drinking and playing tennis and nicking books out of the Bod under your cricket jumper and lobbing them at punting tourists from Magdalen Bridge.' I won't lie - my immediate reaction was: fantastic stuff, no notes. But then I thought about it more, and while this Brideshead Revisited sentiment is all very romantic, and a semi-reasonable thing to say back when university was free (or if you were somebody who didn't have to worry about that anyway), it is really quite absurd to borrow or pay almost thirty thousand pounds to be told to read some books, and then choose not to read them.

When I think about this, I'm reminded of the scene in Good Will Hunting in which Will mocks Clark, a Harvard-educated bully, for having 'dropped \$150,000 on an education [Clark] coulda got for a dollar fifty in late fees at the public library.' Clark retorts, 'Yeah, but I'll have a degree, and Will, despite having just shown that he knows more than Clark, can't argue with that. When the degree matters so much more than the knowledge acquired from the degree, the goal is not education or erudition, but the qualification itself, turning it into a brand or a product, something which can be purchased. It turns out not to be all that absurd that we don't prioritise studying. The degree isn't really about the books at all, and if you can get it without reading them properly, why bother?

People who talk about 'paying thirty grand for a library card' tend to be people who think the humanities are a self-indulgent waste of time: this isn't what I'm saying. I don't think the liberal arts are pointless; I think they deserve to be better. Oxford tells us to spend 40 hours per week on our degree, and for humanities students 90% of it is spent reading alone. This isn't some random, exaggerated number: it actually is 90. Those of us doing history have three tutorials every two weeks, plus two or so lectures a week, and a class a week if we're lucky - coming to a very optimistic eighteen contact hours out of 160 study hours a month, which is 11.25%. Of course, humanities degrees are by and large about reading, and spending many hours reading alone is unavoidable. But it shouldn't feel like we're just reading alone. It feels like a tragic missed opportunity to be taught by and among so many intelligent and knowledgeable people and only get to discuss the things we've all studied if somebody takes it upon themselves to start the conversation. It wasn't until Hilary of second year that I had any classes at all, not until Trinity of the same year that I had classes with the other history students in my college - which I think is insane. Of course we discussed the things we studied together before this, but in our own time, and informally: why didn't we have to do it for over a year?

The point of a liberal arts degree, the difference between it and simply going to the library, is sup-

"One goes to Oxford precisely because the teaching is rubbish."

posed to be the opportunity for discussion with and instruction by some of the best minds. This is what the tutorial system intends to provide: the unique opportunity to have Socratic conversations with a leading expert in the field about a piece you've written, in which they treat you like an intellectual equal. I'm not sure if it succeeds. In practice, tutorials are more of a bizarre pretence that, after reading about something for a week and writing a few pages about it, we have nuanced enough opinions to have an equal conversation with someone who has devoted their whole life to it. Even after two years of this, in tutorials I still find it difficult to override the feeling that I should just let the expert talk - and I don't think it's always wrong to feel that way. When my tutorials are about topics on which I have genuine opinions, which they often are, I don't have a problem defending my

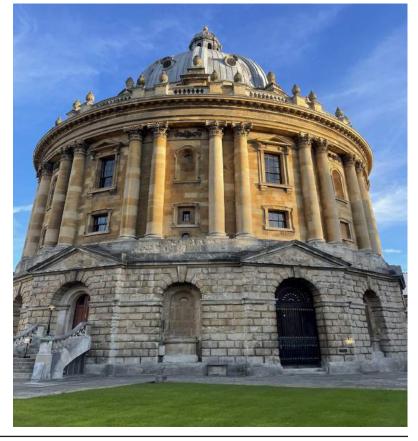
point of view. But when it's something I don't feel I know enough about, I don't like having to pretend I know (as tutors will criticise you for not being opinionated enough). It seems remarkably unintellectual. It also seems like many problems, such as politicians artfully dodging questions, are reflected in, or in many cases actually nurtured by, the Oxford tutorial system.

Some have criticised tutorials, but while I think the concept is noble, things could be a lot better. The tutorial system still demands public-school arrogance, expecting students fresh from A-level to be confident enough to challenge tutors with decades of experience. Pre-existing barriers like this are difficult to break down but this doesn't mean that we should ignore them. Wouldn't it be beneficial to see our tutors more often, so that they become less of a scary, semi-anonymous figure associated predominantly with essay deadlines? And to have more classes and have them sooner, so that we aren't always only talking to the expert? This isn't a criticism of tutors themselves: I know many of them are more than willing to spend extra time with us if we ask for it, but real teaching should be a guarantee, not something that only happens when tutors overstretch themselves. Surely Oxford itself has

"In practice, tutorials are more of a bizarre pretence."

the money and resources to give us more than a glorified library card and an hour a week.

Image Credit: Oliver Sandall



Sunak's rollback on climate and the economy

Oli Hall

ishi Sunak's speech on Wednesday evening was the perfect representation of just about everything wrong with his government. Here was a political leader, hastily strong-armed into policy announcements by leaks, rolling back pledges key for both our climate and our economy all whilst preaching the values of 'long-term decision making. As the UN secretary-general called for developed countries to accelerate their race to net zero in New York, Sunak not only jeopardised Britain's chances of doing so by 2050 but simultaneously sparked outrage in the business community. One thing that is accelerating is the rate at which the UK is quickly becoming the laughingstock of the West.

I feel like I should preface this piece

by making it clear that I am far from a passionate climate campaigner. I have never attended a climate march, I'm not vegan, and the house I live in does not have a heat pump (more on that later). The key thing about bringing people with you, as the right wing of the Conservative Party like to say, is that this is about far more than our planet. Clearly, wildfires, flash floods, and other extreme weather events highlight the damage and potential disaster of missing climate targets. But even more pressing, especially for a Britain outside of the EU, is the economic argument. That is an economic argument that the government is very much losing.

Let us cast our eyes back to the coalition government of 2013 and the promise to 'cut the green crap', as David Cameron so eloquently put it. Back then, the cuts to spending on everything from wind subsidies to energy-saving improvements in homes were welcomed joyfully by much of the tabloid press. Now, with the spectre of energy security looming after Russia's invasion of Ukraine, those cuts are costing British households hundreds of pounds every year.

Still, post COP 26 and Boris Johnson's otherwise disastrous tenure in Downing Street, there was some hope that Britain could be at the forefront of a renewed 'green revolution'. Joe Biden's Inflation Reduction Act set the standard, and although businesses have been calling for a more aggressive UK push, they have quietly been committing to British industry.

This might be due to Britain's ability to stand out from the EU, something that the very same Brexiteers cheering today never seem to stop reminding us of. Of course, Britain would have had all the freedom in the world to ban electric cars by 2030 if it were still inside the EU, but the bloc's compulsory shift to 2035 had seen companies such as Stellantis and Volkswagen focus on UK markets.

Ford has already invested £430 million in upgrading UK plants to produce electric vehicles. Their UK chair, Lisa Brankin, said: "Our business needs three things from the UK government: ambition, commitment, and consistency. A relaxation of 2030 would undermine all three." Stellantis issued a statement saying that "clarity is required from governments", and the head of the RAC noted that the policy change risked "slowing down the momentum the motor industry has built up in switching to electric". The unanimous agreement of industry is striking: while they might normally be reluctant to directly criticise government policy, the automotive industry has been almost unified in its dismay.

Of course, petrol wasn't all that Sunak wanted to talk about in his press conference. In fact, he fairly superbly set out the reasoning for a general election. A call for an 'informed national debate' was framed by an argument that governments shouldn't be making such big decisions that haven't been voted for. Of course, while Sunak himself has no mandate, the pledge to reach net zero by 2050 was in the Conservative manifesto during the last general election after Theresa May signed it into law in her dying days in office. It is also worth bearing in mind that in 2019 Boris Johnson declined to attend the Channel 4 'Climate Debate'. It may seem rich to some then that now the party complains there hasn't been one on a national stage...

Read the full article online at cherwell.org!

CHERWELL'S FRESHERS' GUIDE

1

KEEP OFF THE GRASS

Pidges, plodges and other Oxford slang

Rufus Jones

here are many words and phrases entirely unique to an Oxford student's vocabulary. Some are strange, others quaint, all of them arcane. Once you get used to using them, they feel as ordinary to say as 'Hello' or 'How are you' but can be intimidating to the untrained eye. This is precisely why *Cherwell* is providing an A-Z thorough run-down of all the jargon to clear things up.

Battels

Your bills, sent out at the start of each term. If your Domestic Bursar is uncommunicative, paying your battels can feel a hell of a lot like a battle.

Blue

A sporting award given for the honour of besting Cambridge. If your sport is only kind of a sport, a halfblue is given.

BOP

Short for Big Organised Party. They are events put on by one's college with a greater frequency than usual during Freshers Week. Depending on how organised and imaginative your college reps are, BOPs can be absolute laughs and nights to remember. They can also be nights you'd rather forget.

Bod card

Short for Bodleian Card. This is your Oxford ID card. It's proof you're a student here and grants access to various college rooms and university buildings. The world is your bod card! Just like a passport, your photo will always look ghastly.

Collections

A uniquely Oxonian brand of sadism. Your return from each holiday is celebrated with mock examinations testing knowledge of the previous term's content. The results do not count towards your degree but studying for them will put you in good stead for Prelims.

Commoner

A student without a scholarship or exhibition. A normal student, basically, but that doesn't have the same outdated ring to it that commoner does. It is frequently used in the context of gowns i.e., wearing a commoner's gown to Matriculation.

Crewdate

A joint meal or event hosted by similar societies e.g., sports societies like Rugby and Rowing. Depending on which societies organise them, they can be relaxed, convivial occasions or debauched ones where the veneer of civilisation slips away.

Eights

Inter-collegiate rowing races held in Trinity Term. The average student will not get much use out of this word but rowers use it with abandon as the Eights are the big event of the summer (for them, anyway) and the apogee of their time at Oxford.

Exhibition

A student scholarship. If you value studiousness, do not excitedly tell your family that you were right to choose your college because it is full of exhibitionists! Any student conscientious enough to earn themselves an exhibition is an exhibitioner, not an exhibitionist.

Formal Hall

A subsidised three-course meal eaten in one's college. As the name suggests, you should wear something nice though bear in mind you're only having dinner, not going to Prom. Frequency varies by college: Oriel, for instance, has them every day.

Hilary Term

Second Oxford academic term of three. Hilary starts in mid-January and ends in mid-March. The term was named in memory of the writer Hilary Mantel.

JCR

JCR stands for Junior Common Room. It is both a room within one's college and an informal community of undergraduate students. JCR meetings are dichotomous: either orderly and boring or fractious and entertaining.

Matriculation

A grand, loveably pompous ceremony for which one dons their sub fusc and is rewarded with formal enrolment into Oxford University; lasting about ten minutes, a few senior members of staff in increasingly elaborate outfits strut about the Sheldonian Theatre, one of whom puts Gandalf to shame with their impressive staff, and the Chancellor solemnly reads out some Latin, as though casting a spell or waking the dead. It's free rein after this; Matriculation is typically celebrated with raucous day-drinking, though if you would rather not, there is nothing in the rules demanding it; it is nothing more than students looking for yet another excuse to get rat-arsed.

Michaelmas Term

First Oxford academic term of three. Michaelmas starts in early October and finishes in early December.

Norrington Table

The annual attempt to compare apples and oranges; it is a league table ranking student performance in Final Exams by college. It is best to pay it little heed as results fluctuate yearly and - surprise, surprise - colleges with more students tend to get more Firsts.

Oxbridge

An insufferable cabal – the partnership of Oxford and Cambridge - of which you are a member. All of British society – from Whitehall to the West End - is teeming with Oxbridge graduates. Instead of railing against the injustice of it, cultivate smug passivity in the knowledge you're next in line.

Plodge

The marriage of porter and lodge. Porters, whose natural habitats are lodges, are the face of a college who dutifully carry out all the important tasks that keep it running.

Pidge

Short for pigeon hole which is a storage tray for any papers one is sent. Now that emails are a thing, pidges have lost their importance. That being said, important documents are sent out in the first few weeks by pidge so now - if ever - is the time is check your pidge regularly.

Prelim

Short for Preliminary Examination. Exams covering all of first year's content. Passing Prelims is a requirement for entering second year. You do not need to hideaway in your room and study for the entirety of Trinity to pass; if you study for your Collections, you'll have less to do than you think.

Rustication

To rusticate is to leave Oxford for a year for personal, health or academic reasons. The word has shed its shady undertones. This was not so in the past as one former student of Trinity College rusticated for having 'fired a gun at the window of a fellow student whose late night revelry had disturbed him and for whom he had an aversion.'

Sconce

Only the most Dionysian of dinners involve sconcing. To sconce at the dinner table is to require anyone to drink who has done x or is x. Example: I sconce anyone who has slept through a lecture.

Sub fusc

Formal attire worn for Matriculation and exams. Shortened from the Latin sub fuscure meaning slightly dark.

Trinity Term

Third Oxford academic term of three. Trinity lasts from late April to late June.

Wordsearch

Sarah Beard

Can you find the words?

PIDGE
PLODGE
BODCARD
BOP
COLLECTIONS
JCR
MATRICULATION
MATRICULATION
SCONCE

Words can also run backwards, on the diagonal, and backwards on the diagonal!



OXFORD LIFE • 3

JCRs and MCRs explained

Raghav Chari

CR stands for Junior Common Room. It is 'junior' because it is meant for undergraduate students. MCR stands for Middle Common Room. It is an identical body to the JCR, except that it is meant for the postgraduates in a college. An MCR serves exactly the same functions as a ICR.

For simplicity's sake, only JCRs will be spoken about and explained. Keep in mind that anything that is mentioned about JCRs will also hold for MCRs. So, simply replace 'JCR' with 'MCR', and 'undergraduate' with 'postgraduate'.

Confusingly enough, 'JCR' has three separate meanings. Depend-

ing on the context, 'JCR' may refer to: a) the physical common room in which undergraduate students gather; b) the collective body of all undergraduate students at a college; or c) the student committee that works for and is elected by the undergraduate students at a college, sometimes called the JCR committee

Each college has its own JCR, in all three senses of the word. Unfortunately, there's no easy way to differentiate the three meanings, except by context. This is why the word can be used in a variety of sentences, such as 'let's visit the Brasenose JCR', 'the St John's JCR has voted for motion ABC, and 'we're attending an event organised by the Oriel JCR. Hopefully, with time, you will learn to differentiate them easily.

Common room

Every college will set aside a room to serve as a social space for its undergraduates. Some JCRs are large, and some are small. JCRs may contain TVs, gaming consoles, foosball tables, and other such recreational facilities. Alternatively, these things may be in other social spaces, and the JCR may be meant just for hanging out or organising meetings/bops in.

Collective body

Upon entering a college, undergraduate students are added to a collective body of all undergraduates. I, for instance, am a member of the St John's JCR. If you are an undergraduate, you will join your college's JCR. JCRs have the power of raising and

passing motions. They have a budget

which they allocate towards events and any source that the JCR votes in favour of. The raising and passing of motions occurs at JCR meetings, held a few times every term. JCRs may also conduct room ballots once a year.

JCRs represent undergraduates in a number of ways. A JCR collectively negotiates with its college during rent negotiations, welfare policies, and other such matters that affect student life. Similarly, a JCR also represents the undergraduate students of its college in the Oxford University Student Union (OUSU, or SU for short).

Student Committee

All the actual work of organising, allocating, and administering is done by a committee. It is elected by and comprised of members of the JCR, and this committee may contain a myriad of roles. Each role has officers. For example, there are Welfare Officers to handle student welfare, a Treasurer to manage budgets, and so on. Beneath the role of officer is the role of a representative, rep for short. Reps are not necessarily elected, though they may be. Reps handle smaller-scale responsibilities than officers do, and may sometimes report to an officer.

The JCR committee hold JCR meetings, negotiate with college and the SU, and most relevant to student life, organise events and activities for the JCR. The most common event that JCRs organise is a 'bop'. These are student-organised parties held a few times during term, and a great way to socialise and have fun with friends.

Cooking for yourself

Violet Aitchison

midst the myriad of concerns that accompany the commencement of university life - relocating to unfamiliar surroundings, embarking on a new academic journey, and forging new social

"... it would be a mistake to disregard or relegate cooking to the periphery of your priorities..."

connections - culinary self-sufficiency often takes a backseat. Yet, it would be a mistake to disregard or relegate cooking to the periphery of your priorities, as a well-balanced diet is paramount for productivity. While your college halls offer convenient, quick food during intense study periods and serve as vital social hubs during the initial weeks, as you settle into the rhythm of Oxford life and become attuned to budgeting, cooking for yourself becomes a significant daily routine.

For many, university represents their first venture into managing all three daily meals independently, devoid of familial support. Cooking for oneself may initially appear more challenging and intimidating than it actually is.

For first-time cooks, I recommend mastering a few fundamental recipes, such as a tomato sauce, a stir-fry, or an ome-Once you lette. have these culinary basics under your belt, you can elevate them by incorporating a variety of in-

gredients, rendering them more 'gourmet'. Beyond their simplicity, recipes like tomato sauce offer cost-efficiency, with ingredients like tinned tomatoes remaining shelf-stable throughout the term. Websites like BBC Good Food provide beginner-friendly recipes to guide you as you begin your cooking journey.

Batch cooking stands as another wise strategy, saving both money and time, especially during rigorous academic weeks. Reheating pre-made meals requires minimal effort and ensures you won't skip meals due to tiredness. Dishes like chili con carne, spaghetti Bo-

lognese, or if you are vege tarian various curries lend themselves well to batch cooking. While this might seem tedious initially, it pays off handsomely when you're racing against the clock on a Wednesday evening

"Batch cooking stands as another wise strategy, saving both money and time..."

with an essay due the following morning.

Additionally, some of the most

delicious options are also the simplest: pesto pasta, instant noodles, a cheese toastie, or a baked potato with beans. Their ease of preparation does not diminish their appeal, and often, the ingredients are items you'll find lingering in your fridge and pantry. Notably, many of these uncomplicated meals lean towards vegetarian options. Even for those accustomed to meat, reducing meat consumption can en-

"... reducing meat consumption can enhance budget flexibility and meal variety. It encourages culinary creativity..."

hance budget flexibility and meal encourages culinary variety. It creativity unless you wish to consume the same vegetable

and carbohydrate combination every evening. While fresh vegetables may have a limited shelf life, frozen vegetables, and batch cooking can

mitigate this issue. It is important to remember that any meal is better than none, so do not avoid these simple meals out of snobbery. If you, like me, are into loweffort, high-reward cooking, companies such as Hello Fresh provide great meal plans and easy recipes that require little thought but delicious results.

In summary, while cooking for yourself may not rank as the most thrilling aspect of your new Oxford life, it's a facet deserving of your attention. Beyond its role in fuelling your energy levels, cooking can establish a routine, offer-

ing built-in breaks to step away from work, refresh your mind, and prepare for upcoming study sessions, social engagements, or society meetings.

What is matriculation?

Anya Biletsky

ome end of 1st Week is an event which many look forward to with anticipation: matriculation. A staple of the Oxford experience, every student, whether undergraduate or postgraduate, must participate in the matriculation ceremony in order to be officially enrolled in the university. It is the event which appears in a lot of press about the university, for it is a very visibly "Oxonian" affair. Students deck themselves out in sub fusc, mortar board in one hand, prosecco in the other, and make their way over the cobblestones to the historic Sheldonian theatre to be sworn in to the University. It is, in many ways, a spectacle.

If you are lucky enough not to have one of the earlier matriculation time-slots, you will likely begin the day with a college photo of all matriculating students, as well as an individual photo, which makes for a mantlepiece-adorner guaranteed to make you the favourite grandchild. After the photos, you will head over to the Sheldonian for the matriculation ceremony.

The ceremony itself is surprisingly brief: after assembling in the Shakespeare's Globe-esque Sheldonian theatre, the Vice-Chancellor speaks a few lines of Latin. For a Classics student, like me, the Latin bit was rather fun, though my enthusiasm may have been in the minority.

Prepare for the spotlight. On my matriculation day two years ago, as we filed out of the Sheldonian

"Students deck themselves out in sub fusc, mortar board in one hand, prosecco in the other..."

theatre onto Broad Street we were greeted by a horde of tourists eager to snap photos of us. For many of us, this would be our first (and likely last) taste of the life of a red-carpet celebrity.

The most fun part of the day is, however, taking photos outside the RadCam, and then traipsing through the city for a bar crawl. Go punting! No memory will be quite the same as capsizing a punt and being plunged into the murky depths of the Isis in sub fusc, and having to clamber out onto the bank while muddying your pristinely-ironed white shirt.

Sub fusc is worn by students at matriculation and when taking University examinations. It comprises a white collared shirt, paired with a dark skirt and dark tights, or dark trousers and dark socks ('dark' here constituting black or a very dark blue). The key bit is making sure there are no gaps between skirt and tights or trousers and socks. Shoes also need to be black, and a white or black bow-tie, black tie, or black ribbon needs to be worn, as well as, optionally, a dark jacket. Finally, the whole ensemble is topped off with an academic gown and mortar board - but do not wear the mortar board on your head at matriculation! This is reserved for the graduation ceremony.

Matriculation is a tradition, of course, but it also, in a way, affords the occasion to live outside of the Oxford rubric for a day. Savour this day of enjoyment in the city; the occasion is rare when your entire college year group is out and about and simply having fun.

Checklist:

- Sub fusc Latin dictionary
- Vintage camera for the fond, fond memories Prosecco (or no-secco)
- Goggles for the inevitable river swim
- Lined stomach

TOMATO



Exploring Oxford's green spaces

Matt Unwin

walk is a great way to relax and take your mind off work, and fortunately, Oxford is filled with green spaces, ranging from botanical gardens to fields to forests.

Maybe I'm a bit more pro-walking than most — I once turned up late to a tute in first year in soaked jeans because I got stuck in a marsh – but I think it's a great way to get out and about.

"Maybe I'm a bit more pro-walk than most — I once turned up late to a tute ... because I got stuck in a marsh..."

Christ Church Meadow

Perhaps the quintessential Oxford green space: large fields, a meticulously kept garden, a lovely riverside path that slaloms along the Thames and its tributaries, and great views of one of Oxford's most famous colleges. It even has cows.

Its central location makes it a great spot for a quick lunchtime walk, and it has numerous benches that you can sit and eat lunch on.

Port Meadow

A huge field to the North of Oxford, accessible either by walking up the canal or up the Thames.

This is still used for grazing horses and cattle and, according to local legend, has never been ploughed - at least for four-thousand years.

The meadow is a great place for a sunset walk, and straying to the far end will take you to the village of Binsey, which features The Perch, a little thatched-roof pub and restaurant with a large garden area.

Thames, Iffley Lock and **Isis Farmhouse**

Heading the other way along the Thames, past the college boathouses, will take you towards Iffley Lock. Wandering along the river here, you'll see narrowboats chugging past, as well as areas of forests and fields. Also of note: just by Iffley Lock you'll find a quaint little pub called The Isis Farmhouse — a popular venue that hosts regular events featuring local bands, international artists, and live jazz performances by the University Jazz Orchestra.

University Parks

If you want a change from the library and want to do some reading or studying in the outdoors (perhaps not ideal in the colder months), then University Parks is the place to go. It features large, wide-open lawns and is in a prime location for any budding STEM student, ¶ given it's right near many of the STEM departments and lecture theatres. It's also a great

place for a picnic or for play- 🔇

Christ Church Meadow. Image Credit: Grayswoodsurrey / CC BY-SA 2.0

ing some sport: the park features a cricket pavilion, pitches for football and rugby, as well as tennis courts. If you fancy more esoteric sports, I can personally attest it's also a great place for some ultimate frisbee.

Farther Afield

If you feel like getting out of the city for a day with friends, then you can, of course, always get the bus or train somewhere. Oxford is in a pretty prime location for walking as it's right near the Cotswolds and has good transport links to many other UK cities

and towns. Many of the towns and villages in Oxfordshire are beautiful and well worth spending a day wandering around. Particular highlights include Abingdon,

"Oxford is a pretty prime location for walking as it's right near the Cotswolds and has good transport links..."

Wallingford and Witney, but there are many other places you could easily spend a day in. If you get a chance, a particular favourite is Great Malvern, which is about an hour and a bit away by train and is a beautiful spa town built into the large rolling hills of Worcestershire.

For anyone interested in hiking or walking around Oxford, the Oxford University Walking Club puts on regular hikes on Saturdays and Sundays, and these are great to go to if you want to hike in a group or just meet other people who enjoy hiking.

Don't worry, we're all imposters

Jakub Trybull

ow go across the quad, staircase 5, up to the 3rd floor, take a left on the landing, and your room number is 14. Please try not to get locked out straight away. There'll be a welcome session at 2pm in the Hall. Your sub fusc is in this bag. Welcome to Oxford."

A knot in your stomach tightens with your first taste of latin. It suddenly feels like the skin you're sporting isn't your own. Am I really meant to be here? The names you saw on WhatsApp group chats have suddenly morphed faces and a whirling sense of nervousness and excitement glints in everyone. Even gravity feels a little stronger. A slightly odd exchange in the kitchen earlier might have rocked you slightly, same as when your new course mates described all the great things they did last summer. I'm not meant to be here. Your home friends feel so far away as you become conscious of all the pairs of eyes surrounding you. Alone, in your new, alien room, you feel just that: alien and alone.

Let's take things slowly to begin: It's your first time living alone and amongst strangers who might just become your best friends. You're amongst thousands of other ambitious, intelligent individuals and Oxford's inflated reputation comes with its own complex of what 'successful' looks like.

A thought can't seem to leave your mind though - I'm an impost-

But so am I. As is the person sat across from you in the Bodleian and as are your course mates, flatmates, and the people you don't know. We're all imposters. The ideal Oxford student' is a myth and it's unthinkable that we could try to summarise fifteen thousand students into a particular type or personality. Each detail of our lives and backgrounds has moulded our identities in remarkable and undecipherable ways and we are all propelled by a million different dreams and desires.

We measure our existences in

"The 'ideal Oxford student' is a myth..."

relation to one another; it's how we learn more about ourselves. Sometimes notions of 'deservingness' arise, that somehow there's an external force that can determine whether you are more or less

worthy to be a student here.

Yes, we all work

hard

(perhaps too hard at times) and we should acknowledge that, but at the end of the day getting in was a lottery, completely by chance. Chance in the admission process, chance on your exam days, chance

that you grew up with a particular nature and nur-

ture.

Chance does not make mistakes, it has no judge nor is there 'right chance', it just is.

So what I am trying to say is... well, just try not to deep it, as easy as that sounds. You are meant to be here, whether it's fortune or fate. Take a breath, feel proud, and dress yourself in that confident, gleam-

ing smile! Oxford is full of fantastic opportunities and people to meet, seek them 👔 as you can never grow in a comfort zone.

Freshers, congratulations! I wish you the best of luck; soon you'll feel right at home.

OXFORD LIFE • 5

Oxford - the city of love?

Eden Kilgour

xford is a unique place, there's no denying. The city itself many would describe as romantic, with its charming, cobblestoned streets and punt-filled rivers, but the question remains as to whether this romance pervades our lives as students, as much as it does Oxford.

Supposedly 36% of Oxford students find their husband, wife or life partner here. Based on that (perhaps slightly questionable) statistic therefore, it seems that whether you're entering Oxford ready to fall head-over-heels, or you're swearing off relationships altogether under the pretence of 'focusing on your degree', over three in ten of us will walk out with a spouse as opposed to a Blue or a first.

However, having heard (and experienced) many a dating horror story this year, I find this hard to believe, and it seems that for many of us, it doesn't come that easily. Of course, it has to be said that, dating and relationships are, in their very nature, different for us all, yet it appears in Oxford that these preferences are even more polarised, perhaps since finding time for a relationship amidst two essay crises a week is, for some,

one too many things to juggle. Although don't be discouraged, since whether it be through dating app endeavours or situationship epidemics, Oxford students most definitely still find time for love.

'Oxlove' is probably a good place to start. You will no doubt soon (if you've been lucky enough to dodge it so far) stumble across Oxford's infamous 'Oxlove' page, perhaps the most

shameless way in which students send in heartfelt declarations in an effort to express their love. It has to be said. however, that an 'Oxlove' is unlikely to progress into any t h i n g greater than short-lived burst of validation. Speaking of which, one could per-

haps draw a parallel between the abundance of these fleeting confessions with the hook-up culture

that very much exists in Oxford. In a desperate dilemma between desire and deadlines, many opt for a 'no strings attached' approach an option that fits I can't stress enough how important it is to ensure you're on the same page. I've heard there's nothing worse than the lingering question of 'Do I text them over the long vac?', and falling victim to the questionable situationship epidemic that breeds itself in Oxford. An alternative route to find love that many Oxford students decide to venture down, is that of dating apps, as many seek validation through mindless swiping and rather painful voice-noted bios. However, this phase too, is often temporary.

Then comes the obstacle of college-cest ... to commit or not to commit. Students diverge in their opinions on inter-college relations, and personally I've seen

these go both

swimmingly and abys-

mally. One thing that

everyone can agree on is its con-

venience. And whilst things are

running smoothly, this can be

very helpful... until things aren't.

So if you want to prevent awkward dinner-hall bump-ins and library jump-scares, I would advise you to consider the potential consequences of engaging in inter-college relations. Having said that however, it really isn't the felony many make it out to be, and as long as you're aware of potentially seeing said person pop up every five minutes (although in Oxford this is pretty unavoidable), I wouldn't be too concerned.

On a more serious note, Oxford can be stressful even without heartbreak. Relationships are most definitely possible, and with the right mutual attitudes, I've witnessed some truly lovely relationships blossom within the romantic city of Oxford. So I guess my advice would be that, whatever route you pursue, ensure you set boundaries for yourself and others. Transparency and communi-cation are key to remaining on the same page with your part-

ner, and keeping these as the foundation of your relationship

can make a battlefield ties feel just

of extremia tad less daunting. Dating in Oxford is certainly an interesting experience, but make of it what you will and I wish you all the best.

Your essay won't harm you ... but the lasagne at the back of your fridge might! A guide to in Oxford

Katie St. Francis

ongratulations! Not for getting here, I'm sure you've heard enough of that. Instead, let me be the first to congratulate you on securing a truly enviable first experience of adult life. Spending your first year away from home sequestered in an Oxford college is not a half-bad way to do it: beneath the watchful eyes of porters, in the gentle embrace of your scout's air freshener, and catered for by world-renowned chefs. However, 'surviving' your first brush with adult life in Oxford is not as simple as avoiding death by rogue croquet mallet. Don't fear, though, it's not a difficult task: just keep your head, and keep off the grass!

As a fresher, you can expect to filter into a college bedroom. Devoid of character, resistant to decoration: this empty room ought to axiomatically remind you that someone was here before you, there will be someone after (your college son next year, or a hapless conference guest the day after you leave for Christmas), and maybe even someone at the same time (say hi to your college scout, no matter how bad the hango-

ver). In sum, your living space might never truly feel like yours. This can be intimidating, but it's good to remember that anything which might help you to adjust is worth doing, like decorating your room. Always, but particularly during this unreplicable week, your well-being is extremely im-portant and should be treated as such - which starts with you. So, sleep well, do your reading, and make way for a suitable amount of self-indulgent activities, such as a phone call to a friend.

Expanding outwards, getting along with college staff is an important but oft-unmentioned part of living out. College porters are your first stop for all manner of questions and situations, so it pays to remember that they want to be contacted by you, you shouldn't hesitate to do so. Scouts are also there to help - but, contrary to popular Oxford lore, they really don't have to clean your room if it's too far past the pale, so just use your common sense and stay relatively tidy.

I'm also presenting you with a prime social opportunity here: busting this particular Oxford myth will earn you a gratifyingly shocked expression from your

gratitude, everlasting eternal friendship, etc. A sim-

coffee might go over betthough. ter. Apropos, it may seem that friends are essential, but comhaving pany is not the summit of survival. It could take a while to find your friends, and this is especially true 'close to home': the peers with whom you are shunted into a staircase probably won't be your bosom pals. Atomisation is very common in college staircases, and it's normal to feel a bit lonely even when you're surrounded by

around

busy social lives and

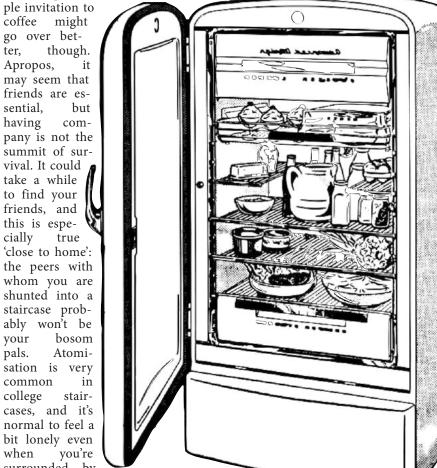
academic schedules. Whilst

this is often the most convenient

way to fill a romantic void, if you

do decide to go down this route,

Fresher friends, and thus their so many new people. Go extend some invitations during Fresh-



ers' Week and to accept some, but don't feel any pressure to attend absolutely everything.

> Your actual survival depends on the basics sleep, food, and because this is Oxford, work. Once you arrive, set up your sleeping and working areas so that you won't have to think about it when you stumble back from Bridge later tonight. If you have collections, you can always multi-task and ask a coursemate if they would like to 'study' together over coffee. For food, get your fixings in hall. Although it is tempting to think that because you don't pay for hall food at the time, it's important nonetheless to budget for this.

> I hope that at least some of this is helpful. Try to enjoy this week, but remember it might not size up to the accounts of Freshers' Week you've already heard and that's okay, too.

Discover Oxford University's world-famous Gardens, Libraries &

Museums

Just show your University Card and enjoy free Ashmolean exhibition tickets, free entry to the Botanic Gardens and Arboretum, and discounts on food, drinks and shopping.



Bodleian Libraries: Old Library Open daily (see website), Broad Street, OX1 3BG visit.bodleian.ox.ac.uk TOURS FROM £9



Bodleian Libraries: Weston Library Open daily (see website),

Broad Street, OX1 3BG visit.bodleian.ox.ac.uk **FREE ADMISSION**



Museum of Natural History Open daily 10am - 5pm, Parks Road, OX1 3PW www.oumnh.ox.ac.uk FREE ADMISSION



History of Science Museum Tue - Sun 12pm - 5pm (Closed Mon) Broad Street, OX1 3AZ www.hsm.ox.ac.uk

FREE ADMISSION



Pitt Rivers Museum Tue - Sun 10am-5pm (Mon 12 - 5pm) Parks Road, OX1 3PP www.prm.ox.ac.uk FREE ADMISSION



Ashmolean Museum

FREE ADMISSION/EXHIBITION

TICKETS FOR OU STUDENTS

Open daily 10am - 5pm,

Beaumont St, OX1 2PH

www.ashmolean.org

Harcourt Arboretum (Located outside of Oxford) Open daily 10am - 4pm (Nov to Feb) and 10 - 5pm (from March) Oxford Lodge, Peacock Gate, OX44 9PX www.obga.ox.ac.uk **FREE ADMISION FOR OU STUDENTS**

Oxford Botanic Garden Open daily 10am - 4pm (Nov to Feb) and 10 - 5pm (from March)



Rose Lane, OX1 4AZ www.obga.ox.ac.uk FREE ADMISION FOR OU **STUDENTS**

UNIVERSITY OF

Gardens Libraries & **OXFORD** Museums

All images @University of Oxford Prices correct at time of printing: September 2023

ACADEMICS • 7

Academic survival guide

Silvia Andreoletti

t might be easy to forget, amidst the flurry of activity of Fresher's week, just how close the beginning of the academic year is: soon, you'll be meeting the tutors and getting to know the basics of the subject that you have chosen and that will, for better or for worse, be the at the center of your university experience for the next few years. This might seem daunting at first, as might the Oxford system of tutorials and lectures, which will be very different to the most 6th Forms. However, you'll get used to it much quicker than you think, and most people grow to love it.

Tutes and contact hours

The first thing you'll need to be worried about is scheduling, or making sure you know when your tutorials, lectures, labs, or classes are and that none of them overlap (a herculean endeavor for many double honors students). Tutorials (or, in hip Oxford lingo, "tutes"), labs, lectures and classes make up your "contact hours" for the week: while most STEM students won't have much fewer than

they did in school, humanities students will find they only have a few contact hours each week, u s u a l l y comprised

o n e to three tutorials and a few lectures. This means that most work needs to be done outside the classroom, in preparation for tutes or to expand on the material in lectures. While all subjects have to attend tutes, which are usually one-hour sessions with a tutor and a few other students on your course, the material you'll be asked to prepare for them varies. Some subjects will need to write essays, others will have problem sheets to complete, and many will have some of both.

Lectures and labs

The other contact hour common to all subjects is lectures, but their use-

fulness is much debated and varies across subject and lecturer. Most lectures (but not all!) are recorded and uploaded on Canvas after a few days, so it isn't absolutely necessary to attend every dreadful Monday 9am in vour calendar. If vou're lucky enough to have your lectures in the Exam Schools, the terrible acoustics and non-existent view of the board might discourage you even more. However, it's easy to fall behind by watching lectures online, and attending them in person is a good chance to meet people outside your college and wake up at a reasonable hour. If your tutor is lecturing, it's also a good

"...it's easy to fall behind by watching lectures online, and attending them in person is a good chance to meet people outside your college..."

idea to show up (especially if you're planning to lie about it in the next tute) because the material will most likely be even more relevant to what you're covering that week. Some lectures may not be in step with the material you're covering in tutorials, but it's usually a good idea to go anyways so when you look at the slides later on they'll make at least some sense. Labs are usually only required by STEM subjects and are mandatory to attend, so make sure to let your tutor know if you can't make it. They're usually quite straightforward, but it's a good idea to do the pre-lab work beforehand to help you understand what you're doing and how it relates to the things you're studying in tutes.

Your first tute

Before you attend your first tute you might have been sent a reading list and an essay question or problem sheet, which you'll be expected to either send in before the tute or bring with you on the day. This will be the start of the discussion, and you'll get to ask any questions during the tute itself. No matter how difficult you might be finding them, rest assured tutors will have seen worse: even if you've gotten something completely wrong, it will be cleared up during the tute, and since these essays have no impact on your final grade, you have as much room to experiment as you want. If the reading list seems too long (or if you're only starting the reading a few hours

after the deadline and need to speed-read pages of content), it might be useful to start with the starred* texts on the faculty reading list, or in a pinch reading the abstract is a decent substi-

tute for less important articles you still want to include.

Feedback and marking

Essays and problem sheets are usually marked and given back to you during the tute or a while after. Some tutors will give you a grade, while others will just add some comments (on the Word document if you're lucky, handwritten in hieroglyphical cursive otherwise) – these might be dishearteningly negative at first, but tutors are just trying to highlight parts in which you can do better. These will be incredibly useful when you're revising for exams, as they're a great place to start any additional reading on that topic.

Exams

To prepare for Prelims, which mostly happen in Trinity of first year, most colleges will make you sit collections at the start of every term, covering the content of the previous term. These are usually based on past papers (or, depending on the inventiveness of your tutor, just last year's paper) and are a great chance to check how well you're doing and start revising early so you don't fall behind. Like tute essays, the mark you get on collections doesn't actually matter (unless it's very high, in which case some colleges give prizes, or a Fail, which might lead you to have a chat with your tutor to discuss any extra help you might need). However, it's still useful to take them seriously: they're a great opportunity to summarize your notes and build on the things you've done in tutorials so by the time exams come around you'll only need to revise instead of covering new material. To be as prepared as you can for both collections and prelims, it's useful to keep your notes at least somewhat organized, especially those taken while researching for an essay. If there's anything you found interesting but didn't have enough space to fit into the essay, or anything your tutor highlighted in tutes that isn't covered in your lectures, note it down somewhere, as that can be a great way to get higher marks in exams.

Managing your work

The freedom most students have to organize their weekday more or less how they want can be both a blessing and a curse. For those with only a few contact hours, it means you're free to join as many societies and sports as you like without worrying about time constraints, or have a more relaxed sleep schedule than at school, but it also means it's very easy to fall behind and become overwhelmed. You will probably find you need to work on weekends, and late nights are often involved (a 3am Red Bull-fuelled essay crisis in Third Week is basically a rite of passage), while others try hard to get all work done during the week so they have at least one day to unwind. The key thing is to keep track of the work you have to do and spread it out over the week, even if you don't have an imminent deadline, and not get burnt out by sitting in the library hours on end. It's good to take frequent breaks and go outside every once in a while

"... a 3am Red Bull-fueled essay crisis in Third Week is basically a rite of passage..." to clear your head. I made it a rule to never work in my room (as that's meant to reduce sleep quality and concentration), and worked in different libraries according to the type of work I had to do (the dystopian hallways of the Glink are surprisingly conductive to Macroeconomics problem sheets). For those less neurotic than the author, this might not be necessary, but it's still worth it to explore some of Oxford's beautiful libraries to find your favorite working nook for those long pre-tute essay crises (Bintia's library guide a few pages ahead would be a good place to start!). Working with friends, even if they're from different subjects, or outside when you can, are also great ways to avoid burnout.

Finding help

Even if you're doing your best to stay organized, it's completely normal to struggle during your first year. If you think you're going to miss a deadline

"Even if you're doing your best to stay organized, it's completely normal to struggle..."

for whatever reason, let your tutor know (preferably before the deadline itself) and most will be understanding. If you're struggling with a specific subject, you can also discuss it with your tutor and they'll try to help or direct you to resources where you can get extra tutoring. Your college parents are also great people to ask - they've done this before so they'll know how to help, and their notes can be a godsend before exams. If you think you may have a learning difficulty or a disability you haven't informed the University about, talk to your college or the DAS and they'll incredibly helpful too. The JCR welfare rep, academic officer, or your subject rep are also great people to turn to and will be able to connect you with the college or other specialists as needed.

The best cafes for study in Oxford

Oliver Adelson

should say straight away that I have nothing against libraries. Least of all against Oxford's libraries, which have the fine habit of making you feel smart and important even at moments when you're convinced that the most fitting place for your work is the bin. But despite the diversity and charm of Oxford's libraries, sometimes a change of scene is in order.

The café is perhaps the most natural study spot since it provides both table space to work and caffeine (two birds, one stone). There are doubtless dozens of cafés to choose from for this list, but I will stick to a few of my favorites:

Society Café (Known as "Society"): This charming café on St. Michael's Street has both indoor and outdoor seating, and it enjoys—or is afflicted by, depending on who you ask—close proximity to the Oxford Union. The coffee blends are superb, and the baristas are always eager to chat.

Missing Bean Café (Known as "The Missing Bean"): Tucked away on Turl Street beside Lincoln College, The Missing Bean is an independently run café that makes for a great study spot. There is lots of natural lighting inside the café, and, weather permitting, you can study outside thanks to the café's plant-adorned outdoor seating. My friends rave about The Missing Bean—you definitely won't want to skip this one.

Prêt à Manger (Known as "Prêt" or "Cornmarket Prêt"): Despite the difficulty most students have pronouncing Prêt à Manger, word of this capacious study spot has spread fast throughout Oxford—so much so that it has become one of the most popular places to grab coffee and write a last-minute tutorial essay. There is ample room upstairs, and if you get a window seat you can look out on Cornmarket and people-watch while you procrastinate.

Blackwells: There are plenty of spots in Blackwells where you can work, but the most popular place to be is Café Nero on the first floor (found by the poetry and board game sections). I am an ardent supporter of studying in Blackwells, and I maintain to this day that I have done some of my finest work in the plush chairs by the windows overlooking Broad Street. The obvious advantage of studying in a bookshop is that you appear smart since you are surrounded by books.

You can also consult them if you feel so moved.

Art Café: The name might be a little on the nose, but this study spot really pulls off its fusion of art exhibition and café. If you do choose to patronize Art Café, you will have ample material to opine on with your friends in between bursts of studying ("Yes, yes, I am inclined to agree that this portrait is seductive, but it nevertheless betrays the artist's lack of joie de vivre and follow-through.") Art Café also has "excellent" cake and coffee, according to distinguished Yelp reviewer Andrew Long (Yelp Local Guide Level 9).

KEEP OFF THE GRASS

A guide to Oxford's libraries

Bintia Dennog

xford is renowned for its architecture - and that includes its libraries. Sooner or later you will become acquainted with them, be it for studying or pure exploring purposes. To help you make an educated choice on which libraries to visit, enjoy this useful, albeit simplified, guide on the best libraries in Oxford!

The most remarkable, or at least most famous, library in Oxford is the Radcliffe Camera, also referred to as the Rad Cam. It's known for its round shape and light academia vibe; it also comes with a slew of tourists taking pictures outside. This is my personal go-to, and a classic amongst Oxford libraries - you cannot go wrong with Rad-Cam-ing. The best views (and seats!) are at the top, by the way.

Similarly well-known and wellliked are the **Old Bodelian** (Old Bod) and the Taylor Institution (Taylorian). The first is home to the Harry Potter Library (Duke Humphrey's) and always has enough seats - the latter definitely doesn't. If you go to the top floor of the Old Bod and walk all the way around, you'll also find pretty views of the Rad Cam (you're welcome). In order to get a good seat at the Taylorian, either get there at nine when it opens, or around lunchtime (12:30). This is also very much applicable to other libraries.

Next is a pretty controversial take: the **Gladstone Link**, or better known as the Glink. It's the birthplace of certain Oxford lore and you'll come to either love it or hate it. As an underground connection between the Rad Cam and the Old Bod, with airplane-boarding-like tunnels, the atmosphere down here is pretty grim. However, some people swear their productivity skyrockets in the Glink - perhaps because time doesn't feel real.

If you're a sucker for convenience, you might also choose to stick with your college library. As a Lincolnite, I personally do - we're known for our stunning library (it used to be a church!). Other colleges, such as Exeter, who currently have a marguee, may just opt to study in a different one.

If you want a secret tip, you might also want to consider signing up for the All Souls Library. Usually this is only open

to its fellows, with but quick sign up (which involves giving one of your tutors emails...), you'll gain access too!

Its aesthetics, spaciousness, and exclusive atmosphere make it a pretty solid option for studying.

Additionally, if you've decided to splurge on a Union membership, make sure to use the Union Old Li**brary**! Unfortunately it doesn't have that many seats but it was featured thing.

lish Faculty library, and the Law library. Somebody also recom-mended the Social Sciences li**brary** but I cannot with a good conscience endorse that, at least

to explore and maybe even study in. Good luck!

> Image via Wikimedia Commons/ CC-BY-2.0

not aesthetics-wise. In the end, Oxford is your oyster... and that oyster contains over



Balancing life and work

Georgie Allan

he Oxford Experience is unique among UK universities for a variety of reasons, not least of which is the intensity of its incredibly short terms. Coming in at only 8 weeks, less than half the year is devoted to teaching, packing vast quantities of learning and work into a very small timeframe.

Living in such a fast paced environment, developing strategies for balancing life and work are essential and, perhaps for the first time in a student's life, achieved completely independent of anyone else; you set your schedule and choose how much of your life you want to dedicate to your degree. With such short terms it can feel like just as you are beginning to figure it all out, it's time to go home again. Here are a few tips to give you a head start on working out your own routine, and finding your balance.

Work isn't everything

The biggest focus of your time at Oxford will undoubtedly be your degree, which will demand vast portions of your time, energy and focus. Show enough dedication you may even be rewarded with scholarships, exhibitions and awards. However this should not come at the cost of your physical or mental health. Both your college and the

university are filled with support programmes to help you maintain both; the very existence of a 'welfare week' each term acknowledges the strain a degree at Oxford can place on you. Make sure you do the same, and recognise when it might be more prudent to step away from the library and give yourself a break.

Remember you are only human

Try as you might to be a ruthlessly efficient academic weapon, you are still a biological human being. You need food and water and sleep in sufficient quantities to function in both your work and social life. You also need friends to support your mental health, and engage in dialogue and debate with people who are alive and in your life, rather than the author of whatever reading you've been assigned this week. You might try combining these by meeting up with your friends in hall (a reliable place to find people to talk to when uncertain) for lunch, or inviting them over for a cup of tea.

Find a society where you can really switch off

Oxford boasts a wide range of societies, and you will discover a new one almost daily in your first term. Some of these can seem like another commitment, adding more work and events to your schedule particularly if you decide to join a committee. But just as you can't fight fire with fire, you can't find relief from your work with more work, no matter how hard you try or how much vou enjoy it. Look for something low commitment and totally different from what you usually do. Try a dance class, or sign up for a one off pub crawl, meet some totally different people and don't put pressure on it. You don't have to be good at everything, you don't have to make friends everywhere and sometimes it's ok to do something for the sake of it and not to boost your CV.

Make a schedule, and don't panic when you don't stick to it

Schedules are great. Some have meticulously prepared planners, or packed google calendars and others prefer to improvise on the day. It usually helps to have at least a rough idea of what needs to happen when so you can make time for what you want to happen as well. However when you don't manage to follow your schedule to the minute it's important not to let it overshadow the rest of your day. Sometimes a problem sheet may take longer than anticipated, or your tutor may go off on a tangent and double the length of your tutorial. Sometimes you just really need a lie in and the morning disappears. It happens. You can always shuffle things around and make it work.

Cancel plans if you have to

At some point in your time at Oxford you will find yourself overbooked. Essay deadlines, socials, sports commitments and plans with friends will combine into a week of hell characterized by a lack of sleep, a lack of time and an abundance of stress. Sometimes you won't see it coming but when you do, it is important to know when to call it quits. Yes, FOMO sucks, but so does a schedule so packed that you have no time to enjoy it. Your friends aren't going anywhere, they will understand, and they will almost certainly need the same understanding from you some time in the future.

Don't be afraid to ask for help

Everyone wants to see you succeed, and if you feel you are struggling there are avenues you can explore both within your college and outside it to find reprieve. If you feel your workload is overwhelming, your tutors' emails are always open and there is usually some flexibility they are willing to offer if you are truly struggling. If the work itself is proving challenging, remember your peers are in the same boat as you and will likely be happy to help you out if you need it, or if they don't know either try your college parents. If it is really too difficult then that is ok too - that's what your tutorials are for. Your tutors are there to teach you what you don't know and

clarify what you don't fully understand, not to bear witness to your impeccable academic genius.

Explore Oxford's green spaces

Anyone who frequents Oxfess will often see the advice "touch some grass" given to anyone who appears to be taking themselves a little too seriously. Though the sentiment may be mildly derogatory, touching grass or even being near it is fantastic for both mental and physical wellbeing. Immersing yourself in nature for even a few minutes each day is reported to have universal benefits including improved sleep and mood, lower blood pressure and greater physical fitness. Throughout the undeniably intense 8 week Oxford term, finding simple things like this to aid wellbeing is more important than ever. Fortunately Oxford students have an abundance of green spaces to explore, from the curated lawns found in college quads to the natural beauty of Christchurch Meadow. Those with an interest in botany may consider the Oxford Botanic Gardens which offer free entry to students of the university and boast plants from across the globe, some dating back to the establishment of the gardens in 1621. Anyone wanting to explore further afield could walk to Port Meadow or even take a bus to Oxford's Arboretum.

KEEP OFF THE GRASS

ENTERTAINMENT • 9

College bar guide

Kate Monaghan

xford is known for working hard and playing harder, so it's fitting that every undergraduate college has its own bar. Each has a signature drink and, like everything else about colleges, its own culture - some quiet, some packed every night. All are much cheaper than a pub and provide a space to socialise with people from college outside the confines of the library. You can also visit bars in other colleges, although some are stricter about outside guests than others, so you might have to be with a friend at that college or at an event there.

Full disclosure: I haven't been to anywhere near every college bar, so my advice is limited - guess you'll have to do a bar crawl to discover the rest for yourself!

THE BEST BARS

I go here, so I admit to bias, but nobody can deny that Balliol is one of the best. I've been to other college bars on the last night of term or a Bridge Thursday in early Michaelmas and been met with a near-empty, near-sober room missing only a single tumbleweed blowing across the should-be dance floor. Balliol would never. It's always crammed preceding or following any kind of event, and To get to another college's bar

I've never seen it empty. Go for the wall art if nothing else.

St Peter's deserves a mention just for the puzzling legality of its house drink - the Crosskeys, which has a relatively steep (for a college bar) price point of £5, but more than delivers by consisting of five (five) shots of alcohol plus juice of your choice. The bar itself is lovely – small and cosy with really nice decor related to the college.

Exeter is my favourite college aesthetically, and you should go just for the views of the Rad Cam. They're also incredibly friendly: my friend and I unknowingly went to their bar when they were having an exclusive MCR event and even though we were clearly neither at Exeter nor doing PhDs they let us have lots of their free port, although I can't promise this will happen to you too. Their college drink is the unoriginal but wonderfully named Ex on the Beach.

If your priority is a delicious cocktail that doesn't break the bank, you can't miss St John's. They have not just one college drink but too many to list, many of them impressively creative (Apple Crumble, anyone?) and all invented by the head bartender.

BAR CRAWLS

vou first have to get past the porters, who are unlikely to let a huge group of freshers in. You'll have more luck going with just a couple of friends and tagging along with someone who does go there. If you don't know people from other colleges (most people don't) and don't want to face the hassle of trying to sneak in, consider joining a society that does bar crawl socials - most college sport societies do.

Where to crawl? Oxford is compact, but it still takes almost an hour to walk from St Hugh's to St Hilda's. You're not going to hit all thirty-odd bars in one night unless you're willing to spend a minute at each and end the night getting your stomach pumped. It's a lot more fun to spend more time in fewer and to choose colleges in close proximity. I've only done a proper college bar crawl a couple of times, and my favourite was along High Street and Turl Street (at Lincoln I asked the bartender what the college drink was and was swiftly kicked out for not being a student there – it happens to the best of us).

Alternatively, you could bring some excitement to the oft-overlooked OX2 postcode and go to Somerville, St Anne's, LMH, and

St Hugh's, or even the graduate colleges there.

Please do remember to drink responsibly. Freshers' week is meant to be fun and there's no harm in getting drunk if you enjoy it, but make sure you're not taking it too far and getting yourself in danger. Don't feel like you must drink at all: I know people who don't and still go to the bar and go clubbing, and nobody thinks anything of it. All college bars have soft drinks and some even offer mocktails (Somerville does a very good one). Have fun but take care of yourself.

Image via Wellcome Library/CC-BY-4.0



Oxford's clubs

Paul Furey

ou've been to the lectures, wrapped up that essay, survived the first tutorial. Now it's time to blow off some steam and put a fresh dent in that student loan at one Oxford's many nightclubs. We're here to fill you in on all you need to know about the very best Oxford has to offer before you make your debut on the uni nightlife scene.

To say the dress code at clubs is relaxed would be understating it. We've seen it all, from entirely topless to inflatable animal costumes, all manners of attire grace the dancefloors of Oxford. This is sometimes down to the theme of a college bop or sports social encouraging fancy dress. Nevertheless, this doesn't mean everyone dresses down. You're still likely to catch some in full white tie on any given night.

Atik is Oxford's biggest nightclub. On Wednesdays it holds Park End, aimed at uni sports teams offering discounted tick-

ets and queue jumps, but all are welcome, you don't have to be an athlete. Downstairs Atik houses the Cheesy Floor, a dancefloor which divides opinion. However, if you prefer your nights filled with ABBA and the Y.M.C.A. it might just be the spot for you. For a cheap night out we can also recommend Broke Mondays at Atik. Certainly less busy, but 6 Jägerbombs for £10 leaves no one complaining.

Most clubs happen to have a smoking area. Bridge is a smoking area that happens to have a club attached. Often disparagingly re-

"... now it's time to blow off some steam and put a fresh dent in that student loan at one of Oxford's many nightclubs..."

ferred to as a glorified corridor, the floor space here is limited. The music does tend to be quite good though. Thursday is the night to be at Bridge as there will no doubt be some cheap gimmick strung together in an attempt to draw out the masses. The Ultimate Pizza Party or Ball Pit Bonaza awaiting you in the weeks ahead may not seem appealing right now, but it is inevitable you'll make an appearance.

Plush is an LGBTO+ club on Cornmarket Street. The 3 Jägerbombs for £5 are not enough to distract from the claustrophobia-inducing cellar that facilitates its makeshift dancefloor. There are only rumours that sweat drips off the ceiling, but still, try to avoid touching the walls. Tuesdays are Tuesgays at Plush, which makes a very lively night out and the LG-BTQ+ Society will usually hold a social event beforehand. On Sundays they also hold a drag show.

Atik, Bridge and Plush are likely to take up the majority of your nights out, but there are a few smaller venues that you may

"Nights out can be plenty of fun and can leave you with some of your best memories of **Oxford, but it's** important to stay safe..."

manage to stumble into as well during your time here. Varsity is situated above the Covered Market and has a pretty cool rooftop terrace. The Bullingdon is on Cowley Road and a bit of a trek to get to, from where most of the colleges are located. If you were planning on walking that far we'd recom-

mend saving it for Indie Fridays at the O2 Academy. Do note that Fatsoma is the app to buy tickets for Bully and the O2, the rest use Fixr.

Nights out can be plenty of fun and can leave you with some of your best memories of

Oxford, but it's important you stay safe. Keep in contact with your friends and consider sharing your loca-tion with each other. When alone, keep to busy streets and avoid poorly lit areas. Under the Safe Lodge scheme, any student can use any participating college lodge to call back to their own college welfare team - look out for the green circle by the lodge entrance.

Where to eat after midnight

Oliver Sandall

ebab vans and McDonald's: that's the name of the game.

Not much is open in central Oxford past midnight, except the dozen or so kebab vans ... and McDonald's. You can either choose to have the same ol' reliable post-club McNuggets, or you can make friends whilst waiting for your doner: the choice is yours (and your bank account's).

McDonald's is my go-to, providing the same sub-par, yet efficient service. More importantly, though whatever alcohol is left in your system may fight off the arctic temperatures of British winter,

"The choice is yours (and your bank account's)..."

having somewhere to warm up before the last stretch back to college is always nice. With that said, you'll quickly 'get to know' the 'security' at McDonald's, shooing you out as soon as you've got your order, leaving your friend (who ordered some weird burger with double ketchup and seven gherkins) waiting alone in the chaos of Cornmarket Street Maccies.

My top tip for McDonald's: get the App and order on your way there, since the kiosks (especially the receipts which print out your order number) hardly ever work. Plus, you can earn some points and get yourself a free burger every now and then.

Each corner of Oxford has its own set of kebab vans – you can't miss them. Soloman's, towards North Oxford, in front of the Taylorian, is known for its cult-following, even selling T-shirts and Hoodies. Posh Nosh, around Christ Church, serves chips and hummus, as well as having a loyalty scheme. Other popular vans include McCoys, Ali's, and Hassan's. Whichever you choose, you'll quickly become loyal to your Michelin restaurant on wheels.

My kebab van top tip: speak to the people



ing with you. You're guaranteed to get a funny story out of the countless interactions you'll have over the course of the term. Also, try Soloman's chicken wrap or Posh Nosh's chips and hummus.

Perhaps the most economical solution to late-night munchies – and this is only for the bravest soldiers, who are still in a state to find their pans at 4am – is the post-club/post-essay crisis Ramsay-style fry up. Whilst not as time effective, it is certainly budget friendly and is available 24/7. If you're too lazy to cook, the forgotten meal deal crisps, pasta from earlier, or random snacks from the Fresher's Fair lying about in your room are also worthy

contestants. Another special mention goes to Domino's on Park End Street. Nothing screams romance and bonding more than sharing an overpriced, greasy pizza with your special someone or your newfound bestie at 2am. With that said, they often run promotional offers and even hand out Freshers' Week discounts.

Whilst not open after midnight, Najar's is also a staple of Oxford's street food culture. Open from 6am-9pm, this taxi rank-cumfood stall offers the best sub-£5 Lebanese wraps, offering 50% off on Friday of 8th week. So, if your night out ends before 9pm or continues until past 6am, don't forget Najar's, just outside of Trinity College on St Giles'.

In any case, you're sure to have some interesting encounters with some random stag-do goers, drunk middle-aged men, or postgrads who have lost the ability to handle their drink. And, if you're really lucky, you might actually make a new friend, or at least get another random Instagram follower.

To whatever drink you spill on your dress, or sauce you stain your favourite shirt with, bon appétit and cheers!

Oxford balls

Anya Biletsky

eaving Oxford in ninth week of Trinity term, from my seat on the upper deck of the Oxtube I could see flurries of students coming into Magdalen College, clad in ball gowns and white tie.

These were the early arrivals eager to experience the ball in its fullest - 6pm to 6am, twelve hours of nonstop drinking, dancing and merriment. The Magdalen ball was a subject of intense Oxfess discussion in the weeks leading up to it, with rumours of a rollercoaster set to be among the night's entertainment.

Sadly, there was no rollercoaster - but there was an ice rink, several stages with live music (including a live performance by the Hunna), and a fairground. It was, according to some, one of the most glamorous Ox-

f o r d b a l l s in recent

years. Commemoration balls like Madgalen's occur every four or five years at certain colleges, and they are some of the most hotly-anticipated events in the Oxford calendar, usually taking place in Trinity term. Tickets priced upwards of £200 go quickly; they promise an evening-to-night-to-day rotation of food, music, and an open bar, as well as various other bits of entertainment, with attendees in white tie. There is even the added option of a luxurious dinner in the college hall

pre-ball. Not all balls are commemoration, however; other colleges hold black-tie balls, which are slightly more affordable, though still make for a night-out on the pricier side (most college balls do however offer access tickets at a reduced price).

Several student societies also hold their own balls throughout the year. Notable society balls include Swift Soc's Taylor Swift ball at Freud; a Harry Potter themed ball; Oxford Women in Business's ball; and the Caledonian Society's termly reeling ball. The Oxford Union likewise hosts a termly ball, with themes ranging from 'Summer of Love' to 'Ice and Fire' to 'Moulin Rouge'.

A piece of advice: do not wear a dress with a train to an Oxford ball. It will most certain- ly be stepped on. At a reball I attended, I flinch-

ing as I saw gowns splattered with mud and trodden on by heeled feet. I, for one, have even stopped wearing heels to balls, in favour of a pair of trainers no one can see them under the dress anyway, and they make for a far more comfortable experience of what is effectively a black or white-tie music festival with an open bar. One thing I have learned from attending balls is that one must always plan for the reality of the event they are attending, even if that means sacrificing a smidge of elegance for that added dash of comfort. In the case of

the Oxford ball, it makes a world of difference.

A crash course in dress codes

Lottie Tellyn

ou just got dropped off at Oxford. You've been informed that you have a black tie dinner this term, that there will be white tie balls in Trinity, and the dress code for your fresher's dinner is smart casual. What is going on? And more importantly, what are you going to wear?

First, let me alleviate your fears for a moment: all dress codes are open to interpretation. Although some are stricter than others, you probably won't be far off with your best guess. People still have their personal style at every event, so you'll never really stand out as that one person who didn't get the dress code memo.

That said, there are some guidelines. So, without further ado, here's a crash course for all of the Oxford dress codes...

Casual

Self explanatory, honestly. Wear whatever you want. You'll want to be comfortable, ready to spend hours in the library, labs, or lectures. Opt for layers, especially in Michaelmas.

Smart Casual

Leave your joggers and hoodies at home for this one. As long as you don't look like you just rolled out of bed, you should be fine. But the dress code means you should at least look like you put in some effort - maybe a shirt or a casual dress. This tends to be the dress code for events like formals and garden parties. Oh, and maybe avoid jeans.

Business Casual

This is definitely getting into

cream-chinos-and-blue-blazer territory -- something you'll be sure to see a worrying amount of over the next year. Wear something you'd be comfortable going to an interview or some kind of official meeting in.

Cocktail

I've never actually come across this dress code in use at Oxford, but a quick Google revealed it's worth having on the list. You can wear a shorter dress if you want, and heels are definitely okay if you want to wear them (although they will kill after a few hours standing up). If you opt for a shirt, consider a tie as well for this dress code.

Black Tie

We're getting into properly formal territory here. If you're going down the suit route, then you want to be thinking very James Bond vibes. There are variations, but the general look is white shirt, black suit (it can be a tux, but doesn't have to be) and a black bow tie (hence the name).

Sexism aside, this is often listed as Black Tie or Equivalent. So, if you'd prefer to opt for a dress/jumpsuit, you can definitely wear a long one here. Shorter ones work, but would want to be on the smarter side. Heels tend to be the trend too, in my experience, but feel free to opt for some other smart shoes, like boots or docs.

White Tie

This is as smart as it gets -- usually reserved exclusively for commemoration balls. If you have national dress that you'd like to wear, now is definitely the time that you can show it off. If not, opt for a floorlength dress or a full coat-andtails suit, complete with a white waistcoat and white bowtie (very few people already own these, so if you have a white tie event, look into hiring this).

And that's it: all of the dress codes that you might encounter. It's worth noting that I've never seen someone get refused entry into an event because they didn't have the right clothes (I have not tested this theory extensively). But you'll definitely not get kicked out of formal for wearing jeans, and if you really want, you can wear white tie all year round (as someone I knew of did in first year).

Don't give it too much thought. You've got events to get to.



CLUBS & SOCIETIES • 11

Sport at Oxford

Jess Cullen

ere at Oxford, we have a massive sporting community, and there is something for everybody at every level. It is easy to get caught up in your studies and academic life, so being able to take a step outside and do something active is so important and helps you maintain a good balance.

Exercise is integral for your mental health, great for your physical health and a fantastic way to meet people and build a community in Oxford – some of my closest friends came from football. Oxford offers any sport you can think of, and I really

"We have a massive sporting community, and there is something for everybody at every level..."

mean any – there's football, rugby league, cheerleading, Eton fives and even kayaking and canoeing to just give you a taste, so any sport you set your heart to can be supported.

The sporting opportunities are essentially split into two levels; college sport, where you play for your college and against other colleges at a very casual level, and university sport, where you play for a team that represents the university and plays against other universities across the country. Your college will likely have its own process of how it organizes teams, so make sure you find out how that works in fresher's week, but there is no strict deadline! You can join college teams at any time throughout the year and play for them in any fixture.

Each college will join the "Cuppers" tournament, which is simply a knock-out competition against other colleges, and many sports have their own leagues where you have weekly fixtures. College teams have minimal commitment, but they are easy to get involved with, so you can play sports on your own time, but you still have the opportunity to compete. The level tends to be in the middle, so you can play at a good level but also start out a new sport and just give it a go. You can start playing a sport that you have always wanted to try as a beginner with no pressure - I never thought I would enjoy ultimate frisbee as much as I did!

College teams also have a thriving social life, hosting regular socials, crew dates (big fun drinking parties), and non-drinking events where you can get to know people from your own college and others better. Ultimately college sports are a really fun way to exercise with your friends, get involved in college life, and make the event



"College teams also have a thriving social life, hosting regular socials, crew dates and non-drinking events..."

of your time at college; I could not recommend getting involved more, even if you have never played a sport before.

If you are keen to play sports at a higher level, the University sports scene is a fantastic one to get involved with and offers a whole load of opportunities. Each sport is represented by a club, such as OUAFC (Oxford University Association Football Club), and these clubs are run by students and compete in the interuniversity leagues called BUCS on Wednesdays (with some competing on other days). All clubs have a 1st team called the Blues team, where you represent the University at the highest level, and many also have a 2nd and 3rd teams as well, all of whom compete in leagues. Each year the club will also have a Varsity game against Cambridge (generally the biggest game of the season) and those who compete in the 1st team have the chance to receive a Blue – a high accolade to graduate with and a great honour.

University clubs require a bit more commitment during the week than college, but they are easy to schedule and, as they are run by students for students, work within the Oxford schedule. Many clubs offer development squads with coaches for beginners, so don't hesitate to join and get involved in their community, but generally, if you are looking to play Blues a bit of experience would do you good. Many of our teams compete at the top level of BUCS and the standard of sport is high throughout the University.

If you want to get involved with university sports there are a few key things that you should do: first, find your sport on social media (all will have Instagram or Facebook

"Univeristy clubs require a bit more commitment during the week than college, but they are easy to schedule and, as they are run by students for students, work within the Oxford schedule..."

accounts as well as websites) and have a look at trial information/ register your interest (feel free to DM any questions!) and secondly go to the freshers fair and find the sport that you want to play – you can check the trial dates here as well and get to know

the community from the people that run it. If you want t o play for of the

competitive teams, make sure you check the information out beforehand and don't miss the date! However, if you do get caught up in freshers week and don't make it to trials don't hesitate to contact the club - everyone understands how intense it all is at the start and they will likely give you an opportunity to showcase your skills at a later date. Whatever you do, be it college or university or even just running through University parks, give sports a go at Oxford. Not only will you be looking after your body and happiness, but I can promise that you will make friends and find a community you will always be part of! Make the most of your Oxford journey.

one

Religion and culture at Oxford

Zainab Rashid

ometimes, Oxford feels quite far from home. From the brand-new terminology, (see pidge, plodge and glink among others) to the Hogwarts-like beauty of the colleges, it can definitely appear overwhelming and otherworldly. Moving away from home, taking down all the decorations on your walls and packing away your life into (many) suitcases to enter such a wonderfully bizarre world is no doubt intimidating and scary. Oxford really has its own culture - but for those who feel like you're leaving your own behind, fear not. That's what the vast array of societies Oxford boasts is for.

Oxford has over 400 societies to join, many of them being cultural or religious, in order for students to meet people of similar backgrounds and hear a familiar language, perhaps. Religious organisations, such as the Oxford University Islamic Society, the Oxford University Hindu Society, the Oxford University Jewish Society and the Oxford University Sikh Society are just a few of the many examples of large religious groups that regularly hold social events, safe spaces for those who miss their religious communities at home. The events held provide a perfect opportunity to interact with other students of the same faith and make new friends, or to learn more about a certain religion and interact with members of different communities. From Ramadan to Diwali to Christmas to Yom Kippur, major moments in religious calendars are marked by organised events where people can join in and enjoy being surrounded by community.

As well as societies focused on religious community, there are many that prioritise the celebration of culture and run social events for people of certain cultures to meet one another. As a Pakistani girl, one of the things I missed most about home was coming back after school or

college to hear ARY news blasting on the TV, the smells of fresh salan invading my nose and my family's (loud) conversations in Urdu. So, finding the Oxford University Pak-Soc was literally a godsend - they run social events regularly throughout term providing a perfect excuse to dress up in salwar kameez, occupy a stall at the Culture Fair (and of course Fresher's Fair!) and run Urdu speaking classes, as well as having really cute stash. Cultural societies like this one will enable you to find a community, and hopefully make great friends.

Although it may not always seem like it, Oxford can be quite a diverse place and students come from all walks of life. Religious and cultural societies here are incredibly welcoming, inclusive and well-organised, providing you with ample opportunity to get involved and be part of the committees, so that you can bring forward new ideas if you are elected. Most societies are also on social media and will have fun introductory events throughout Fresher's Week, as well as group chats that you can join to stay connected if you're not always able to go to an event.

So, dear fresher, quell your anxieties about being so far away – I can guarantee that Oxford will seem like home in no time at all.

Student drama

Shaan Sidhu

xford University Dramatic Society is the central theatrical society associated with the university. It acts not only as a funding body for student shows, but also arranges regular speakers' events where professionals can share their experiences in the industry and give us insight into what it entails. OUDS also operates workshops such to increase access for those who are new to student drama and wish to get involved. For those that wish to adopt a more relaxed approach to theatre, you can get involved with The Quick Company, which acts as a laidback drama club if vou would rather avoid the stress of preparing for a show with an audience! To find out more about the Dramatic Society itself as well as see its term card for productions and events amongst other updates, Freshers should check out its Instagram page @_ouds.

OUDS works alongside the Oxford University Technical Theatre Society (OUTTS), which focuses on the practical aspects of theatre and offers workshops specifically on how to operate theatre technology. Anyone interested in sound, lighting, costume, set and stage should look to get involved and keep updated by following @outts. ox on Instagram.

There is a thriving student theatre scene at Oxford, as you can expect there to be at least two shows happening per week in each term, and there are plenty of opportu-

"Almost every production is student-led and puts on content from all genres imaginable..."

nities for amateurs and experts, aspiring actors and tech wizzes alike. Almost every production company is student-led and puts on content from all genres and playwrights imaginable. The various theatre venues of Oxford are also open to putting on plays of all lengths written by students themselves, so this university is truly the place for aspiring dramaturgs. Any roles available will be advertised through call outs for auditions and crew applications which are either uploaded through the Facebook Group 'Oxford University Drama Portal' or by the respective production company on their own Instagram pages, so keep an eye out across both platforms.

As for venues that can be used, there are a few in which more student shows are hosted: The Burton Taylor (BT for short), a small black box-style space; The Michael Pilch Studio, located on Jowett Walk and owned by Balliol College, houses a similar stage space. Keble College houses the O'Reilly Theatre, which has a greater capacity and an auditorium-feel. The largest venue open to students is the Oxford Playhouse, reserved predominantly for largescale productions or musicals.

Trinity Term provides greater opportunities for students wanting to engage in Oxford's drama scene as colleges prepare to put There tends to be lots of Shakespeare, so if that seems up your alley, try to get involved! In the same term, New College transforms its



cloisters into a stage hosting its annual Greek Play, where a tragedy is performed in translation. The target participants are classicists across the university, but anyone studying another degree is welcome to participate or watch! There is also the triennial Oxford Greek Play funded and supported by the Oxford University Classical Drama Society (OUCDS), with the performance of Euripides' Medea taking place this Michaelmas Term at the Playhouse.

Ultimately, Oxford's drama scene offers a range of opportunities for people with all levels of experience and can be a great way to meet new people that have a shared interest in theatre.

Student journalism guide

Adam Saxon

he world of student journalism at Oxford is much vaster (and probably confusing) than it may first seem. This guide intends to give an overview of the key publications you should keep an eye on during your time at the university, and how you can get involved in writing/ editing for them.

The different publications:

Cherwell

Oxford's oldest and most prestigious newspaper. Boasting former writers and staff including Graham Greene, Peter Mandelson and Baroness Hogg, Cherwell was established in 1920 and has been breaking Oxford's biggest stories ever since. Cherwell has a wide range of sections including News, Comment, Features, Sport, Profiles, Lifestyle and Culture, and we also provide Oxford students' favourite selection of puzzles to complete in our print editions along with the top stories in weeks 0, 1, 3, 5, and 7.

The Isis (https://isismagazine.org.uk) is a magazine, again the oldest of its kind, dating back even further than Cherwell to 1892. It is the home of longer, often more artistic pieces including poetry, art, short stories, essays, and photos. It has a once termly print edition which is always a work of art and is a publication worth look-

ing out for when it arrives in your JCR or plodge.

The Oxford Scientist

Oxford's independent student led science magazine (https://oxsci.org). Packed with knowledge and discoveries from the forefront of the scientific world, OxSci also manages to be filled with beautiful graphics at the same time. The Oxford Scientist also releases a print edition once every term. Cherwell, Isis, and The Oxford Scientist are all run by the same student-led parent company, Oxford Student Publications Limited (OSPL). They are all fully independent of the central university, and as such rely on contributions from JCRs and donors to keep running. However, they also make up the backbone of the student journalism scene in Oxford and are central to providing outlets for both news and creative projects to a wide range of students.

The Oxford Student

Another Newspaper, owned by the Oxford SU but editorially independent through its constitution, the Oxford Student has been around since 1991. It releases print editions along a similar schedule to Cherwell (we know which one of the two we'd recommend picking up from your JCR) and provides another outlet for a similar range of topics to Cherwell.

The Oxford Blue

A more recent addition to the Oxford

student journalism scene, the Oxford blue was set up in 2020 and is an online only newspaper.

Writing for us:

Getting involved with Cherwell is easier than you might think! Commissions are put out regularly on our facebook groups and our Instagram commissions page @cherwell.commissions. Simply shoot us an email if any of the recent commissions are of interest to you, or if you have your own idea for a story feel free to pitch it to us; no prior writing experience is expected! Our incredible team of editors will be on hand to work with you to make sure you're totally happy with your article before it goes online (and possibly in print).

The news team also holds regular news meetings, where potential stories can be proposed and discussed. These are a great way to get involved and meet some of our news editors who would be helping to get your article published.

The email addresses for each of our sections can be found below:

Cherwelleditor@gmail.com (general enquiries, getting in contact with Editors-in-Chief)

Cherwellnews@gmail.com (News stories)

Cherwellcomment@gmail.com (Opinion pieces)

lifestylecherwell@gmail.com (Pieces about life in oxford)

culturecherwell@gmail.com / Cherwellfashion@gmail.com (Pieces about Music, Film, Books, Plays, Fashion etc.)

featurescherwell@gmail.com (For larger pieces, possibly those that take a deeper dive into a subject matter or tackle an issue of great importance)

Sportcherwell@gmail.com (Sport! Both Oxford and national)

cherwellprofile@gmail.com (Interviews)

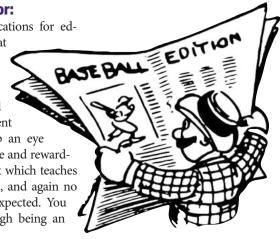
If you ever feel unsure about which of our sections your article would be best suited for, simply email our editors in chief cherwelleditor@gmail. com and they will be able to guide you to the right section for you!

Becoming an editor:

Cherwell takes applications for editors of all sections at the end of every term, so if you feel like you'd like to have a go at working behind the scenes on a student newspaper then keep an eye out! It's a really flexible and rewarding time commitment which teaches a wide range of skills, and again no prior experience is expected. You will be guided through being an editor by our experienced senior editorial team who are always there to help you develop the necessary skills for the job.

Why get involved?

No matter your level of involvement, the great appeal of student journalism is its flexibility. The Oxford term time is rigorous and demanding, so the fact that you can write or edit articles in any free moments you find yourself with makes it perhaps one of the most attractive extracurricular pursuits available at the university. It is also, I have found, an incredibly inclusive sphere. Our editors and writers come from a vast range of backgrounds and subjects, and as a comment editor for the last two terms I have found my worldview influenced and much the better for it. Furthermore, we are at a crucial crossroads for the future of the media, and the importance of journalism at the grassroots level cannot be underestimated.



ALTS (@altsicehockeyox-

Unusual Societies

Yunju Park

Ave you ever found yourself in an internet rabbit hole? The summer preparing for Oxford involves a lot of information hunting down rabbit holes - you've probably already heard all about Oxford's traditions - matriculation, May Day, trashing, time ceremony, and even some whispers of secret societies.

While not really "secret", eccentric and unusual societies and clubs are plenty at the university. The official Oxford University website boasts 400 clubs and societies and offers a (non-exhaustive) list, but a quick dive down the rabbit hole of Instagram's recommended accounts will let you know about communities you wouldn't realise at first glance.

Generally, most societies publish term cards at the start of each

Political societies

term (Michaelmas, Hilary and Trinity) laying out all the events, venues, and dates they'll be holding for the term in one neat graphic. When you find a Facebook group or Instagram account for a society, make sure to follow and keep an eye out for all this information. Here are some worth mentioning!

mentioning! Oxford Tea Appreciation Society (@tea_appreciation)

This society fosters love affairs with tea, whether that be the classic breakfast brew or international blends. There are tea appreciation afternoons every Sunday, and their membership is only £8. Some past events on their term card has included Hong Kong tea appreciation, Roaring Twenteas, and a collaborative joint social with Fashion society.

,

d **ford)** ALTs hold amateur ice hockey tournaments every Wednesday and Friday from 10:15pm to

midnight. Their new term card is packed with theme nights and costume nights, such as 80s night and Barbie night. It's beginner friendly, non-contact, and my personal favourite at £5 per session.

Music societies (@oxfordswiftsoc / @mitskisocox)

Devotees can also find communities to appreciate their favourite artist and their music. The Oxford Taylor Swift Society is very active with a packed term card full of all things dedicated to her (last year's events included Taylor Swift club night, pub quiz, karaoke, listening parties and tour screenings).

Lana Del Rey society and Mitski society seem to also be in the works, and if Oxford is desperately lacking an appreciation society for your favourite artists, you can always recruit your friends to start one, whether it be casual or plans to officially register with the university.

Reading groups (@oxphilogyny)

If you're an avid reader with no one to bounce your book thoughts on, there's reading groups of all kinds at Oxford to do exactly that. Critical race reading groups and Philogyny reading groups, among many others, spark essential discussion about important topics, theoretical and beyond.

Keeping up with societies such as the **Oxford Women of Colour Society, Oxford Campaign for Racial Awareness and Equality, Class Act,** etc will be useful to find out about these groups, as they often have joint discussion events. They're also a great way to meet others who align with your values and take a

lications teeming with ideas from across the

broad church of Conservative opinion, to our

new range of Women's

socials orchestrated by

our wonderful Welfare

and Safeguarding team,

we are proud to be an

open, welcoming socie-

ty at the heart of Oxford

life. This term, as we

look forward to some

of the greatest events in

our history, including a

conversation with a for-

mer Prime Minister, an

exclusive Winter Soirée

and a night at the Opera,

no other.

have fun.

break from your weekly academic readings.

Other eclectic societies like the Star Wars society exist too one of the committee members describes it as "quite an informal and nerdy society for star wars fans to get together and watch the movies, series (CLONE WARS!!!), and do Star Wars themed activities together". There's also always an opportunity to gather like-minded people you might never even have met before- Theme Park **society** began from an Oxfess in November 2022, eventually leading to a group-trip to Thorpe Park in April.

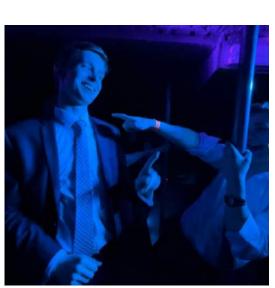
And if you're still curious, try going down the rabbit-hole yourself. Whichever societies you decide to try out, whether it be any on this list or the huge variety of stalls at Freshers' Fair, you'll end up finding your people. Have fun!

*Sponsored content

Oxford University Conservative Assocaition

here in Oxford can you find avowed Marxists, committed cetrists and true-blue Thatcherites, of every college, course and year, jostled together in a room of raucous debate and thrashing out the problems faced by Britain today? Where in Oxford can you find a packed calendar of events, from conversations with the leading figures in our nation's politics to socials so fun they will soon be filling your diary? Where in Oxford can you find a group of people so committed to the politics in which they believe that they will tear themselves out of bed after a late night clubbing to campaign across the country? This may seem a tough question. Yet add in unlimited port, wonderful venues and some of the most fascinating people this city has to offer, and you will come somewhere close to describing the magic and majesty of the Oxford University Conservative Association. But don't just take our word for it. Over our 99 year-long heritage, Margaret Thatcher, Edward Heath,

Jacob Rees-Mogg, Dan Hannan, William Hague and even Nick Robinson have all agreed so much that they rose to become our President. Today, our hundreds of members are continuing this tradition. From our weekly debating and drinking event, Port and Policy, to pub-



Upcoming events: - Liz Truss, Former Prime Mininster - Jeremy Hunt, Chancellor of the Exchequer - Ice Skating

- Wine,Cheese and Poker

tickets will go on sale in first week.Beer and Bickering – every Saturday evening at Magdalen.

Oxford University Conservative Association

Oxford University Labour Club

he Oxford Labour Club is the oldest and largest University Labour society in the country. It was founded 104 years ago to advance the cause of the Labour movement in Oxford. Today, after thirteen years of Conservative government that has tripled tuition fees and defunded our education system, this mission is more vital than ever.

The Labour Club will always pursue this political mission, but it also aims to provide a friendly and accessible entry into the Oxford political world. This term, we have a packed term card, full of speaker events, socials, campaigning and more. The highlight of the term is the return of the Barbara Castle Memorial Reception, a chance to celebrate the essential role that women have played in the Labour movement and in British politics. At the event, we will hear from a wide range of speakers including the former chair of the Trades Union Congress Frances O'Grady, Shadow Minister in the Levelling Up Department Paula Barker, and



Leader of the Opposition in the House of Lords Baroness Smith. At our other speaker events this term we are delighted to hear from speakers from across the Labour Movement, including MPs, Members of the House of Lords, trade

> unionists and more. As the general election draws nearer and nearer, the club is doubling down on its canvassing efforts. Not only will we be campaigning in Oxford every week, but we will be travelling across the country speaking to voters on the doorstep. Our weekly social Beer and Bickering is of course making its return, moving to Saturdays to confirm its title as the only political social in Oxford worth

going to. Come along to meet fellow Labour supporters and engage in friendly political discussion.

we encourage you, whatever your polit-

ical persuasion, to join this society like

Common misconception - Tories can't

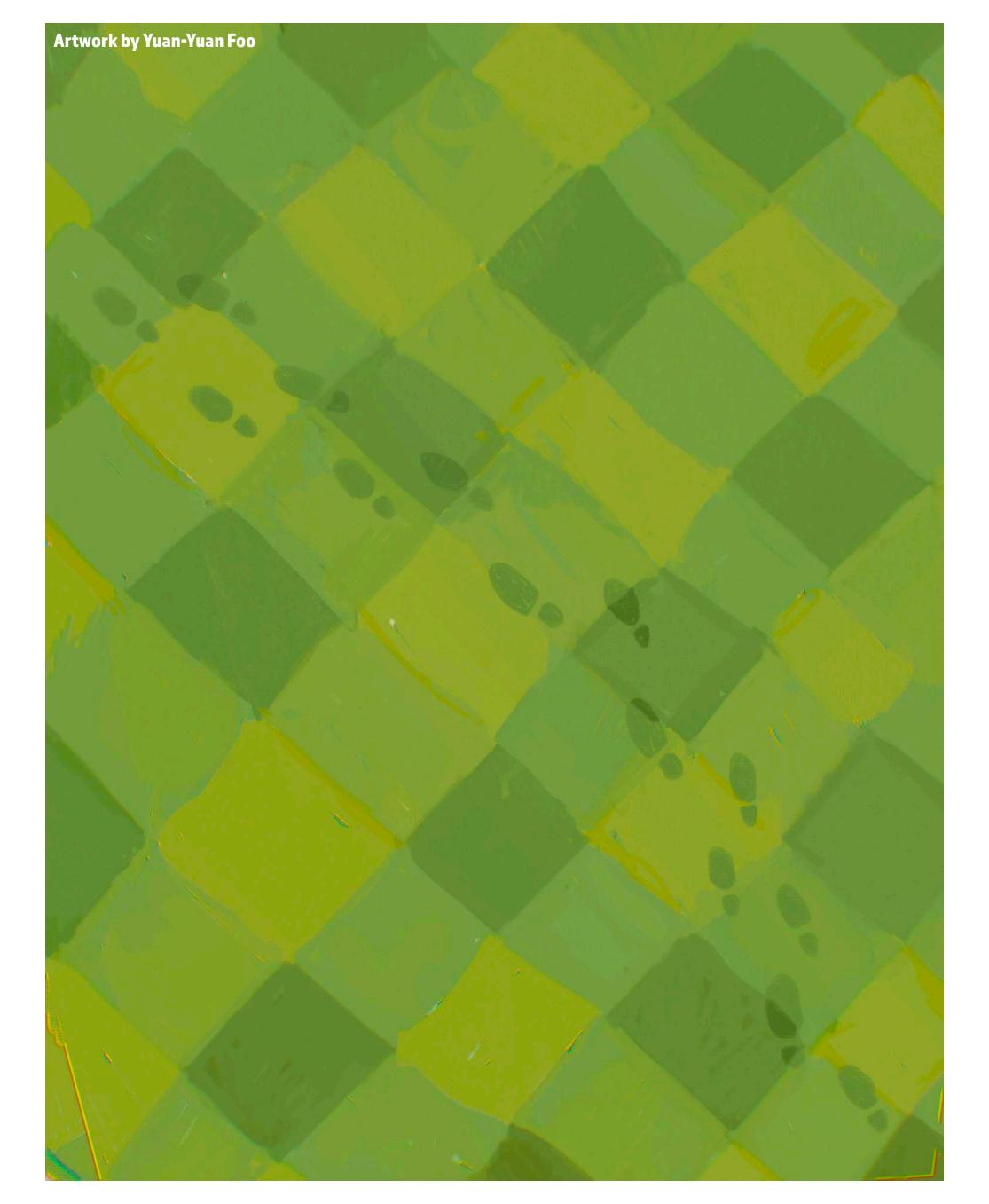
The Labour Club prides itself on being the friendly face of politics within the

University of Oxford. I encourage everyone to come along and find their niche, whether it is knocking on doors, writing for the blog or giving your hottest takes at Beer and Bickering.

Upcoming events: - Welcome Drinks with Anneliese Dodds MP - 13 th October 7pm-10:30pm - at Magdalen College.

- Talk by Lord David Blunkett – 16 th November 5pm-6pm.

- Barbara Castle Memorial Reception – 23 rd November 7pm-10:30pm



Bottom of the pile: freedom of speech at Oxford

Jakub Trybull

reveals the impact of the National Student Survey's Q27 on Oxford's free speech

Free speech is the lifeblood of a university." So begins Oxford's policy on freedom of speech. Followed by the tasteful poetry of triplets and metaphor, the policy explains how this fundamental right allows for the pursuit of knowledge and truth, and enables nuance and perspective to diversify debate in ways it otherwise might not have.

This article won't debate whether absolute freedom of speech is the pinnacle of individual and societal liberty. History reminds us what atrocities can emerge when this right is taken away whilst the modern day warns us of the tendency for hate speech to turn to violence. The answer, as always, probably lies somewhere in the middle.

I was helping with a News article about Oxford falling to second place in The Times' UK University ranking the other day. Thinking about how devastating this must be for the prideful Oxford student, I had a look at the results from the National Student Survey (NSS), an annual survey sent to half a million students by the Office for Students (OfS) with questions on seven topics: on-course teaching, learning opportunities, assessment and feedback, academic support, organisation and management, learning resources, and student voice.

Crucially, the survey this year included an unprecedented new question, Q27, which asked students:

"During your studies, how free did you feel to express your ideas, opinions, and beliefs?"

Its inclusion comes amid free s p e e c h rows on c a m puses in r e c e n t m o n t h s and the passing of "During your studies, how free did you feel to express your ideas, opinions, and beliefs?"

the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act earlier this year. The Act intends to preserve and enshrine freedom of speech by imposing fines on higher education providers and student unions if there are any breaches. Sounds like a liberal dream to me.

After some number crunching, I realised that, in response to Q27, Oxford ranked first amongst Russell Group universities* for freedom of expression whilst most others faltered on this level. For Q27, Oxford obtained

a positivity measure of 90.8, followed closely by Imperial College London with 90.1. Essentially meaning that the vast majority (90.8%) of Oxford students felt positively about their freedom to share their views on campus. Whilst the lowest ranking Russell Group university was Manchester with just 82.5 - not so charming, man.

Although, five of the Group's universities denied their right to express an opinion, with student unions at other campuses such as Cambridge holding boycotts against the NSS on "education marketisation" grounds which is interesting given the Higher Education Act's 'free speech tsar' is coincidentally a Cambridge philosophy professor. The Oxford SU also took part in boycotts between 2017 and 2022 over concerns that the survey would be linked to the Teaching Excellence Framework and could result in higher fees for high-performing universities. Although the boycott's historic effect is still present, it seems, in Oxford's low response rate of 50.2%.

The survey also revealed that, of the Group members i n c l u d - ed (19 to be exact), 13 were below their individual benchmarks for free speech, with Manchester being the greatest outlier at -3.1 percentage points. Overall, the Group's weighted average score was 85.2, just below its benchmark of 85.8, implying below satisfactory free speech protections.

Oxford's NSS triumph may come as a shock. In a *Cherwell* poll (16th of September 2023), we asked our followers the same question (Q27). Of 168 respondents, 34 (20%) said that their free speech was mostly restricted while 3 (2%) said they were completely restricted. On the other hand, 81 (48%) said their free speech was mostly free and 50 (30%) were completely confident in that freedom. Using these results, the positivity score might be closer to 68.7, much lower than the NSS score.

Oxford's role in the wider debate on free speech on campus has always been front and centre. Former Prime Minister and Oxford graduate, Boris Johnson's 2019 manifesto included a pledge to "strengthen academic freedom and free speech in universities."

Then in March 2020, UN Women Oxford UK's de-platforming of former Home Secretary Amber Rudd resulted in vast criticism from JCR Presidents, de-registration as a student society, and ministers calling for strengthening the Office for Students' powers to ensure free speech.

Later that year, the Student Union (SU) passed an 'Academic Hate Speech' motion condemning the "hateful material in mandatory teaching", to which the University highlighted their free speech policy. This scuffle quite literally created laws, providing the backdrop for new regulation such as the Freedom of Speech (Higher Education) Act to be passed.

History repeats itself with Kathleen Stock's talk at the Oxford Union (OU) last term having reignited the debate. Protests were staged against Stock, academics from

both sides sent open letters,

and the SU (unsuccessfully) attempted to ban the OU from the Freshers' Fair. Like before, Oxford's reaction to controversial speakers wasn't contained to OX1. Instead, national papers joined the narrative prompting a country-wide conversation on free speech and even got a comment from the Prime Minister, Rishi Sunak (yet another Oxford graduate...)

With all this considered it's clear that free speech is no small nor easy topic, and its relationship with Oxford is ubiquitous. It is weaved into our tutorial system, into our societies, into our politics by our Oxford-educated prime ministers, and

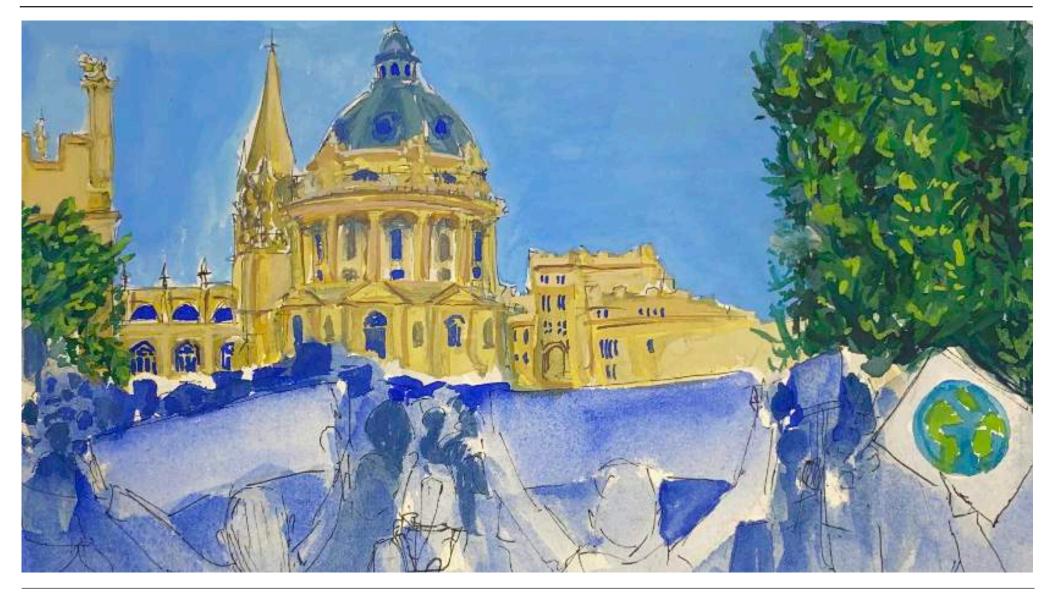
"We are talking about freedom of speech and we are *loud*."

into our national media. Whether we think we have strong protections for free speech or that cancel culture is rife in our University, one thing is certain: we are talking about freedom of speech and we are *loud*.

-

*Russell Group members included Birmingham, Bristol, Durham, Exeter, Imperial College London, King's College London, Leeds, Liverpool, London School of Economics and Political Sciences, Manchester, Newcastle, Nottingham, Oxford, Queen Mary University of London, Sheffield, Southampton, University College London, Warwick, York.

EXCLUDING Cambridge, Cardiff, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Queen's University Belfast.



A manifesto for climate education

Olivia Boyle

explores the student view - from a *Cherwell* poll to a Mock COP28 delegate - of Oxford's response to the climate crisis.

he Zoom screen flitters from darkness to the gradual clarity of humanoid pixels. I am looking at the official face of tomorrow. As the Mock COP28 delegate and I launch our discussion of a manifesto against the existential threat of a world overheating, "all that is solid melts into air." (*The Communist Manifesto*, p.218)

Molly Scrase-Kings is a third year biochemist at Hertford College. While some may have spent the summer jet-setting and globetrotting in the name of life experience, Scrase-Kings was collaborating with hundreds of youth leaders in the name of saving the planet. At Mock COP28, the Oxford biochemist and the team of young

s delegates solidified a manifesto for e climate education.

Someone's gotta do it. And infernal hell knows it ain't going to be the University of Oxford.

A bandwidth away from me, in a seat of climate progressivism is Molly Scrase-Kings. After completing work for the conservation charity, *Raleigh International*, Scrase-Kings was encouraged to apply for this conference of young people tasked with coming up with a plan for global climate education. She explained to me that her journey from Oxford biochemistry to UK delegate at Mock COP28 was detached from the University.

Before going into the details of her time at the conference, I was interested in the extent of Oxford's involvement in Scrase-Kings' path to Mock COP28.

"Did you discover the Mock COP28 opportunity thanks to Oxford?" I asked.

A firm "no" followed.

"Oh, Ok. But, *Raleigh International* came from your tutor or the Careers Service emails, right?" I followed up hopefully.

"Well, no."

And so, I found myself enquiring some four minutes into our eighteen minute discussion - "have you at all found out about anything to do with conservation or climate justice through the University?"

"Um, no. Not really."

There you have it; those words were floating in the metasphere of our Zoom call. It was final. The University of Oxford, among the world-leading universities in earth sciences research, had had no hand whatsoever in taking one of its own from dreaming spires to pioneering international climate policy.

Scrase-Kings, therefore, is an example of the student will, untarnished by university-based, 'adult' involvement, to contribute actively to improving our prospects against the climate crisis.

This will was to be exercised at Mock COP28 where the primary concern, as Scrase-Kings explained to me, was to come up with a rejuvenated manifesto for tackling the crisis that the adult world's tired policies seem to perpetuate. Mock COP28 presented a unified youth statement created by delegates from across the globe to education ministers and climate policy representatives in order to "really try to raise ambition for climate education in all of these countries," as Scrase-Kings summarised.

The biochemist said: "we're told we're the generation that should sort this out. We're going to have to deal with it at the worst level. And yet we're not supported to have the skills to deal with it or even the ability to deal with just the anxiety of it." Mock COP28 is not a replica of



Photo credit: Molly Scrase-Kings

the 'adult' version but a conference on the integration of climate crisis management into the lives of young people in the most common way known to them: through their education.

Climate education is becoming increasingly concrete as a result

"The

government is shoehorning climate education into preexisting policies of youth engagement "

of youth campaigns such as Mock COP28. But it's a branch of education that is absent from these hallowed halls of learning. It could be a blameless move from Oxford. Ultimately, it's the government's "shoehorning of climate education" into pre-existing policies of youth engagement, as Scrase-Kings observed, that gives places like Oxford the excuse to not prioritise - at least consistently - climate education. For the deniers, climate education is perhaps a product of the "tofu-eating wokerati" and for the others, this existential threat is debilitatingly fright-We're ening. in an unhelpculture ful of stalemate and a relentless lack of progress

makes

for

boring education.

Learning at Oxford, Scrase-Kings said: "we need to equip ourselves for the changing world and to ultimately change the culture around climate education. But I haven't seen that in my degree and I haven't seen it in my friend's degrees really at all." Is this Oxford's fault or a governmentally encouraged antipathy towards climate education?

Molly Scrase-Kings thinks that we're at a point where climate education "should be threaded into every subject." A poll conducted by *Cherwell* found that 44% of participants strongly disagree with the statement that "the climate crisis comes up frequently with tutors/ teaching staff or in lectures/tutorials". Indeed, 63.4% of participants are either dissatisfied or strongly dissatisfied with the University's response to the climate crisis.

Where respondents were less uniform, however, was in stating where responsibility lay for leading action against

cli-

"Mock COP28 is not a replica of the 'adult' version but a conference on the integration of climate management into the lives of young people"

mate change. Should we bother holding the University accountable when students should be leading the response anyway? *Cherwell* poll respondents were level in agreeing that the University has more responsibility than students to act

"The summit showed me the power we can have when we collaborate and communicate across borders"

(23.1%) and being neutral on the balance (28.8%).

To the Mock COP28 delegate, Molly Scrase-Kings, "Oxford has a massive responsibility. It is a full front runner, and it should be a leading role model, not just in academia." Currently, however, it appears that the climate crisis is not confronted regularly enough even in the subjects where you would expect it to be. Scrase-Kings continued: "I've heard so many complaints that there's not enough diversity for environmental economics. And there's not much in biochemistry at all."

In *Cherwell's* poll, other students reflected on being dissuaded from action against climate change not by academia but by the rigorous nature of Oxford's student activism. One respondent wrote: "I do find Oxford activism quite intense; it has an established wrong and right way to deal with issues and I find it intimidating." There is no doubt that activism is student-led at Oxford. Scrase-Kings said that from the University "I see glimmers [of action], but it's really student led and student pushed." It being so student-heavy and with only "glimmers" of University support, it's perhaps no wonder that the activism scene is intense and demanding.

As you go higher up, support for tackling the climate crisis evaporates further. Molly ScraseKings told *Cherwell* she is beginning work with SOS-UK to fill in the gaps in the ambitious (quixotic?) plans for climate education announced by the DfE last year. Which are, as Scrase-Kings put it, a "bit late" anyway.

The plans, once again, are symptomatic of a government that is just a tad too busy to deal with the climate crisis. They detail a hollow programme of distributing learning resources in "carbon literacy training" (whatever that means!) to every nursery, school and college by 2025. This will be enabled by the work of people like Molly Scrase-Kings at SOS-UK and the reward for such selfless charity will undoubtedly be reaped solely by No 10. Yet again, this policy appears as fodder for the government to shirk responsibility and could explain why leading institutions like Oxford aren't doing very much leading in the field of climate education. Should they have to if the heads of the nation aren't bothering?

Yet, none of this really answers the question why well over half of the Oxford students participating in *Cherwell's* survey remain dissatisfied with the University's engagement with the climate crisis. What is it

exactly that is holding the University back?

After André Breton, Diego Rivera and Leon Trotsky, a condition of the construction of a manifesto is understanding that "without exaggeration never has civilization been menaced so seriously as today." This is understood widely by the students of Oxford; they have resorted to teaching themselves with the launch of the termly 'School of Climate Change' (Oxford Climate Society).

For now, students have the power. Mock COP28 was hopeful: "the summit showed me [Molly Scrase-Kings] the power we can have when we collaborate and communicate across borders." The young delegates came up with a manifesto for climate education. It commits to a form of climate education where, as the Mock COP website states, students "teach the teacher."

Of course, 55 years on from the *Mai '68* student protests, if we've learnt anything at all, it's that students must be the

> teachers of change. Students of the world don't appear to have much choice other than to unite!

> > Artwork by Amelia Dovell

SOURCE

Fragile Love

Anonymous

She was 15 years old, With empty eyes of sorrow and a hollow heart, When those once fleeting feelings flooded the fortress She'd built in her mind, and she couldn't fight anymore, And she realised that those who should adore Her, no matter what, would abhor Her, no matter what She'd do to convince them, That she was still herself, still the girl They thought could do no wrong-Except now her very existence was wrong To them.

She looked at herself in the mirror And what did she see, what did she see? A monster cos that's what they said people Like her were- depraved, dirty, And yet how could either of them know how she was hurting? She never chose to feel like this, Why would she choose to want to Gouge out her guilty eyes Every time she saw a beautiful girl? Why would she choose to want to Slash her skin and bleed out? Every time she heard their

Against those like her and

Why would she choose to want to Suffocate slowly hiding her true self? And whispering the truth into the invisible, silent safety Of the dark in her room at night. Why would she choose to want to Disappear into that darkness herself?

Cos that would've been easier than Knowing that their supposed love was as fragile As a glass vase that she could topple over, And she'd watch their eyes fill with fury And their hearts harden with hate And their disgust and contempt contort Their faces, and then She'd no longer be the girl that came from them But a diseased, debauched devil woman That they'd discard without a moment's regret.

But she couldn't help who she was, She couldn't hide the shimmering colours Radiating from her that they tried to Paint over in black without them even knowing. And she realised that a love as weak as theirs Was no love at all,

And it was them who were the monsters If they thought one unchangeable aspect of her Was enough to throw her away with loathing.

And why should she want to Slash her skin when she finally felt safe in it? Why should she want to Disappear into darkness when she finally found Some trickling light leading her to acceptance?

She'd never done anything wrong By feeling the way she did, She was just existing And so she stopped resisting.

The sticky sweet story of you

The first time was

Sophie Booth

That sticky sweet smell lingers in the air, flickering and dissipating again and again, a smoke cloud burning with the memory of your gentle fingers cradling glass after glass after glass. It is a fire that never burns out. Those glasses, those halfwashed, fully poured glasses were your greatest love. You found them impossible to resist; relentlessly tempting, they seduced you with their goldenbrown complexion, making your heart race and forcing hot blood to tickle your veins. They made tingles crawl up your spine, made the hairs on the back of your neck quiver with a sensation only equitable with feeling alive.

They let you forget.



understandable. The second, forgivable. But the third, fourth, fifth, sixth...? You leant on those glasses like they were the oxygen keeping you alive. With every breath, a little part of you would burn away – the heat from those love affairs boiled and bubbled away inside of you, pushing you further and further away from the you we all knew. From the you that we all loved.

brutal, biting words

You would stumble home, your crutch buckling under the weight of your guilt and selfhatred because you knew it was wrong. You desperately tried to hide all evidence of your illicit affairs with the golden girls. But it was futile – those goldenbrown drops seeped into your skin and engulfed you, making your hair, your skin, your sweat, sour with their putrid aftertaste.

That sickeningly sweet, sticky smell tormented you, constantly luring you back into the embrace of your golden-brown lovers again and again and again until you were left lying alone, helpless, that sticky sweet smell no longer emanating from your breath.

Your heart no longer pumping hot blood through your veins.

Years have passed since that sticky sweet smell stung our eyes and made us sick with sadness. Years have passed since your warm, gentle fingers were replaced with a cold stone slab, memorialising our love for you as if you were a saint and we were your followers. Years have passed since your greatest love took you away from the ones who loved you most.

Yet, after all those years, the aftertaste of your addiction still hangs in the air. Because now, that sticky sweet smell lingers in the memory of your wife, the nightmares of your daughter, the breath of your son. A fire that never burnt out.

Maybe those half-cleaned, fully poured, golden glasses shouldn't have been your greatest love.

Maybe you should have chosen us.

Lilian Trickey

Joy

I'm floating in a bubble- I am so slight, yet my laughter rumbles

Like a mighty lion- a force to recon, but sweet and lithe, And it bends to my will as it lifts me up, up, up- I'm so humble I'm lighter than air without expectations, my baggage I slough

One by one- and they tumble down to the ground below. I have come up so high since I discovered I could fly, Serendipitous serenity, so sudden a surprise- I shout hello To those less fortunate than I, so sad, self-indulgent sigh-My wings shimmer like puddles, but there's no rain in sight.



SOURCE

A walk down Magpie Lane on one winter night

Words by Adrian Kuba Illustration by Rachael Cummings-Naylor

Wandering nightly through the cobbled pavements of the city of dreaming spires, I could not help but notice the darkening shade of sandstone under the yellowing hue of orange lampshade.

The sandstone walls that saw the greatest wars and the greatest minds

flourish, and vanish without a single trace,

Except for written words, tireless recreation, A distant dream in the milky fog of one's own false recollections,

Of what is written on those sepia walls in dusty libraries,

A personal Alexandria of the romantic mind.

Those dark amber walls, who have eyes, Remember better than the greatest scholar, preserving the legacy

Of elfin spirits of men, just like you and me, Aspirations and visions of grandeur; lived or unreached.

Those ghostly wails of the past still remain, Resounding through the rooms of poets and politicians-

Becoming accustomed to these hallowed walls, just like you and me,

Wilde and Wordsworth, Shelley and Graves,

Their thoughts and words echo through empty streets,

Greeting me from windows and doorways, lit up cafes and dingy side-street pubs,

An omnipresence worthy of gods- these lecture halls, their shrines.

A dream to live by; a breathable mythology of those like you and me.

And I, and you too, may perhaps be one of those souls, Spending endless wintery nights wandering that stone, A future ghost, of a glorious past, echoing through those rooms at last.

FILM A24's Rise Through the Ranks

Eden Kilgour & Matt Unwin

eline Song's moving debut Past Lives, the most recent release for distributor and producer A24, is being showered with critical acclaim, but this sort of praise is nothing new for the studio. We've all seen it — the flashing white and RGB animated logo that characterises one of the most rapidly-rising studios of this century, and which has now formed a distinct brand, and spawned a dedicated cult following. The studio was founded in 2012 by Daniel Katz, David Fenkel and John Hodges, with a name lifted from the Italian A24 motorway that Katz was driving along when he decided to found the company. Such a name



seems fitting: the A24 motorway crosses hilly and mountainous terrain, forcing it to employ several daring and unorthodox civil engineering solutions, mirroring the novel storytelling techniques employed by A24's own films. Whilst these have no singular common characteristic, tending to span diverse genres, settings and plots, still many recognise elements of their films that make them distinctly 'A24'.

Since their inception, A24 films have risen almost exponentially into the public consciousness, producing and distributing landmarks of contemporary cinema like *Lady Bird*, *Ex Machina*, *Moonlight* and *Hereditary*.

It would be far-fetched to state that these films have anything remotely in common, but they are alike in their unique tone and voice. Perhaps the film that best encapsulates the studio's philosophy is Swiss Army Man. This film, by the same directors as Everything Everywhere All At Once, centres on a relationship between a castaway and a farting corpse. Most distributors were hesitant to pick it up, but A24 leapt at it. It seems that they saw in Swiss Army Man something that traditional studios did not - that its bizarre gimmick and strange humour wasn't a turn-off, but in the age of the internet, was a unique selling point that could market the film. They believed that the film's unique voice and storytelling would stand out, especially in a world of increasingly risk-averse mainstream studio releases.

The reason this comes through so distinctly is the fact the company works almost exclusively with writer-directors and pride themselves on being creator-driven. Thus, their films often feel intensely personal and hand-crafted, with edges that haven't been worn down by multiple redrafts from different writers and studio interference. Through their fundamental loyalty to filmmaker vision, A24's films, in all their differences, are often characterised by their focus on character relationships and dynamics, bringing out the best and worst human qualities and allowing post-watch self-reflection.

Past Lives is a striking example of these personal films, marked by an individual 'authorial voice'. Through its references to migrant experience shaping the protagonist's sense of identity, Past Lives feels deeply personal to Celine Song herself, just as the autobiographical elements of nostalgia, grief and loss do to director Charlotte Wells in the A24-distributed Aftersun. This focus on human emotion is also evident within The Lighthouse, which explores mental deterioration induced by insanity and isolation, and within Hereditary,



which explores grief and anguish. Perhaps most notably, this is demonstrated through Moonlight, which achieved A24's first Academy Award in the infamous envelope mixup of 2017. The film follows the protagonist through his internal, interpersonal and societal conflicts of grief, race, masculinity, identity and sexuality, giving a voice to underrepresented voices in cinema, as many other A24's films similarly do. Though these films are vastly different in both their settings and narratives, they all offer audiences a fresh, personal perspective, and the fact that A24's films consistently achieve this is a feat achieved by few other studios.

We can't say that every A24 film has been critically raved about, but they have certainly had their fair share of success. Perhaps a more cynical person would say that A24's unexpected popularity lies not in their unique obsession with 'authorial voice', but with their tactical marketing strategies, utilising social media to appeal to a young demographic, like their *Ex Machina* ad campaign that saw the creation of a Tinder account for the AI antagonist Ava.

Regardless, A24 is no longer simply the flashing logo that appears on-screen but rather has established an entire brand with its own identity of film, one that allows contemporary cinema viewers to recognise their work even without such a logo. The future of cinema is exciting, and I have little doubt that this inquisitive and innovative studio will be at the forefront of that.

Image Credits: (L) Past Lives Poster, Courtesy of A24; (R) Greta Lee in a still from Past Lives, Courtesy of A24

Olivia Rodrigo's Guts: A Lament on Girlhood

Holly Errington

n light of the immense success of her debut album Sour, Rodrigo's latest project, Guts, emerges as a compelling narrative continuation. This sophomore release is a simultaneous confession of growth and weakness, venturing into the edgier realm of pop-rock and exploring the complex emotions surrounding moving forwards after a significant relationship. The album master fully captures the challenges of this transitional phase of growing up, such as social incompetence, embarrassing levels of jealousy, and repressed feminine rage, making it a resonant musical journey for those experiencing the perils of girlhood.

When the album cover for this new body of work was released, a simple image of Rodrigo against a purple background, many fans were skeptical. Her Instagram comments were flooded with people claiming that sticking to such a similar aesthetic to her previous album, which also featured the singer against a purple background, would lead to a boring piece of art. In light of its release, these comments have become startlingly ironic, as the album explores themes of perfectionism and the overwhelming pressure put on Rodrigo to continue improving and changing as she grows older. This sparks the question, do we put too much pressure on young artists to constantly reinvent themselves for our entertainment? Has art become more about consumption than self expression? It is unbelievably difficult to write about the experience of girlhood without being accused of being too cliché. Girlhood is often dismissed as uninteresting by those who haven't lived it, and the quick dismissal of art about girlhood reveals an intriguing paradox: women frequently find resonance and enjoyment in songs written by men about men, while men seem to lack a similar inclination to connect with art centered around the female experience. Guts dances between raw pain and playfulness with ease. The opening trackall-american bitch

ful piano creating a sense of macabre dread that comes to a dramatic crescendo in the line 'You can't love anyone 'cause that would mean you had a heart'. A similar spite curses through the holy trinity of this album: get him back!, love is embarrassing and the grudge. Three songs that showcase the best of Rodrigo's writing talent by mixing witty lyrics, intense relatability and a revival of the 2000s pop genre.

him back!

is a grungy

p o p

els in spite, with the use of mourn-

tablishes dynamthis ic from the get-go wistful with verses weaved in-between a chorus reminiscent of Avril Lav- i gne's classic alternative hits. Rodrigo sweetly sings 'I've got sun in my motherfucking pocket' to encapsulate the feeling that one must always be performing easygoingness in order to not be seen as rude or overly emotional by men. Contrast this with the bridge of the song being, in Rodrigo's own words, 'literally just me screaming', and we have a complex exploration of the pent up anger that, as described by Margaret Atwood, being 'a woman with a man inside watching a woman' creates.

The hit single vampire further rev-

song that reads like a scrawled journal entry, endearingly immature in a way that Rodrigo frequently crafts so well. love is embarrassing is another dance-worthy tune that uses specific occurrences from her own relationships with stars such as Joshua Bassett, Zack Bia and Adam Faze as stepping stones to communicate a common experience. the grudge takes Rodrigo back to her roots - a slow piano ballad about resentment and holding onto the past,

simple yet powerful.

Rodrigo's use of humour in this album is refreshing. Lines such as 'And I told my friends I was asleep / But I never said where or in whose sheets' from the hit single bad idea right? drip with the mischievous self-derision of a teenage girl convincing herself that she is behaving badly 'for the plot' rather than because of her attachment issues. Furthermore, hearing her audibly grin when she announces 'maybe I could fix him' certainly made me grin along with her.

MUSIC

One thing that would've really made this album shine is a collaboration. Conan Gray, Rodrigo's close friend, is an obvious contender. Sharing a song such as *making the bed* with Gray could've been an incredible opportunity to make an understated song trapped in the middle of the album stand out, rather than simply being another sad, yet admittedly still catchy, ballad.

The final track, teenage dream, is nothing like its Counterpart by Katy Perry. The simultaneously hopeful yet sorrowful lyric 'Got your whole life ahead of you, you're only nineteen' is placed in our ears like a prayer, but is shortly fol-lowed by an apology for not an apology for not enjoying what is supposed to be an age of simplicity and joy. This is certainly an anxiety-inducing ending, sure to make many nineteen year olds shed a tear.

Overall, Guts is a fun album that successfully attempts to rekindle 2000s nostalgia whilst also being an exploration of intense pain. It will be interesting to see how Rodrigo's career develops over time, after all this is only her second album, and her tasteful use of self aware sarcasm adds a modern flare to this genre reboot that puts her at the forefront of a new yet familiar wave of music.

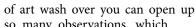
Image Credits: "Guts World Tour Logo", Olivia Rodrigo, CC BY-SA 4.0

A Very Short Guide to Surviving the Gallery Date ART

Kelsey Moriarty

here are a million better ways to spend an afternoon than moping around a largely windowless building with a complete stranger and an inability to remember where the exit is. Despite this, gallery dates remain oddly popular, with couples week on week traipsing to galleries. Art is in many ways a sort of stepping stone to deep and meaningful connection. Gallery dates are not without their difficulties but we here at Cherwell have some advice on how to handle gallery dates, from how to look at the art, how to talk about it - and when to leave.

Looking at the art is the bulk of the work. Take a minute to take in the painting. When you look at it, what do you notice? How do you feel? Simply allowing a piece



talk about. It may be something completely trivial - maybe you think someone's face is painted in a weird way, or that you want a particular piece on your bedroom wall - but any connection

Art is supposed to produce a reaction – just let it do its work. Ultimately, the aim of a gallery date

feelings and perspective on things. is to foster a relaxed and enatmosphere

the

is

to

Begin by sharing your initial impressions and feelings about a particular piece, and maybe venture into asking questions about specific details of the painting. Avoid technical jargon and instead focus on emotion and personal connection to the work.

Of course, there comes a point in every gallery date where you notice that one or both of you is walking a little slower. Yawning, perhaps. Or, more obviously, looking around for an exit. That's when you make arrangements to leave. Find a natural break point, such as the end of a room or section, and get out. Most galleries and museums have a café, and this is a great place to decompress, share your thoughts, and congratulate yourselves - you just about managed to survive the gallery date.



STAGE

I, Daniel Blake @The Oxford Playhouse 10th-14th October The critically-acclaimed stage adaption of the original film by Ken Loach, which follows the plight of a widowed carpenter trying to weather the failures of

the British welfare state.

BOOKS

Gifts and Books @The Weston Library An exhibition exploring the importance of gift-giving through books and across time, and how this apparently simple act reveals wider interactions, relationships and belief systems.

MUSIC

In Harmony @audiograft festival, Ovada 7th-8th October An installation & performance by artist Raheel Khan that brings together composition, geometric design and electroacoustic sound.

FILM

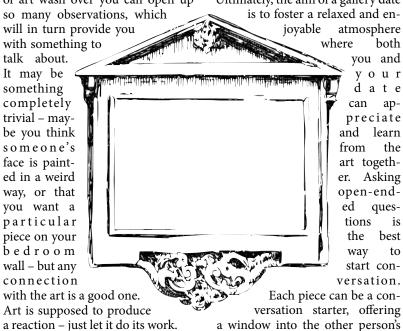
Past Lives @Curzon Westgate Nora and Hae Sung, two deeply connected childhood friends, are wrest apart after Nora's family emigrates from South Korea. Decades later, they are reunited for one fateful week as they confront destiny, love and the choices that make a life.

Read more on page 15!

ART

Colour Revolution @The Ashmolean Museum Rediscover Victorian society as a vibrant colour-filled era - from dazzling dyes used in chic corsets, bold experiments by avant-garde painters, and the flamboyant use of nature's

beauty in jewellery. Read the review in next weeks edition of Cherwell!



The Unwritten (Until Now) Oxford Dress Code

The definitive guide to how Oxford students dress, and how they really ought to...

Katie Saunders & Shaan Sidhu

iberated from the constraints of school uniforms and dress codes, University is a wonderful time of fashion freedom. But this bewildering independence can be a source of anxiety for many, sometimes even prompting a regression into their three-year-old self (think jorts, hair ribbons and Peter Pan collars). Never fear! We've put together a practical guide of the unwritten Oxford dress code that covers all the bases head-to-toe, from staying warm this winter to surviving a walk of shame with style. Shoes

Being at Oxford inevitably involves a lot of walking. Alongside a pair of comfy trainers - over which the Adidas Samba currently reigns supreme - Docs are another Oxford staple. But if you're planning to

break in a nice new pair this term, pack some thick socks or prepare for them to become your red-raw Achilles' heel (Wonder Balsam is also truly wonder-FULL for softening the leather). Any such chunky, platform or biker boots will also help lift you another inch away from the grime of the Atik cheese floor. When it comes to fancy footwear, however, the impulse can be to prioritise fashion over functionality- but tread this line carefully, especially if you're clip-clopping over the Radcam cobblestones in cowboy boots. Oxford roads can be a perilous territory for the weak-ankled and uncoordinated, so we recommend you wave goodbye to ballet flats and stilettos. And if in doubt, just

default to the trustworthy,

versatile, stylish Croc (check out @ crocsford for inspiration). Scarves

Essential to surviving Oxford in the colder



months, sporting a chunky fluffy scarf will prevent you from shivering in pub gardens and college libraries alike. Material matters too, so make sure to find something made with wool or cashmere. A preferred staple for both students and tutors here seems to be the striped cashmere scarf, but please avoid being so obsessed with it to the point that you will wear it to

Bridge, because you will lose it, and a year later, you will see someone in Pret wearing it. Although skinny scarves might be fashionable and very à la 2000s, you will

regret abandoning thicker options as November rolls around. Overall, a good scarf adds flair to an outfit, and can be easily complemented by other winter accessories like hats and gloves. Coats

Many Freshers anticipate the unofficial rite of passage of purchasing a college puffer in their first term. The hype is certainly warranted given how practical they are, especially in the winter months. However, there are a plethora of outerwear styles that are just as warm but more stylish. Down is more insulating than the synthetic filling in college puffers so, all clichés aside, The North Face puffer and others like it are great alternatives when bought second-hand. The same rule goes for lavish lovers of the fur coat, which keep you classy and very cosy. Long wool coats are also very common around Oxford as they can be styled casually during



A pair of Adidas Sambas will take you a long way, the quintessential shoe for all-year round Models: (L) Isaac Mead, (R) Giorgi Gvaradze

the day or dressed-up for formal events. Loved by farmers and academics equally, wax jackets like the Barbour are rather popular around town, and resist rain well. Thus they make up for what leather jackets lack, even if half the student population prefers the latter over the former. So unlimited in styles and colours, it is no wonder that every other person owns at least one. Workwear jackets are also designed with durability in mind, and like leather jackets they are suitable for all seasons. Search for brands like Carhartt and Dickies and you are sure to come across one. Bags

It seems to go without saying that a good, practical bag is an Oxford

essential. That's probably why so many students bin their backpacks and succumb to the debilitating condition of Tote Bag Shoulder (or the luxury alternative, the Longchamp Lats). But if you do so, beware. It rains a lot here, and the flimsy sheath you nabbed from the Freshers' fair is unlikely to keep your books dry. Not convinced? If you're cycling in every day, a backpack is probably more ideal. If you're feeling adventurous (or professional), use a satchel. If you want everyone to know how heavy your course load is, use a suitcase. And the most cursed option? The humble Tesco bag, with your unprotected laptop, pens and loose chewing gum rattling about the

bottom. Environmentally conscious, cost-effective and unlikely to get stolen (although it may get binned).

What to Wear on a Night Out:

Oxford's laid-back club culture is reflected in our outfits. The college puffer is an essential wear in the migration from college to Atik, since you probably care about it less than your rare vintage leather trench. You might even save £2 by skipping the cloakroom and taking a cheap jumper that you can just tie around your waist once you get inside. For footwear, some old trainers will do the trick, ideally with no mesh if you fear drink spillages. Clubs are also a great place to break

in your Doc Martens. Since venturing back into Bridge in broad daylight to dig through the lost and found just feels wrong, don't wear anything you would be devastated to lose or damage. With the exception of the post-formal night out, nobody wears heels, nice dresses or suits. Leave any expensive or sentimental jewellery behind. The same goes for scarves and nice coats, even in the coldest months; either take a less precious alternative, or else rely on the triedand-tested 'liquid layers' method (taking a couple of shots before speed walking across Oxford). There are two kinds of Walk-of-Shame outfit: **Post-formal**

Model: Shaan Sidhu

The classier of walk of shame uniforms is of course last night's black h tie, with heels (or bowtie) in hand, ong, sprinting across Oxford to a forgot-

Post-club

dignity.

A black leather trench is, by now, a must for anyone ven-

turing to scale the imposing spire of University Church

The luckier ones out there might get home in time for a frenzied outfit change, whereas the slightly less fortunate, having lost their cloakroom ticket, might have to borrow something from their new 'friend' and college tour provider. No shame involved though - the combination of a rugby shirt's boyish charm with ultra-low waist jeans is peak Cornmarket Street-style.

ten tutorial sans laptop, notepad or



Bring a flair to your Bodleian essay crises with a scarf and pair of gloves, perfect for weathering this winter Model: Connie Higgins

Vol. 299

Revolution in the Round: Is The Globe Still Relevant?

Kiaya Phillips

he globe is certainly still one of the biggest and most recognisable names when it comes to theatres despite now being over 25 years old. It is renowned for its Shakespearean roots in drama and constant stream of productions every year. The Globe theatre is undoubtedly a household name for anyone with even the remotest interest in the dramatic arts. But with its almost exclusive adherence to traditional plays, primarily Shakespearean ones, is it still able to keep up with the times? When modern theatre is on the up, and people want to see pieces that are provoking and get people talking, is The Globe able to accommodate the ever changing needs of a modern audience?

This summer, like many others, I went to see a few productions at The Globe with my father, a yearly bonding ritual we enjoy partaking in. This summer we saw two productions; The Comedy of Errors and As You Like It. What always intrigues me when going into a production of a Shakespearean text, is how the director and actors are going to make their version "different". Being an avid Shakespeare fan I can safely say I feel as though I have seen it all. I've seen very traditional versions that strongly adhere to the original speech and directions of the texts, and I have equally seen overly modernised interpretations

that take a go at bringing Shakespeare into the 21st century. I have no particular preference for either but I always find that the plays that stick with me are the ones that bring a unique interpretation to the table.

In this summer's production of The Comedy of Errors we can see directorial choices being made to bring a quirky take on the original comedic text. The production I saw was overtly camp and playful in style. They utilised the underlying innuendos of the original text and played on them using exaggerated physical movements and costume. Costume designer Paul Wills' dynamic choices emphasise the overly dramatic take the director is embarking on with this text (I myself am particularly curious to know where the black and silver starred cowboy boots he uses are from...). In a review of the production by The Guardian they state that the 'context remains relatively untouched yet the show feels contemporary, further revealing that people are beginning to recognise the steps that The Globe is taking to bring its plays into this more modern dramatic space, whilst still paying homage to its Shakespearean roots. Moreover, the costume and set's bright colour palette would incite the eye of any spectator, especially members of a younger demographic. The Globe is known for its audience participation and I do think this is an element that they utilise well to keep their productions interesting and relevant. It brings theatre into the outside space, breaking down that fourth wall between actor and audience member, a connection that is emphasised further with their classic in the round staging design and particularly their unique standing section.

Additionally, in this year's production of As You Like It I saw The Globe enter into a new more gender and racially inclusive space. The casting was deliberately gender neutral and diverse and the context of the text was made to be more fluid and open to wider interpretations. Director Ellen McDougall employs composer Michael Henry to integrate modern pop music into the production, adding some pizazz to the age-old classic and encouraging а hearty audience sing-along to Bruno Mars. The costumes in this production also take a more modern, untraditional, approach integrating traditional silhouettes and structures with lavers of distressed ruffles and more modern accessories

like neck chains and dangly earrings. The play could be viewed as pushing traditional limits too far, but I think it took a new approach and I enjoyed the gender neutral casting and felt that it did not interfere with my understanding of characters and their relationships in the slightest. I look forward to seeing more of this level of inclusivity and diversity in future Globe productions.

I also think that The Globe ensures that their productions remain accessible to the masses by offering £10-15 tickets for the standing section of the theatre. Though it isn't exactly enjoyable to stand for some of the lengthier Shakespearean plays (I don't think I could exactly "enstanding joy' for three hours watching a dense play like Hamlet!), it does give the option for people to come and see a production for a fraction of the price of what the seated tickets often go for. This means young thespians are given access to these world class productions without much financial sacrifice.

On The Globe's website they say that they 'celebrate Shakespeare's transformative impact on the world by conducting a radical theatrical experiment.' They are seemingly striving to create this new identity for themselves by offering alternative productions that aren't Shakespeare and encouraging their actresses and directors to make radical and progressive choices 'to collide old and new' to form something revolutionary.

Though I think that The Globe is trying to keep themselves relevant there are definitely advances they could make to ensure this even further. I feel like they are slowly beginning to push against the boundaries of traditional texts, but it's time to break those walls down and venture into something new and profound. I think by integrating newer modern plays into their repertoire they would generate new traction to the theatre and give back to the community by allowing up and coming practitioners a bigger setting to show their productions on. Despite this idea, I do have a lot of respect for the Globe and its productions, and I will undoubtedly continue to visit their theatre and enjoy their shows for many years to come.

Photo by Birmigham Museums Trust via Únsplash

William Shakespeare, Marble Bust (1760) by John Michael Rysbrack

BOOKS Recommendations from the Editors' Desk

Flowers for Algernon, Daniel Keyes **Rufus Jones**

The protagonist of this novel is an unlikely one: a 32-year-old man named Charlie Gordon with an IQ of 68. Seeking self-improvement, he attends reading and writing classes at a state institution, Beekman. His teacher Alice, kindly and solicitous, suggests he keep a diary. The novel comprises these diary entries.



Flowers for Algernon, Marshall P. Baron, Paint on Canvas (1970s)

Scientists at Beekman, after successful experiments on a mouse named Algernon, are looking for a human test subject for a surgical technique believed to increase intelligence. Recommended by Alice and clearly motivated himself, Charlie is chosen. The surgery is a success and Charlie's IQ skyrockets. Though initially excited by his newfound adeptness, his acuity sheds light on painful events he was previously oblivious to unavoidable; for instance, those he thought his close friends were actually bullies, delightedly ridiculing him to his face. The novel documents the wonder, fear and confusion with which Charlie comes to view the world and himself. The style and the content of the novel reflect his development as his writing improves. Though published in 1966, the subject of disability is treated with remarkable candour. Flowers for Algernon offers a stirring view of how the disabled are perceived and treated. It is one of the most moving novels I've read.

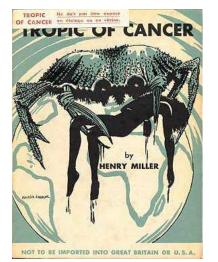
Tropic of cancer, Henry Miller

Ananya Parakh

It's tough to find a place to start with Henry Miller, because he never starts at the beginning. He dives into an obscene piece of insight you'd think you could have had yourself but you never did. He describes himself as "hungry, homeless and happy". The autobiographical nature of Tropic of Cancer reflects that. With nothing to lose, he has complete freedom to welcome anything that comes his way, he has no grounds for compromise or sacrifice, just complete freedom and independence for thought and belief. For literature.

I read this book in bits. It was like a feast, that I had to take deep sighs to digest. Karl Shapiro, in his introduction to the 1961 edition said that it's like poetry in a book written by a man that hates poetry. This could not have been more accurate. He rarely ever actually sticks to the subject, but that is the best part of the book. The corners and crevices of genius, almost scriptural, talk. Set in Paris in the 1930s, Tropic of Cancer is disgusting, pushing the boundaries of free speech in every way possible; misogyny, racism, violence and intoxication. You name it, and it's a 'trigger warning' in the book.

One of the longest standing banned books in the history of literature, for reasons that I understand, it is the best piece of literature I have ever read. It's the perfect book to carry to a desert island with you, because while you're hungry and homeless, you'll also be happy.



A Thousand Splendid Suns, Khaled Hosseini Zainab Rashid

Khaled Hosseini is a magical and

beautifully poetic writer. Every review glorifying 'A Thousand Splendid Suns' is both correct and unable to do it justice. My heart was pounding throughout and I was nervous to turn the page because of what I feared would come next.

The story begins with Mariam, a young girl living in Afghanistan. Although she adores her father and cherishes his visits from the city, his ultimate rejection of her culminates in her marriage to Rasheed. And so, she is doomed at fifteen to live out the rest of her days with a cruel older man. With political conflict raging in the background, Laila is born and their paths cross in a shocking twist.

The story explores female life under Taliban rule, abusive relationships and family dynamics in an extremely empathetic way and centres on the personality, character and strength of both women. Hosseini's writing and plot are captivating and the novel is intense, with themes of love, grief, sacrifice and hope threaded throughout. In short, it is absolutely heart wrenching. Image Credits: (L) Via Wikimedia Commons; (R) First Edition Cover,

R. Huffstutter via Flickr

The Tier List

Tutorial rooms

Outdoor tute

With the breeze in your hair and the sun shining bright, an outdoor tute on a warm Trinity day offers the perfect conditions for relaxed tutees and a relaxed tutor.

The tutor's office

The standard tute location. Can be cosy, but can also be stifling, depending on the vibe of the room (and of the tutor).

Faculty classroom

It feels like a schoolroom, it looks like a schoolroom, and no one wants to feel like they are in school again.

The online tute

Objectively the worst tutes. Crackly sound, technological difficulties, awkward silences - and, to top it off, they are reminiscent of the Covid lockdown which we are so desperate to forget.



Toilet training: the unexpected troubles of living out

Flora Symington

t started with a whining. A soft, barely discernible purring every time we flushed the toilet or turned the taps. "Character", we called it. This house was built in the 1920s after all, and didn't we move out of college precisely because we hated living in soulless institutional newbuilds? Didn't we want to live somewhere with a mind of its own?

After a while, we noticed that the soft g u r gling noise coming from the shower drain every time we used the toilet was accompanied by an eddy of water bubbling out onto the shower floor. A little quirk, we thought. It's probably just getting used to us. When we realised what was coming out of the shower looked suspiciously like what was going into the toilet, the regurgitations became harder to defend. Still, we knew it would only be a temporary issue, probably relating to the new bathroom that had been put in downstairs over the summer, which had delayed our move-in date by two months. A quick email to the letting agent and all would be resolved, we were sure.

Two days later, a plumbprofessionally er, known as "The Drain Doctor", was shaking his head at our new bathroom. His diagnosis? "Piss poor" - delivered without a trace of irony (I suppose once you've been in the drain game for a few years the puns start to lose their potency). This came after the agent's first two attempts at solving our problem, which took the form of a mysterious cleaner who poured bleach down the drain, and a silent builder who bailed ten buckets of water out of our garden. We decided it was time for a good old strongly-worded email in the hope that we might be taken a bit more seriously. After a heated housemate discussion over whether "squelching underfoot" was a technical term, the email was sent, and we were told an appointment with the Doctor had been arranged.

The Doctor's diagnostic approach and recommendations were drip-fed to me through the house group-chat whilst I was at work, beginning with the tantalising fact that I wouldn't be able to put my bike away in the garden as it is currently a pit of open sewage. During the full debrief I received when I got home, it transpired that this was because the builders who were in over the summer had decided to cover the drainage trench in the garden with a sheet of plywood and a layer of gravel rather than filling it in. This meant that on any occasion which we had used the garden in the last two weeks we could have come to a particularly sticky end. The Doctor was able to successfully perform some emergency surgery on the bathroom, but prescribed at least another month of building work to get the garden back to its former self. The letting agent informed us that this is not their responsibility, but the landlord's, who, it turns out, lives in California, so isn't what you'd call the hands-on type. As of now, our garden resembles a crime scene only with red spray paint outlining a sewage dump rather than a dead body.

Much like new parents, the house is all my housemates and I can talk about - so much so that I am considering imposing a 'no house talk' rule during meals. Just like those couples who think they're the first people in the world to have a baby, I'm probably documenting something that has happened in some iteration to every first-time tenant, especially if they're renting as a student. I'm not even particularly trying to offer any advice: as far as I'm concerned, we did everything by the book, taking over a contract from friends who lived in the house before and had absolutely no issues with the house or the landlord. The message, if any, that I'm trying to deliver to anyone who is considering moving out of college or is about to move into their house, is that it's not your fault. You can do everything right, you can do all your research, you can show the house all the love and care it deserves (one of my housemates has recently taken to stroking the boiler every time he passes in case it's feeling neglected), and your beloved house can still turn around and throw it back in your face

Oh well. They say the first few months are the hardest. How long does the toilet toilet training stage usually take?

The joys of room decorating

Christina Kurian

ll of it has to be stripped down and hauled right back down those same eight stairs weeks later. Worse still if you're an international student, forced to decide whether to pack clothes or posters - the airline won't give you more luggage capacity just because Oxford has special rules about accommodation. As an international student myself, I spent the majority of my first Michaelmas staring at bare walls.

More recently, I've come to realise the importance of decorating my room - if only for the short amount of time we spend there. Without any personalised touches, room is just four walls .. But add decorations, and suddenly it's vour room, your home, even though the house you grew up in might be thousands of miles away on a different continent. It becomes a safe space to be creative,

and remind yourself of who you are away from the constant turbulence of Oxford life. When you need a moment to breathe and calm down after a hectic week of tutorials, you can look at the pictures you've strung up on your walls – happy memories of times gone by, of the people and places you still love. When you go to sleep, it's relaxing to drift off under posters of your favourite films and celebritie .

For home students, it's definitely worth bringing the little things that matter so much to you. For international students, if this isn't practical, remember that Oxford has great places

for

to shop

decorations and take this as a chance to let your creativity shine! You can start as big or as small as you like - print off some photos of your friends, or head down to Blackwell's Art and Poster shop and have a poke around. There's bound to be something that appeals to you. Fairy lights are definitely a popular option - they create a soft, cosy atmosphere without breaking the bank or requiring too much creative effort. Some rooms come with a pin-board, so stock up on pins and photographs of your most treasured memories. A personal favourite of mine is books; I've met very few people here who don't like to read, and a curated book collection is often one of the most telling indicators of your personality. And if none of the extra decorating appeals to you, then stick with the basics and decorate your furniture. Pick a colour scheme and match your

pillowcases to your duvet cover, throw, and blankets.

Whether you choose to start small or go all-out, decorating your room at Oxford is definitely worth it despite the short terms. Vac storage exists for a reason – the posters can always be rolled up and the fairy lights taken down. The inconvenience of finding a place to pack it away doesn't compare to the small joys of looking at your favourite photos, being proud of yourself for an attempt at interior design, and snuggling against your favourite cushions when you go to bed.

So, get here early in 0th week and start decorating!



Looking for love?

Email lifestylecherwell@ gmail.com or message one of our editors.

A delightfully sweet summer at Cocoa Runners

Nina Naidu

delves into her time this summer interning at a chocolate company and why she is glad she took the opportunity.

eople often say that patience is a virtue, and I embraced this mantra (unintentionally) during my quest for a summer internship. Whilst many friends of mine had already submitted a dozen applications to the top consulting firms in the world by Christmas, here I was in late May contemplating whether to bolster my CV. My initial hesitation stemmed from not wanting to work over the summer. However, reality hit when I realised that I was not going to have a summer without the funds to sustain myself. With some assistance from the Oxford Careers Website and a stroke of luck, I secured just one internship opportunity - a golden ticket to a delightfully sweet summer.

I spent two and a half months as a Digital Media intern at Cocoa Runners, an independent sustainable chocolate company in London. While my peers in their crisp-ironed suits headed to towering office blocks down the road, I found myself swimming in chocolate. The company was undergoing a rebrand for its tenth anniversary, and I was tasked with organising their image library and updating product photos for their new website. As someone new to full-time work, this was an exciting venture for me.

At first, I fretted about my ability to fulfil the job requirements. Worries about my Photoshop skills - last exercised during my Graphic Art GCSE nearly five years prior - and using WordPress for the first time plagued me. It turned out that my apprehension was misplaced. Once I got started, I was pleasantly surprised that my eagerness to learn quickly overtook my editing prowess. With only three colleagues (one of whom worked remotely), I felt well-supported, and they showed a genuine interest in my life and degree. It didn't hurt that the CEO was an Oxford alumnus! I remember my interview even resembling an Oxford tutorial.

During my time at Cocoa Runners, I delved into the significance of ethics and sustainability in the cocoa industry. I learned about the exploitation of cacao farming plantations by major chocolate corporations, involving child slave labour to produce cheap, mass-market confectionery. Although most of my tasks consisted

"What was unique to this job was my exposure to the dark history of chocolate."

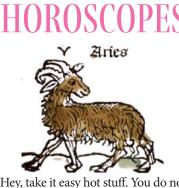
of typical office work – spreadsheet management, copywriting, and setting up numerous chocolate-tasting events. What was unique to this job was my exposure to the dark history of chocolate. Most importantly, I discovered how I could contribute to supporting small independent businesses genuinely concerned about the cacao cooperatives they employed worldwide.

While unrelated to my degree in Italian and Linguistics, I was fortunate to be part of a company that guided me through my first work experience. They emphasised the importance of maintaining a work-life balance, a stark contrast to the academic world where work can seep into any hour of the day. For a few months, I enjoyed a stress-free lifestyle which boosted my productivity, knowing I had only eight hours a day to accomplish tasks.

To those debating doing an internship, I urge you to apply sooner rather than later. My last-minute luck was an exception I would not recommend. Unfortunately, internships in highly competitive fields often yield more rejections than offers (which I admit is not great for your self-esteem), so starting early is key. Don't hesitate to explore opportunities outside your degree field; any workplace experience is invaluable and distinct from your academic journey. While I plan to stay in academia for a bit longer, I wholeheartedly cherished my summer internship.

And don't forget the free chocolate!

Artwork by Sean Hartnett.



Hey, take it easy hot stuff. You do not need any more strika bombs; no no. Let's share the talking stick a little, see how it feels.



Do not say sorry! It is their fault because you are very intelligent.



Is this the term you strut the boards? Look out for OUDS auditions you're probably very good at acting as you have seen so many films.



Malt your shell and let it all hang out. Oh yeah, that's inner briny beauty baby. Also, buy new old clothes, pick up rolling! They will forget who you used to be by week 5. Good riddance.



Try to crowdsurf fresher's fair. They chant your name and in those moments it becomes clear that you will never live this moment down but why would you want to?



With a little more pressure, you'll be spitting out pearls (essays) from that famous oyster-brain of yours (essay production system). Look out for black coffee in your life; it's delicious.



Tibra

Change nothing, risk nothing, keep on keeping on. Pesto pasta is great dinner. Why would you deviate from your decades-old formula?



Stamp out weakness where you find it in your little world. Volcanic soil is the most fertile in which to grow.



What's your name, again? Hi! Yep, yep. Art foundation, mmhmm. The hat is my mum's, yeah! Eschew time management.





Maybe, just this once, you'll go to an OU debate. Eloquent people just hanging out inviting celebs and having a jolly nice time.



Emails can only suggest what you do, never determine. You are your own lode-star, your touchstone,



People are praying on your downfall and trying to play tricks with your vision. You're 20/20 in your and Timmy Chalamet's eyes.

Dinner date with yourself

Phoebe Walls

hen one of my closest friends first introduced me to the phrase "date yourself", I found it ridiculous. I have always enjoyed my own company but wouldn't have considered simply going somewhere alone to be on a date. It's easier than ever in the digital age to download a dating app and swipe your way into the pub with a stranger. Hardly any of us would consider turning up alone for dinner instead.

Last Trinity - freshly heartbroken - I spent many afternoons in Christ Church meadows burning my shoulders and watching couples intertwined. I found the company of friends or a crowd on a night out or in the library a welcome distraction from the racket of my own thoughts and tears. Yet this breakup was food for thought and my friend's advice to "date myself" came to mind. A few months later in Germany I rediscovered my love of solitude. Spending time alone is not embarrassing, it's enriching.

I've enjoyed plenty of dinners by myself. Once a man stopped a wasp falling into my glass in Oxford and then showed me a poem on his cracked screen. We ended up having a burrito before he got his train back to Bristol. This fleeting and platonic connection gave me more confidence to do more by myself. The next day I stumbled into spoons alone and befriended some random interns from Yorkshire. If I'm not chatting to strangers to the people I meet I like keeping to myself but writing poems about them. There's a section of my notebook reserved for sketching strangers.

It's easy to rely on the company of family, friends or lovers to make yourself happy or fill a void. Lots of young people describe feeling awkward sitting in public alone. A table for one can make you question if people are staring, wondering if you have no friends. The reality is that everyone is far too wrapped up in their complex, inner lives to judge you or even notice.

In Oxford with jam packed terms it's easy to fill every day with social events. As an extrovert I treasure time with my friends but used to be prone to bouts of loneliness during term time weekends. The libraries are strangely packed by 9 am yet college can feel eerily quiet. Learning to love your own company offers inner peace.

There is great value in the turmoil of putting yourself out there, whether that's dating or cherishing arguably the greatest love stories of all: friendships. Invest in the relationship you have with yourself like you would a friendship, offer yourself time and compassion.

"Me time" often implies lazing around at home but why not challenge yourself to do what you would normally save for friends or dates for change? Choose your favourite resbring taurant,

your book or sim-

ply soak up the peo-

ple watching.

So instead of scrolling into the endless void of tiktok for hours on end when your friends are busy, go out anyway. Romanticise the mundane and spectacular

moments of your life. You can't break up with yourself so learn to enjoy the company of the one person you are stuck with forever. There's no shame in a table for one.

DOUBLE TAKE:

I am a Long-Term, Long-Distance, Low-Commitment, Casual Girlfriend... how do I set myself free?!

We ask our resident agony aunts for their advice on your problems.

End things ASAP

aving downloaded the mainstream dating apps in Hilary last year, I met a boy with whom I went on a great first date. We then proceeded to go on more dates and get to know each other. The proceeding months saw us essentially playing a couple but with no label and no commitment, and every time I brought up 'what we were', he avoided the question. He finally admitted that he did not want anything serious, but refuses to end whatever it is that we are doing. I feel like I should end it for my own sanity: I think I like him and would want him to commit but I know he never will. What should I do?

He is clearly not what you need,



and you should follow your head instead of your heart, and save it from further heartache. With the start of a new year come new opportunities, and the chance to meet new people. Holding on to negativity from last term may prevent you from taking advantage of all that Michaelmas may bring. Rather than clinging on to what was in the past, you can try to be optimistic about what will be in the future. You are so much more than a 'Long-term, Long Distance, Low Commitment, Casual Girlfriend', and there is no doubt that there is someone out there to whom you will mean so much more.

Not only could this term's fresh start bring romantic prospects, but bear in mind that you have the undying support of your platonic friends. Any romanticising of wintery dates, Christmas markets and the like can still be fulfilled by the people who are there to support you. Your true friends will be there to pick up the pieces when you break off your painful situationship, and will be able to supplant your need for companionship.

My advice is to cut your losses and break free. You never needed him, anyway.

Do it for the plot...

T's the start of term and you're young and single! What's the harm in casual dating? He might be a red flag, but isn't red, like, your favourite colour? I'm sure he has many features which drew you to him in the first place: attraction, humour, chemistry...what more could you ask for? By now it's been established that finding a great match in Oxford can be no easy feat, so once you've found something you like the look of, you would be silly to give it up!

I mean, who wants to be all



when Oxmas rolls around and Broad Street is lit up with Christmas stalls! Sure, he won't actually agree to go with you on such dates (since he won't see you before dusk), but the potential is there! After all, it's better to entertain something than to have nothing. Who doesn't want someone to warm their bed on cold, radiator-less nights?

My advice is to go for it -what's the worst that could happen? This will provide endless e n - tertainment for you and your other friends,

your other friends, bringing a welcome distraction from the stresses of Michaelmas. We all need a bit of risk in our lives at Oxford to counterbalance the monotony of weekly essays or practicals.

Review: Rosa's Thai

Georgie Allan

A vibrant addition to Oxford's George Street, Rosa's Thai has come a long way from its humble beginnings as a market stall in London's East End.

Fifteen years on from its founding as a restaurant group by Saiphin and Alex Moore in 2008, Rosa's is bringing fresh, authentic Thai taste to the Oxford City Centre, using Thai produce including curry pastes from the Huai Yod district and pad Thai noodles from a 3rd generation family business. This was certainly reflected in the freshness of the ingredients served, which gave the food a much richer taste than its takeaway counterparts.

The evening started with a drink - a boozy lemongrass and pandan iced tea, which as with many drinks on Rosa's menu also came as a non alcoholic alternative for non drinkers. An incredibly fruity drink the alcohol gave it a septic edge, reminiscent of the apples contained in a mcdonalds happy meal, an unexpectedly nostalgic taste. To sample as large a selection as possible I chose the Classic



Sharing Platter, which included four of the six starters on offer, with prawn crackers. Intended for 2 people it came in at a very reasonable price of £18 (only £1 more than its vegetarian counterpart) and had plenty to go around. Both the pork and the chicken were well cooked, the former sweet, the latter saturated with the flavour of lemongrass though both were certainly largely improved by their sauces tamarind and peanut respectively. The remaining elements - calamari, spring rolls and prawn crackers - were light and savoury, and worked well with any of the sauces that came on the platter.

The Pad Thai is best described as incredibly filling, which when following a starter and a drink would allow it to be comfortably shared, though had a more-ish quality which more than justified the quantity served. The star ingredient was undoubtedly the peanuts which lent an earthy flavour to the noodles, complemented by the sharp citrus of fresh squeezed lime provided to the side of the plate allowing the meal to be



adjusted to taste.

For dessert I tried both the Thai Churros and the Mango & Sticky

Rice - both listed as Thai classics. Having never tried churros with condensed milk before I was pleased to find that it was sweet but not overwhelmingly so, providing a light finish to a hearty menu. The Mango & sticky rice was the same if a little heavier though this was offset by the sweet freshness of the mango.

Rosa's markets itself as a home of "signature Thai hospitality", a characteristic definitely attributable to this newest addition to the Oxford dining scene. Welcoming staff and comforting food produced a homely atmosphere, giving the whole restaurant an air of ease and familiarity and rapid service allowed the food to be enjoyed at a comfortable pace. Though the price range may make it an only occasional treat for our student readers, I would highly recommend Rosa's to anyone looking for a fun evening out with family, college or otherwise.

Beyond the Tesco Meal Deal

Vedika Rastogi

'The meal deal' is synonymous with the feeling of hungover Sunday blues, the feeling of running on fumes before your student loan comes in and the fuel behind typing those last 350 words on an overdue essay.

owever, the wherewithal of a dreary walk to Tesco is only slightly alleviated by the seemingly abundant and overwhelming array of options. After months or years of being a meal deal connoisseur you learn that unless your favourite sandwich (the only acceptable choice being the cheddar triple) is available you will feel undoubtedly crushed by the weight of regret of drunken decisions made on Atik cheese floor, the looming email chasing up that unfinished essay and/or the shreds of your bank account left towards the end of term. If you find yourself in said position or simply have taste buds not sullied by tasteless hall

food please read on. As someone who infamously has no culinary talent and is also landlocked by Christ Church's aversion to student kitchens I have acquainted myself with the suitable, similarly-priced alternatives.

DIY

Wraps - While it's basic and will remind you of school lunches, an elevated wrap in some places in central Oxford will set you back at least £7 so why not grab some falafel and humous and make your own. This option can also be leveled up- why not make a quesadilla simply by heating your cheesy wrap in the microwave. Or perhaps try a Caprese wrapwhether or not you managed a Euro Summer, the combination of tomato, mozzarella and basil is



guaranteed to bring you a burst of Mediterranean vibes. (Note: Microwave use optional.)

Salad bowls - Not having touched a vegetable in about 6 weeks, a salad may help revive you before you begin to resemble a Victorian waif. Be as creative as you like without suffering the 50p topping charge for indulging in more than one main. You could try a quinoa salad for a protein packed option or chicken satay salad- a perfect balance of peanut and flavourful chicken. You could even try your hand at a warm salad- heat up some chicken slices to ease those wintry vibes.

Soup - Why not treat yourself to a £3.20 soup from M&S? A slice of toast and tomato soup will work wonders in lifting seasonal blues and embracing autumn.

Platter - While you're stuck in limbo unsure of what you want. Satisfy your need for 'picky bits' and treat yourself to an assortment of dips and vegetables or cheese and vegetables or any combination that calls out to you. Overnight oats - Though the romanticized notion of a European breakfast - a leisurely coffee with a cigarette in hand - holds its appeal, the demands of 9 am lectures call for a heartier start to the day. Mix oats, milk or yogurt, and your preferred toppings (like fruits, nuts, or seeds) in a jar. Allow it to rest in the fridge overnight for an easy breakfast that is ready to go!

Maximise your microwave

Microwave eggs? - In my depths of ignorance last term, I discovered it is possible to prepare various types of eggs in the microwave. While I cannot vouch for consistent results, microwave eggs might not be too far off how you would describe the eggs found at hall brunch.

Mug cakes - Switch that 4th cup of coffee out for something more substantial. A mug cake is the ideal solution for your desert desires. Mix together flour, sugar, cocoa powder, milk and butter in a mug. Pop into the microwave for just a minute and you'll have yourself a warm cup of joy.

Beyond the DIY

Sainsbury's Bakery - The offer-

ings at Sainsbury's bakery, from pizza rolls to an array of swirlshaped delights, will satisfy both your cravings and your curiosity for novel pastries.

Bigger tesco meal deal - Perfect for that point when a takeaway seems like a far dream due to the deficit in your bank account, but your cravings are insatiable.

Too Good 2 Go - A great way to rescue leftovers from being discarded and an affordable method to be able to eat from your favourite restaurants at low prices.

Gloucester Green - When you find yourself at a loose end in the afternoon, Gloucester Green offers budget-friendly meal options and an array of cuisines serving up pretty much everything your heart desires.



For the Love of Brighton

Adam Saxon reminisces

owards the end of the division three 1996/7 season (at that stage the fourth tier of English football), Brighton and Hove Albion were staring into the footballing abyss. They would be homeless after the end of the season, with the beloved Goldstone ground sold and scheduled to be demolished. The fans were at war with the board over this sale, and at one point during the season the team had been 13 points adrift of safety. It took a last day of the season draw against fellow relegation battlers Hereford to stay in the league, and a vote that determined whether the Albion would be expelled from the football league anyway. Against all odds, they survived.

This club seems a million miles away from the one that now plays in the 32,000-seater Amex stadium, and last season qualified for European football for the first time ever. At the time of writing, we sit third in the premier league, a fact that if you'd told someone at that fateful Hereford game twenty-six years ago, I'm sure they would have laughed in your face. A large amount of credit for the club's survival and growth in the early years following that close call has to be given to Dick Knight.

Knight, now Albion's lifetime club president, is also a lifetime Albion fan, and took over the club in '97. He guided the club through a rocky period where they played at Gillingham for a couple of years,

had continued brushes with relegation from the football league before finally returning to Brighton and the Withdean stadium in 1999.

I went to my first Brighton game in 2016, the season we got promoted to the Premier League. By Albion standards this makes me a glory hunter. I can never claim to be one of the fans that travelled all the way to Gillingham to watch them lose

"Against all odds, they survived."

every week (although admittedly this was before I was even born). I can't even claim to have seen the years of comparative success when the club was yoyoing between the lower leagues in the mid 2000s. I wasn't one who helped campaign for a new home for the club, an endless battle that lasted over ten years. However, I think it is testament to the success of the club the extent to which the fanbase has exploded in recent years, not just in Brighton but across the world. Looking at the club, it's not difficult to see why.

I can say I fell in love with a club that has consistently felt well run and (primarily) fan oriented. I think it says a lot when I can say that the biggest point of friction I have witnessed between the fans and the board over the last seven years was the implementation of a poorly thought through season ticket exchange system (it doesn't even merit the time it would take me to explain it). Looking around at the Manchester Uniteds, the Liverpools, and especially the Chelseas of the world, it feels good to be a well-run club. Money is a big influence in footballing success, but it certainly isn't everything.

I can also say I've seen a spectacular rise even just over the last 8 or so seasons. I've seen some icons come and go (Glenn Murray, Anthony Knockaert, Shane Duffy to name a few favourites). I've seen some great games and some terrible ones. I've seen us play at Wembley in FA cup semi-finals. I've seen us go from a team struggling to stay up each year and constantly looking over our shoulders down the league, to a team playing expansive and exciting football, looking up the league at how high a finish we might achieve.

Of course, the question always remains- 'well, how long will this success last?' Historically, it doesn't look great. Teams who sell their best players consistently tend to struggle to replicate their success over the longer term- think Southampton or even Leicester. However, in our case I believe we are under the best possible ownership to at least remain a stable

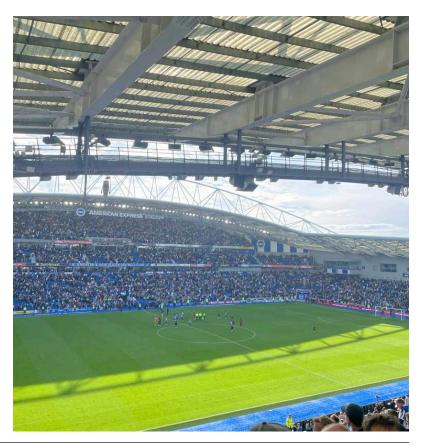
"Money is a big influence in footballing success, but it certainly isnt everything."

club in coming years. Our transfer record over recent years has been nothing short of miraculous. Every time a player leaves, we seem to bring in someone better. Think the replacement of Cucurella with Pervis Estupinan, or the replacement of Yves Bissouma with Moises Caicedo (and now Carlos Baleba?). However, this is no accident. It is the result of a club that is well run from top to bottom. With Tony Bloom (Brighton's current owner) Brighton is in safer hands than most clubs in world football.

He gets it; again, he is a lifelong Brighton fan.

Regardless of all this talk of 'success', the club is in an incredible position. Playing in the Europa league against European giants like Ajax and former European cup winners Marseille in its own way again signifies the historic rise of Brighton and Hove Albion. Currently, I care less about how long the success will last, and more about just enjoying it while it does.

Image Credit: Adam Saxon



The handy Cherwell College Sport MT23 guide

This week, Cherwell brings you a guide to all the college sport coming your way this term...

Understanding college sport: College sports are a great way to get involved in sports in a less competitive setting, so for those who want to try out a new sport or aren't quite at the level to play for the university they can be a great way to stay fit!

To get involved in college sport, first work out if there is a club already running at your college, and just ask to get involved! College sport is on the whole incredibly casual and relaxed, so don't be afraid to try something new.

Many sports run both in a league format and 'cuppers'- an inter-college knock out tournament.

Football:

Cuppers: starts 2nd week Michaelmas and runs until the end of Hilary.

League: Starts 1st week Mich-

larv term

Football runs leagues and cuppers for JCR men's (and men's reserves), MCR men's, and women's teams to enter, so there is a competition for everyone to get involved in!

Rugby (Union):

Cuppers and Leagues- men's and women's competitions run from early Michaelmas all the way through to Trinity.

Netball:

Womens/ mixed league runs from early michaelmas to the end of Hilary, cuppers doesn't take place until trinity.

Rowing:

Isis winter league- the first two races of a competition that takes place over Michaelmas and Hilary terms, and is open to a whole range of boat classes. Aimed at senior abilities.

Autumn 4's- Senior competition, as the name suggests boats of 4 compete against each other. Takes place on the Sunday of 5th

Michaelmas Novice regatta-Saturday 7th week Michaelmas term. A friendly competition aimed at giving novices an early chance to compete against each other.

Basketball:

League runs from 1st week Michaelmas until the end of Hilary.

Badminton:

Friendly league runs from 2nd week michaelmas until the end of hilary. Women's, men's, and mixed competitions all available.

Cross country cuppers:

Early in Michaelmas, also serves as a selection race for OUCCC (Oxford University Cross Country club).

Gymnastics Cuppers:

Late michaelmas term. 1 day event.

Hockey:

Cuppers (Men's, Women's, mixed), and a mixed League all run on Sundays in Michaelmas.

League runs from start of Michaelmas to end of Hilary (mixed teams)

Squash:

League starts mid-Michaelmas, teams of five from each college compete! Cuppers doesn't start until Hilary.

Table Tennis:

Cuppers begins mid-Michaelmas and runs through into Hilary. Mixed gender tournament!

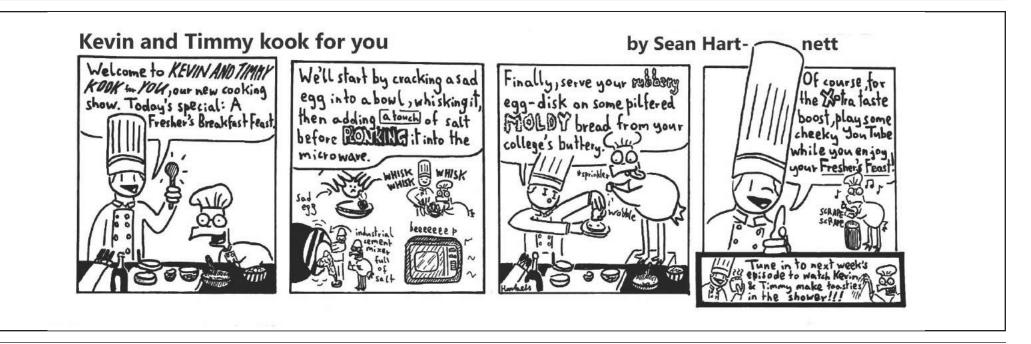
Sailing:

Cuppers event, takes place early in Michaelmas. Mixed gender teams of four from each college. Beginner friendly!

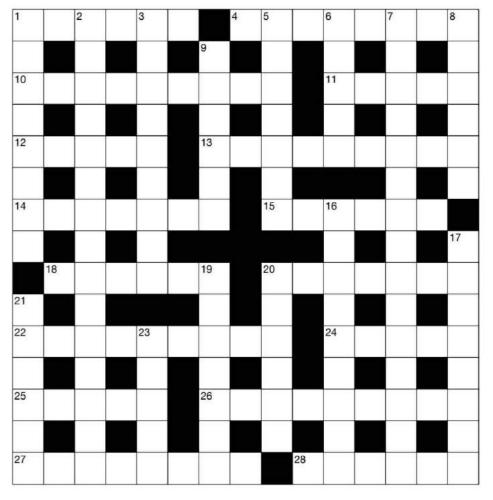
There are many other sports that don't get going until later terms, so keep an eye out even if there's nothing here that looks interesting for you! For more information about college (and university) sport head to sport. ox.ac.uk

Image Credit: Keble College Football Club.





Cryptic Crossword by Misha Pemberthy



ACROSS

1. Ella's heart contains sources of especiall

normal tremors, indicating pulse (6) 4. Top academics forbid Professors of De-

serts (8) 10. Action, with the Spanish berserk over Madrid's second at Barcelona's home

(9)

Genius's first baby shower (5)
 Feel old ache (5)

13. Squared up with drunk devotee boxing topless, fun!

(6,3)

14. Divides odd ship holding church text (7) 15. Sitter rearranged shapes and made them

fit? (6) 18. Sat up, interrupting sibling's balance (6)

20. Excuse to cut orgy short: penetrating a little more than four (7)

22. Made sauna go out of order incessantly (2,7)

24. European plane consuming cold fire (5)25. Naive bet (5)

26. Criticise french and tinge pastry (9)

27. Greedily swallowed scrambled egg and ignored missing soldier returning (8)

28. Arrival of a bit of bad ventriloquism (6)

DOWN

1. Blue sport where one of friends wears lace (8)

2. Despite everything, break nightstand in two (15)

3. Bugs I will regularly unleash on ship harbouring ecstasy (9)

5. Two undergarments- not meek! (7)

6. Stately, yet inert (5)

7. Optimistically play Soviet piano tone

(2,1,8,4)8. Council watch over receding tan (6)

9. No first night: Ann's leg broken in high spirits (6)

16. "Wrong to hold people" journalist heckled (9)

17. Aware and posted, that is not empty (8)

19. Expensive last careful scale of spire (7)20. Severe shortage means morning is set in punishment (6)

21. Prohibit odd bride's doll (6)

23. Milk holder is complete, swapping time for daughter (5)

| Sudoku | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|--|--|
| | 1 | 4 | | | 2 | | | | | |
| | 5 | | | | 9 | | 2 | 7 | | |
| | | | | 5 | 8 | 9 | | 4 | | |
| | 6 | | | | 4 | | 7 | 8 | | |
| | | 1 | | | | 4 | | | | |
| 4 | 8 | | 1 | | | | 5 | | | |
| 7 | | 5 | 6 | 9 | | | | | | |
| 1 | 9 | | 8 | | | | 4 | | | |
| | | | 5 | | | 7 | 6 | 25 | | |

Sudala

| | | | | | 8 | 5 | | 1 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0 | 1 | | | | 2 | | | 5 | 3 |
| | | | | 4 | | | 2 | | |
| | 6 | | 7 | | | 9 | | | |
| | | 3 | | | | | | 2 | |
| | | | | 8 | | | 5 | | 4 |
| | | | 6 | | | 4 | | | |
| | 7 | 5 | | | 9 | | | | 1 |
| | | 8 | | 7 | 1 | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |

& extra hard Oxdoku by Lewis Callister

Answers in 1st week print

Follow us on Instagram for the latest Oxford news and commentary!

