Corpus Christi stalking incident sheds light on inadequate handling of harassment cases in Oxford

Maggie Wilcox reports.

Two Corpus Christi undergraduates were stalked by a fellow student for over two years, despite frequent appeals to college authorities. The college procedure led to a confusing and frustrating process for the victims. Mary and Sophie were in their first year at Corpus Christi College, Oxford when a fellow student, Joe, began giving them unwanted attention. By Trinity term of 2019, the situation had escalated. He made frequent advances, left many letters in their pidges and offered mysterious gifts, persistently following, messaging and staring at them. At times, he prevented them from leaving the college library by blocking them in the pews. He continued to confront and pesteer their pidges and online. Following continued conversations with Corpus admin, the college library ultimately spurred the college to hold a harassment panel. Following Mary’s official harassment complaint, the Corpus Disciplinary Committee held a panel to discuss Joe’s behaviour and recommend further actions. Neither Mary nor Sophie were informed of the precise timings of the panel. Mary only discovered the panel had occurred when she wrote to the Dean with concerns about Joe discussing her harassment complaint publicly, even though she had been told to keep this matter strictly confidential. The Dean responded by stating that he could not control Joe’s actions, the panel had happened the day before and the outcome had not been determined yet. The two women were eventually notified in person that the Commit- tee had banned the accused from the campus and activities “indefinitely”. If Joe ever contacted them again, he could no longer remain a member of the university. Mary and Sophie were not given the verdict in writing. Corpus policy at the time, as detailed in the 2021 non-academ- ic disciplinary procedure (NADP), stated that a “verbal report” is all that needed to be given to the student who brought forward the complaint.

One university, many procedures

High Commissioner “disappointed” with Turkish society’s platforming of Ersin Tatar

Jakub Trybull reports.

The High Commission of the Republic of Cyprus in the UK has expressed “serious concern and disappointment” with the presence of the elected leader of the Turkish occupied area of Cyprus, Ersin Tatar, at an event hosted by the Turkish Society. Concerns lie largely with language and symbols used to promote the event. On Monday, the Oxford University Turkish society hosted an event with Ersin Tatar, branded as “a talk by [the] President of [the] Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, “the “TRNC”. As part of the event’s social media marketing, the presidential seal and a link to Tatar’s website was included. The High Commission was particularly concerned with word choice regarding Tatar’s position as it implied that the TRNC is a sovereign state.

Eight colleges to raise hourly wages to £13.15

Daniel Thomas reports.

Eight colleges are set to raise hourly wages in line with the latest measure to increase the living wage in Oxford by 10%. This is part of a series of measures by the Council to promote wage fairness in the local economy. The new Oxford Living Wage will be raised to £12.49 an hour, and be pegged at 95% of the London Living Wage, currently £13.15.

The Oxford Living Wage, first introduced by the City Council in 2008, is part of the broader Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Part- nership between local government and civil society, to promote equal- ity and sustainable opportunities across the county.

Oxford’s colleges have long been criticised on the grounds of labour rights. A student-led campaign for better wages and conditions in University employment, Oxford Work- er Justice, has drawn attention to issues such as the lack of transpar- ency over precisely how much non-academic workers at the colleges are paid, as well as over the use of zero-hour contracts and agency staff.

An annual ranking of colleges published by Oxford Worker Justice finds low pay, insecure contracts, and massive wage inequalities to be prevalent across most colleges.

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Oxford-led consortium secures £18 million in funding for doctoral studentships

**Cayman Osei-Bonsu reports**

A new award will back an innovative training programme and external engagement for students to become modern leaders in impactful social science research. Funding from the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) will support 31 five-year studentships through the Grand Union Doctoral Training Partnership (DTP). The DTP brings together Oxford, The Open University, and Brunel University London.

The extra funding by the universities and Oxford colleges means the Grand Union DTP from October 2024 will likely increase studentships to 45 per year, with 38 based in Oxford. DTPs assemble a consortium of research organisations, offering tailored training for doctoral research students in interdisciplinary or subject-specific areas in the social sciences.

It will include data, big data, behavioral science, AI, and machine learning skills. It will incorporate professional development skills: leadership, project management, communication, and enterprise. Once piloted via the DTP, the courses will become more accessible to other research students.

Notably, the funding supports a “research-in-practise” element, enabling DTP students to practice their skills with external partners, both academic and non-academic. Studentships will be funded for 3.5 years, where all students will engage in a placement or internship in academia, policy, business, or a third-sector body.

The ESRC Executive Chair, Stian Westlake, stated the new opportu-nity will “enhance the experience for PhD students and boost the UK’s capability.” It will “develop globally competitive social science researchers” across a range of sectors with a “diversity of backgrounds and experiences.”

Associate Head of the Social Sciences Division and the Grand Union DTP Director, Rebecca Surender, said it was a “fabulous result for Oxford and its DTP partners.” Oxford will pioneer “enhanced methods training, external internships, and widening participation.” Additionally, she was delighted to have a strong basis to build the new DTP phase and looks “forward to helping to advance the next generation of social science leaders.”

Image credits: Annie Spratt via Unsplash

Oxford Robotics Institute wins Queen’s Anniversary Prize

**Cem Kozanoglu reports**

The Oxford Robotics Institute (ORI), a subsidiary of the Department of Engineering Science, was among the 22 UK educational institutions that were awarded the Queen’s Anniversary Prize in 2023. ORI was recognised for supporting future sustainability and delivering fundamental advances in autonomous robotics technology, including RobotCar, the first autonomous vehicle allowed on UK roads.

The prize is awarded every two years by the Royal Anniversary Trust, which was established to mark and celebrate Queen Elizabeth’s 40th year on the throne. ORI’s recent achievements include validating the safety and capability of robotics technologies in over 380 field trials in locations as diverse as Icelandic volcanoes, the Atacama Desert, Loch Ness, mine sites in the UK and US, and the surroundings of the JET fusion reactor. It was also instrumental in the adoption of safer, cleaner nuclear energy strategies for Sellafield and the UK Atomic Energy Authority.

The institute has published over 900 papers and gathered £40 million in funding, and their research has generated 22 patents, 70 intellectual property licences and four startups. Their teaching programme has trained over 120 PhDs, 40 postdoctoral researchers, and at least 60 Master’s students.

Professor Irene Tracey, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford wished “[c]ongratulations to all those involved,” stating that “[ORI’s] work is a fantastic example of our researchers collaborating with industry to come up with cutting-edge solutions to the world’s challenges, from supporting sustainability in agriculture to improving safety in manufacturing.”

The winners will be presented with a medal and certificate at a formal Honours ceremony in February 2024 doors.

Image credits: Alex Knight via Wikimedia Commons
Brookes scraps maths and music courses

Bea Keady reports.

Students and academics have issued petitions protesting cuts planned by Oxford Brookes University including closing their maths and music courses.

Alongside the two department closures, the University announced that they were also considering reducing staff across several other subjects including Film, English, History, Architecture and Anthropology. According to a statement released to the Oxford Mail by the English and Creative Writing Faculty at Brookes, Up to 40% of the English and creative writing staff could be cut by the end of January.

Oxford Brookes announced that this year’s music and maths cohort would be the last, with current students seeing their degrees through to completion and the subjects being “taught out” with an increase in the number of lecturers when all students have graduated.

Academic staff for both departments will be gradually decreased until the final cohort has graduated, with maths professors largely transitioning into the engineering department. No transition plan has been created for music staff. The plan, as described by the music department, is for “the last member of the music staff… to leave the university” in 2026.

The English and creative writing team’s statement stressed their concern with the University’s decision: “We believe that the humanities are the beating heart of any university… We have brought great prestige to the university as leading researchers, ranked the 6th best English and Creative Writing unit in the whole of the UK for this…” All [our work] is now under threat.

Similarly, the music department said that they were not given the opportunity to develop alternative programmes to increase interest. They have urged the vice-chancellor, senior leadership, and the government to consider the complaints of staff and students.

The plan to scrap these courses was announced as part of Brookes’ “budget savings” plan last week, with 48 staff at risk of redundancy. The University claimed that “financial challenges due to a range of external factors, such as inflation, flat student fees for UK undergraduates for over a decade, and increases in staff pay and employer pension contributions.”

Many staff at Brookes also emphasised the national pressure on music degrees across the country with student numbers dwindling. They also highlighted the role of the University’s “dead-end programmes” in the combined-honours degrees in the declining number of applicants.

Students and alumni have launched a petition and social media campaign to “Save music at Oxford Brookes” arguing that the current plan to close the department would affect students across the university who are involved in music societies and groups or enjoy the culture of music at university, not just music students. (Especially as the university has only just opened a proper performance space).

The petition, which had amassed 3,677 signatures by Wednesday midday continues: “Participation in arts courses such as music contributes significantly towards students’ mental well-being [and] is a way of allowing everyone to lead to improved performance in all disciplines.

Other groups within and outside the University have also responded. This included the “Society of Musicians who urged the University to give staff more time and shared their “disappointment” at the cuts.

Similarly, in response to the plans to cut the maths and music courses, the University and College Union branch at Brookes met on Friday November 17. The motion: “The University has no confidence in the financial management of the university by the vice-chancellor, which is causing staff to be put at threat of compulsory redundancy” was passed by all members unanimously.

MP for Oxford East, Anna-liese Dodds has urged the University to “consider the impact of this on staff in both subject areas, for whom this must be a very worrying time.”

Oxford Brookes University finished their statement by stating: “Redundancy is, and will always be, our last resort, and we will always seek to identify savings through other avenues where possible.”

Brodexes...
Transgender Day of Remembrance Vigil held in Radcliffe Square

Sloane Getz reports.

Oxford students, staff, and community members gathered in Radcliffe Square last night for a Transgender Day of Remembrance Vigil, organised by the SU LGBTQ+ Campaign to “honour the memory of trans lives lost to violence, hate crimes, and transphobia.”

This observance marks the fourth vigil held in Oxford for Transgender Day of Remembrance, an annual memorial founded in 1999 to commemorate Rita Hester and Chanelle Pickett, two Black trans women murdered in Massachusetts.

Standing next to a memorial tied to the Radcliffe Camera’s fence that listed the names of trans victims of violence, speakers shared memories, recited poems, and performed songs.

One speaker, Chrissie Chevasutt, an outreach worker for the Oxford LGBTQ+ Society, said “(Trans Day of Remembrance), we are rightfully saddened and enraged by losing so many community members. May their memory give us the power to continue fighting another year.”

Image Credit: Sloane Getz

Eight colleges to raise hourly wages to £13.15

An annual ranking of colleges published by Oxford Worker Justice finds low pay, insecure contracts, and massive wage inequalities to be prevalent across the majority of colleges. Past investigations by Cherwell, meanwhile, have brought light to exploitative labour practices and stressful workplace conditions among University housekeepers in the “scout system”.

Additionally, the City Council’s employer recognition incentive, that encourages employers who pay the Oxford Living Wage to accredit so they can get wider recognition, indicates that less than 25% of Oxford’s 38 colleges have been accredited. From a list of over 120 accredited employers, only Magdalen, Merton, New, Somerville, St. Cross, St. John’s, Wadham, Worcester Colleges appear, in addition to local businesses frequented by students, such as Common Ground Cafe & the Old Fire Station arts hub.

As an incentive, the Council argues that providing a living wage may help businesses “improve both recruitment and retention.” Research from the Living Wage Foundation backs this up; 75% of surveyed employers reported that paying a living wage had increased workers’ motivation and retention rates, while 94% felt that it had benefited their business overall.

Set to come in from April 2024, all businesses will be accredited through a recognition scheme, operated by Oxford City Council and the nationwide Living Wage Foundation.

Image credit: Nils Lindner via Unsplash

Analysis: the show must go on

Tosin Olusoji comments.

As dear as we hold our green spaces, there exist worthy causes for which one can sacrifice a park for a month. The 55th annual South Park fireworks display attracted more than 20,000 spectators this November, but also encouraged around 40 complaints to the city council. “A small number of residents”, according to the Oxford Round Table, “bombarded” the organisers with complaints about their failure to protect the park’s ground with sheeting, leading to damage to the turf from vehicles employed to set up the display and football from spectators. The city council has explained that the damage to the park’s turf during the display was a consequence of the ground’s saturation following a week of heavy rainfall, rendering the turf more vulnerable to damage from heavy footfall. The result, which is a temporarily damaged park turf, is an unattractive inconvenience, but I believe that a charity event constitutes a worthy cause.

While the display has raised over £1 million for various charities over the years, those behind the complaints question its sustainability. Current ground rectification efforts have still not taken place as the Round Table wait for the park’s turf to dry out, and local residents may have to wait until Christmas to see the local green space’s recovery. Ultimately, however, as the cabinet minister for leisure and parks asserts, we must weigh the tremendous charitable benefits and popularity. Despite the complaints of a small minority, the display offers Oxford dwellers an opportunity to celebrate bonfire night and raised £85,000 for charity alone last year; if residents can find a different green space to walk their dogs each December, then I propose that the show must go on.
Corpus Christi-stalking incident sheds light on inadequate handling of harassment cases in Oxford

continued from front page

The University of Oxford Harassment Policy by contrast and the majority of Oxford colleges stipulate that the outcome of investigations and disciplinary panels should be provided to the reporter and the accused, including in some cases in writing.

The central University Policy includes a detailed procedure for dealing with harassment issues between students. Last updated in March 2019, the procedure stresses the importance of a timely process, confidentiality, communication and support for the accuser and the accused. The procedure also suggests strict penalties for non-compliance with penalties imposed under this procedure.

However, Oxford colleges are not required to follow the exact University policy. Instead, the University encourages the resolution and punishment of harassment cases “under appropriate college procedures while reflecting the principles of this Policy”. A university spokesperson told Cherwell that the University “has no role in advising colleges on complaint handling procedures”. The University as a whole addresses reports of sexual misconduct under Statute XI and the Student Disciplinary Procedure, and is also undertaking a review this academic year “to identify scope to improve its processes”.

While many Oxford colleges have similar procedures dedicated solely to issues of harassment, Corpus Christi is amongst the minority of colleges which group non-academic disciplinary offences under one common procedure. The college has guidelines for the treatment of harassment cases, but ultimately formal action is taken under the standard complaints procedure and NADP. The Corpus NADP contained in the Junior Members Handbook at the time, states that a student can be summoned to the panel for offences ranging from “contravention of the College’s Information Technology Regulations” and interference with fire alarms to criminal conduct and violence.

“Appropriate action has been taken”

In Michaelmas 2020, Mary and Sophie complained to the college about Joe, who was still involved in college football and had begun to harass Sophie’s boyfriend. In a meeting with the Dean and Dean of Welfare, the two women were told that Joe’s activities were not in violation of the rules, as football occurred off-Campus and Joe was targeting Sophie’s boyfriend, not Sophie herself. Mary and Sophie added in the meeting that the disciplinary verdict they had been verbally informed of barred Joe from participating in any college activities.

However, Mary told Cherwell that since “we had nothing in writing when questioned on this, [the Deans] just said that we misunderstood and that was never said”. The women were frustrated by this lack of clarity and believed that “the point of the harassment panel outcome was to not just separate us, but also to provide punishment”. No action was taken by Corpus against Joe at that point. The women heard nothing from Joe for months during pandemic lockdowns.

When Joe resumed contact with Mary in the autumn of 2021, following her through the streets of Oxford, she notified Corpus Christi, worried about his behaviour. Mary had since moved colleges, as she had been “feeling unsafe at Corpus”, due to the continued harassment and the college’s handling of the case. The Corpus Dean initially recommended she utilise the resources of the welfare team at her new college. Mary sent multiple emails, pleading to hear what steps had been taken, as she believed Joe had clearly breached the disciplinary panels’ ruling. After over a week of emails, the Corpus Dean responded to Mary. He stated that Joe had been “dealt with under the college disciplinary process” and that this had been taken forward. When Mary pushed for clarification, Corpus officials informed her that Joe had been warned that further contact with her or Sophie was banned and repeat offences could lead to him being sent back to the Disciplinary Committee, effectively returning to the beginning of the disciplinary process.

Mary told Cherwell that this experience was frustrating. This new warning negated “the whole point of the harassment panel in the first place”.

Sophie added that she and Sophie were under the impression that “if he contacted us again that was it - no more warning, he was kicked out”.

Following the Dean’s response, Mary wrote to the Corpus Academic Registrar to obtain the results of the Hilary 2020 disciplinary panel in writing. In the November 2021 email she wrote that without the “exact terms” of the disciplinary findings, she couldn’t be sure of what behaviour ‘constitutes a breach’. The Academic Registrar’s response included some of the outcomes from the panel, which included that the accused could not “make any contact by whatever means with either of the female students” nor be in the same “non-teaching environment, room or social space with either female student”. The college did not specify restrictions in teaching settings and Sophie had to talk to instructors herself to ensure that she could be separated from Joe in teaching spaces.

The Academic Registrar added that the Dean had “reminded” Joe of these stipulations and stated that further breaches would send him back to the Disciplinary Committee. This email was the first time in nearly two years that either Mary or Sophie had received any part of the terms of the panel in writing. Mary wrote in a reply to the Academic Registrar that she was “utterly dejected” that the terms of this panel had not been maintained.

All invited to the Scholar’s Dinner

A few days later, Corpus held a Scholar’s Dinner to celebrate all leavers who had achieved a First in Finals. Mary was amongst this group, but due to “space issues” linked to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, was uninvited from the dinner about a week beforehand. The college later told the women that “no invitations were revoked”. Mary had also been told that since she had switched colleges it was “no longer appropriate” for the Corpus to “enter into correspondence” with her about the dinner since it was a “College event”.

She and Sophie learned from friends in attendance at the dinner, however, that Joe was present, despite his college site ban being extended, as per the Academic Registrar’s most recent email. A friend at the event immediately expressed their discomfort to the Dean at the event but was told that this was not an appropriate time to have this discussion. When Sophie’s boyfriend wrote to the Vice-Principal that he was uncomfortable to have been at the same event as Joe, given his past actions, the Vice-Principal responded that this was a “large gathering” with “varying levels of personal relations between attendees”. He insisted that this was “after all an academic function”.

Sophie wrote in an email that night that she was “alarmed” and alleged the college displayed “apathy” towards vulnerable members. She and Mary persistently emailed Corpus to request to speak to the Dean regarding these infringements of the Disciplinary Committee. The women were informed that college administration was discussing the matter and would be in touch soon, as “the number and tone of emails exchanged on this subject over the last week suggests that there is a need for further clarification and closure on this matter”.

Sophie, who was still a member of Corpus Christi College, was informed that she should not contact the Dean without communication from him first, despite having effectively “no one else to turn to”. She also later received an email stating that her tone to the Dean had been unacceptable, as he has “worked hard to ensure that the disciplinary procedure has been followed and all students are treated fairly.”

Help beyond the college

Concerned that college and university mechanisms were not working, Mary filed an official criminal complaint against Joe in late 2021. It was however dropped due to an administrative error on the police’s side which led them to believe the force to suspend the investigation to the 6-month time limit between filing and ruling. Moreover, Joe’s contact within the statutory time limit for stalking offences of 6 months was sporadic. Police have since apologised to Mary for the delay and errors made in the handling of the case. An inspector added that the initial instances of stalking in 2019/20 “could have been considered and investigated as a stalking/harassment offence”, however since these actions were not reported within six months, they could not be prosecuted. Sophie and Mary were advised that if they had been directed to the police sooner, the case could have likely been dealt with within the six-month limit for evidence.

Mary states that before she switched colleges, she was not made aware of the harassment supports that existed outside of the collegiate system, including the Oxford Student Sexual Harassment Support Service, nor was she encouraged to speak to the police by Corpus Christi. Sophie told Cherwell that they were “given the impression that the college procedure would give a similar result to a police report, like a no-contact order” and had thus not wanted to endure the further emotional upheaval and lengthy process of a criminal filing.

Mary added that her new college’s disciplinary proceedings encourage severe cases of sexual harassment and assault to be referred to the police.

Indeed, details of individual college harassment procedures vary greatly. In Trinity 2022, the Conference of Colleges provided colleges with a Non-Academic Discipline Procedure Template which “had been tested as to compliance with law, regulatory obligations/guidance and good practice”. This new model allowed “for colleges to adopt/adapt to their own particular constitutional arrangements and circumstances as they see fit”. Implementation was thus varied.

The majority of colleges have a specific procedure for dealing with harassment complaints and ensure written communication with all relevant parties, with over a dozen including nearly identical procedures specific to harassment investigations and discipline between students. These colleges also included stipulations that the complainant can directly appeal the case if they are not satisfied with its treatment. Only Corpus and five other Oxford colleges admitting undergraduates do not require both the complainant and the accused to be informed in writing of the verdict of their NADP or dedicated harassment proceedings.

A not-so-new NADP

In Hillary 2022, Mary and Sophie sent a formal complaint to Corpus describing their displeasure with Corpus’ conduct and the NADP as it stood at the time. The Corpus President answered them in April, acknowledging “the distress that [their] experiences in relation to this case caused, both at the time and since the complaint and hearing”.

The President added that issues concerning sexual harassment were “under active review in committees and bodies of the University, Conference of Colleges, and individual Colleges.” and that it “is obviously important to keep procedures and good practice up to date”.

Read the full article online at cherwell.org
**The Debate Chamber**

Oliver and Kate go head to head, debating if scholars’ privileges are justified.

**Let it be?**

**Violet Aitchinson**

The last month has too frequently left me wondering what this obsession with revivals and reunions is all about. We know that die-hard fans beg for reboots or prequels, and arguably this is a fine enough justification, but what is interesting is that far too often they end up being disappointing. For me, the nailing of the coffin was the failed revival of two parts of pop culture that I hold in high esteem: The Hunger Games and The Beatles.

I’ve always slightly cringed at band reunions and movie remakes. After a while, you wonder how many more Star Wars movies can be released, or how many times Thespic Girls can go on a reunion tour. There are countless examples of media reboots that have failed and failed to add anything to their franchises, even when it wasn’t necessary. Just a few include the 2019 Charlie’s Angels movie, the 2011 Mean Girls 2 sequel, or the band All Saints 2006 reunion wherein the band members soon after claimed (falsely) that they would never reunite again. You might think I sound cynical as these releases seem to be in good taste or for the fans. But when historically these revivals never live up to the original, you’re left thinking: who or what was that really for?

When thinking about it, most of my favourite shows or movies have been the ones that didn’t milk their potential. Whilst it’s painful we’ll never get another season of Phoebe Waller Bridge’s Fleabag, or Ricky Gervais and Stephen Merchant’s British edition of The Office, their brilliance lies partially in the fact we are left wanting more. We don’t know everything there is to know about all the characters, and their storylines are not tightly wrapped up. This makes returning to them even more enjoyable, as it feels like you are constantly learning something new about these characters.

But what a prequel like ‘The Ballad of the Songbirds and Snakes’ or a song such as ‘Now and Then’ does, it ruins their sacredness. Too much is revealed, and a lose interest in its legacy. We are let it on John Lennon’s private demos, and the question as to whether revolutionary music was left unrecorded is partially resolved. Equally, when the origins of The Hunger Games are over-explained, our excitement or intrigue is pacified. And so, the franchises become less interesting, despite the fact the intention is the opposite.

Considering The Beatles are the bestselling artists in history and The Hunger Games trilogy is the third highest-grossing movie based on a young adult book of all time, I have felt further confused about the motivation for the revivals. Clearly, there is no upset that either of the brands would need something to keep up interest or strengthen their legacy. On top of this, both are avidly critically acclaimed. It’s not then as if there was an undiscovered master-piece that would change the whole perception of either’s reputation. So, what we are left with is two major mediocre pieces of work that are not only distasteful for the lack of artistic integrity and poor quality but also clear examples of greed.

Also, on a simpler level, it was hard not to feel offended by how bad both revivals were. Whilst contrasting in content, ‘The Beatles’ ‘Now and Then’, and ‘The Hunger Games: The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes’ represent the same issue. They fell into the trap of being lazy and under-developed. What happens is we see money-grabbing studios and producers convinced that the brand’s legacy and loyal fanbase justify them releasing anything as long as it’s new; regardless of the quality. And, to an extent, they aren’t wholly wrong. I still bought tickets to see the movie, and I still streamed the song. But the difference was I came out of both experiences confused by what I had just seen and heard. I came out having lost respect for both franchises, knowing how brilliant the work that had come before had been, and knowing that this is how a new generation would perceive both things.

And I’m not the only one to think this.

Before George Harrison’s death in the 90s, The Beatles had already attempted to release ‘Now and Then’. However, the technology at the time wasn’t good enough, and Lennon’s voice could not be separated adequateley to clearly hear the lyrics. In the twelve-minute documentary released about the making of the song, Paul McCartney revealed Harrison said the original attempt at the demo was “fucking rubbish” and that he hoped “someone does this to all my crap demos after I’m dead” – turn them into hit songs”. McCartney’s case for releasing the song was that it was in memory of his friends. However, when one of said friends, who is now dead, actively challenged its release, you’re got to wonder how true this is. Not only does this comment made by Harrison confirm my lack-lustre feelings towards the track, but it also poses a moral question about releasing work by someone who can no longer consent. Whilst it isn’t for me to decide, it does add another layer of discomfort in knowing we can’t be sure that this is what George Harrison or John Lennon would have wanted.

Of course, there will always be examples that break the mould. Toy Story 4 was a beautiful homage to the original movies, and ABBAS’ ‘Voyage Continues’ show continues to receive rave reviews. But this doesn’t make up for the countless awful remakes, sequels, prequels, and revivals that tarnish what once were remarkable pieces of work. Because ultimately, what the half-baked reboots do is leave you wondering if the thing you so cherished to begin with, was ever really that good.

**Image Credit:** orionpozo / CC BY 2.0 Via Flickr

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**Does the Varsity trip have an accessibility problem?**

**Highlighing financial inequality**

**Raghav Chari**

Yes! It costs £349 upfront to buy tickets, but this masks the massive hidden costs. Varsity organisers expect people to put forward in addition to this. These can be several hundred pounds in themselves, with total expenses being closer to £800-1000. This is an exorbitant amount for any normal person. Yes, ski trips are expensive, but perhaps it’s not feasible lower the prices by a lot. Many among us might have enough of mummy’s money to not think twice about it. But, as it stands, Varsity is far out of reach for the average student.

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**Inexperience: a handicap**

**Violet Aitchinson**

Perhaps just under one thousand pounds, partying and skiing in the mountains for a week seems like a great deal, right? Perhaps if you’ve grown up going to chalets every winter perfecting your technique, it would seem like a gargen. However, if you are like me and have never as so much placed your foot in a ski boot, not so much. Intrinsically, the trip is inaccessible. Whilst they claim you don’t have to have skied before, it doesn’t sound like much fun flailing around in the snow for seven days, desperate to pick up the sport, just to be rewarded by seeing Sammy Virji in a sweaty, overcrowded sports hall.

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**A once-in-a-lifetime opportunity**

**Adam Saxon**

I’ve never been skiing in my life. However, from what I’ve heard, the Varsity trip is a good value-for-money experience, especially because you get so much more than just the skiing. Realistically, how many chances in your life will you get to go skiing, with mates, AND have the opportunity to set loose on plenty a night out at the same time? Sounds like a bargain to me. If you’ve got a grand burning a hole in your pocket, (unlike me) I’m honestly not sure there’s a better place you could be spending the first week of December.

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When I started writing this, I had to ask my friends if we even have scholars’ privileges at Balliol. It turns out that we do, but they don’t consist of much more than a single grant (£150 for an Exhibition or £200 for a Scholarship) and a celebratory ceremony.

I can only hazard a guess at which of my friends or cohort received firsts in their Prelims. I suppose this is because we’ve already got rid of most of the things that would reveal it. In Balliol, we don’t wear gowns; I can see how scholars’ privileges would seem more relevant if you were confronted with your first-year performance at every formal.

As somebody who is not a Scholar, I don’t have a problem with people who did better in Prelims being rewarded for it, but perhaps it might seem more unfair if they continued to receive monetary, free meals, and other privileges throughout the rest of their degree, as they do at other colleges.

Balliol’s system seems like a good compromise: I don’t think there’s anything wrong with offering a prize for academic performance, but it probably shouldn’t mark students out as different for their whole time here. I do seem like opposing scholars’ privileges is a strange hill to die on when Oxford itself is academically at the top. Are we only OK with benefiting from being the best until we’re the ones who don’t? There are much greater examples of the reinforcement of inequality here than a reward for doing well in exams.

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**Oliver and Kate go head to head, debating if scholars’ privileges are justified.**

Iff Oxford is to be the democratising academic institution it strives to be, scholars’ privileges are wholly unjustified. In their October 2020 Cherwell investigation, Rachel Muir showed that “Prelims favour private school students.” Though the piece uses data from 2015-2019, it wouldn’t be too great a leap to assume that this pattern is still largely true. In this way, scholars’ privileges - in any form - only entrenches the divisions still very evident in Oxford today.

Whilst scholars’ privilege in room ballots are thankfully a thing of the past, monetary prizes for Prelim results are still commonplace in many colleges. In Somerville, for instance, Scholars are awarded £500 a year whilst Exhibitioners are awarded £2000, with both prizes including an additional £60 to pay for the scholar’s gown. Many colleges follow a similar format, with some (such as Keble) also providing scholars with a number of free meals per week.

Whilst some argue that these prizes may fund book purchases or other academic endeavours, scholars are free to spend their money as they wish. Moreover, many colleges have funds to request reimbursement for book purchases or other grants which everyone – no matter their Prelim results – can access.

That is not to say that scholars don’t deserve to be rewarded for their academic achievements; but clearly there must be another way than (partly) funding their Varsity ‘23 trip.
Why we might not beat climate change

Louis Johnson

I n an interview with Kate Raworth, author of Doughnut Economics, Rory Stewart and Alastair Campbell criticised their guest’s rejection of economic growth. While Raworth maintains that a new model is necessary to build a sustainable economic system, Stewart and Campbell argue that the idea is simply politically infeasible. Both views are right. A model along the lines of the sustain- able ‘doughnut’ that Raworth advocates is necessary if we are to avert the horrifying culmination of our 200+ year industrial experiment, yet it is also impossible to implement in our current political system. A candidate or party advocating for such solutions simply opens themselves up to electoral annihilation. Is replacement of our current political and economic model really necessary? Surely substantial progress has already been made? Case in point, the Inflation Reduction Act. Passed by the Biden admin- istration, it was a landmark piece of legislation that transformed the American response to the climate crisis and provided a beacon of climate leadership for countries all over the world. China, the world’s largest carbon emitter, has made pledges for reducing their emissions and is rapidly investing in renewables. Yet while major coun- tries continue to talk about slashing their emissions, and endless COPs promise the final turning point for climate action, global emissions continue to rise and rise. But even the current terrifyingly threadbare climate action may not last. The impassioned prayers of climate scientists were delivered with Biden’s victory in the 2020 US elections. He needs to develop a vision of a sustainable climate legislation. But with Biden’s popularity flailing, and deepening polarisation meaning that the Re- publicans are intransigent in their denial of climate change while the world burns, any GOP victory will lead the world’s largest democra- cy in a fossil fuel boom that will guarantee any chance that any man in the White House will need to avoid the worst is stymied. In Britain, the ruling Conservative Party, for example, set out the goal of net zero by 2050, in- the wake of the 2008 financial crisis. While this goal is a start, it is far from enough, and yet already the influence of pressure groups and right-wing outsiders occupying the climate sceptic polit- ical space have led the Conservatives to weaken their goals. Across Eu- rope, right-wing parties are leading a backlash to green policies that threatens to undermine EU emissions targets. Therefore, consider this thesis: the Western economic and political system is patently unable to accommodate the complete trans- formation that adapting to climate change would require.

“The Western economic and political system is patently unable to accommodate the complete transformation that adapting to climate change would require.”

Oliver Smith

n a week where Republicans were choking out of either in a bruising primary debate, the clear frontrunner, Donald Trump, was in New York, battling to save his crumbling Manhattan Em- pire. Meanwhile, Biden has come under increasing scrutiny from his own party, seen as more of a liability than an asset. Biden is trailing Trump in the polls, with his age leaving uncom- fortable questions for voters. Judge Engoron has ruled that Trump’s co-defendants have been “over the financial state of Trump’s co-defendants have been found guilty of ‘violent racketeer’ in a piece for the Daily Beast, ordering his lawyer to control his client, stating: “This is not a political rally.”

Trump faces mounting legal difficulties across the country, with his greatest peril in Georgia, where he is being pursued by the state, not the federal government. If convicted, he would not have the ability to pardon himself. In a recent speech in New York, Trump was widely accused of echoing fascist rhetoric as he cen- tres his vitriol on the “enemies” who “lie and steal and cheat on elections.” If Trump were to lose the next election, he would surely cry foul. If Trump were to be imprisoned, his chokehold on the Republican Party could lead his followers to take up arms. In a recent speech in New York, Trump was widely accused of echoing fascist rhetoric as he cen- tres his vitriol on the “enemies” who “lie and steal and cheat on elections.” If Trump were to lose the next election, he would surely cry foul. If Trump were to be imprisoned, his chokehold on the Republican Party could lead his followers to take up arms.

Georgia Secretary of State, Brad Raffen- spenger, where Trump asked him to “find 11,780 votes.” In recent weeks, Trump’s co-defendants have been peeling, off one by one, mafia-style, to save themselves, pushing Trump further and further into legal peril. Trump faces the genuine prospect of either prison or the presidency – a cell or the Oval Office come the end of next year. If Trump does find himself im- prisoned, the GOP will find itself at a dangerous crossroads – they can either rally around another candidate or they can follow their leader into the abyss. The grassroots of American democracy were badly damaged by Trump’s election denialism in 2020 and the country has only grown more divided. In a recent speech in New York, Trump was widely accused of echoing fascist rhetoric as he cen- tres his vitriol on the “enemies” who “lie and steal and cheat on elections.” If Trump were to lose the next election, he would surely cry foul. If Trump were to be imprisoned, his chokehold on the Republican Party could lead his followers to take up arms. In a recent speech in New York, Trump was widely accused of echoing fascist rhetoric as he cen- tres his vitriol on the “enemies” who “lie and steal and cheat on elections.” If Trump were to lose the next election, he would surely cry foul. If Trump were to be imprisoned, his chokehold on the Republican Party could lead his followers to take up arms.

The Countdown to 2024: abortion rights may be Democrats’ saving grace

challenge to the former president, but his support has since plummeted, now just 14% to Trump’s 57%. Haley is ascendancy, reverting her stagnation campaign to a ‘respectable’ 8.7%. The other candidates on stage seemed to have lost their raison d’être. The pro- vocateur Ramaswamy was the only one unifying force on stage, drawing the ire of all his competitors. Haley labelled him ‘scum’ under her breath in one particularly heated moment. As the candidates wrangled over who had cosied up closest with Chinese elites, wish to do an ‘eco- TikTok, could not help but think of the farce of it all. Where was the real leader of the Grand Old Par- ty?

In fact, Trump was a mere 10 miles away, already campaigning for the presidential election. Earlier that week, however, the former president was in New York, where he built his identity around being a successful businessman. When he faces the prospect of losing control of his empire. The presidential election is regularly tied on his financial state- ments and exaggerated his net worth. Trump – despite decrying the ‘witch hunt’ – voluntarily appears in court, conscious that every time he is in- dicted, the campaign donations come flooding in, and his popularity rises with his core base. Judge Engoron has lambasted the former president’s po- litical posturing, ordering his lawyer to control his client, stating: “This is not a political rally.”

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“Understanding and appreciating those of other cultures is the number one tool we have to respect”

Sophie Magalhaes speaks with travel influencer and entrepreneur, Kacie Rose about navigating social media fame and how we can expand our horizons through travel.

I sat in my room on a sunny Tuesday afternoon, scrutinising my face on Zoom as I wait for Kacie to join the call. I have followed Kacie’s Instagram for months. Whilst studying Italian in Florence over the summer, my feed flooded with restaurant recommendations and ‘La Dolce Vita’ captioned videos. Kacie’s skills stood out to me the most. Her funny and relatable ‘culture shock’ series on TikTok are what brought her social media stardom, but she is adamant that navigating her new online presence was not effortless. ‘No body’ writes a guidebook of what to do when you go from zero eyes on you to millions. It’s so beautiful in one way. I was suddenly connecting with people all over the world… but after the culture shock series, I was getting 50,000 followers overnight! Hate comments were overwhelming. ‘I cried everyday for a week.’

Kacie was a stranger to social media fame until moving to Italy in 2021. Having grown up in Michigan, she moved to New York City at age seventeen with the dream of dancing professionally. ‘The Mid-West is known for its innate kindness, in the sense that people are very humble. Then you get to New York and people are very blunt and direct.’ I ask which region had more influence on her. Launched head-first into a new pace of life, Kacie throve off NYC’s multi-cultural bustle. Her adventurous online presence comes from a decade of building a career for herself in one of the world’s most frenetic cities. ‘New York is a city where anything can happen, and it’s beautiful in that way. You go from zero to a hundred very quickly. This intensity however, coupled with the toxicity of the performing arts industry, pushed Kacie to the edge. Marketability can compromise creative expression. As Kacie says, an industry run by those with numbers and appreciation those of other cultures is the number one tool we have to respect.

Kacie describes moving abroad as learning how to ‘do’ life all over again. Simple things that you wouldn’t think twice about doing in your own country, suddenly become overly complicated. ‘I didn’t know how to schedule a doctor’s appointment or where to buy a birthday card.’ Transparent with these struggles on social media, Kacie makes them opportunities for learning. ‘Do the shit that scares you’ is now the catchphrase of Kacie’s travel business, Kacie Rose Travel. A far cry from the Broadway stage, Kacie now hosts group trips, taking people from all over the world through various regions of Italy. I ask which trip has been the most memorable. ‘My first ever group trip. I was so nervous, I felt so much anxiety. I thought it was a mistake. They knew it was my first group trip and they embraced it, they ran with problems and they were so kind and supportive. At the end of that week everyone was standing in the hotel lobby crying whilst saying goodbye to each other. I was shown such beautiful support by people I didn’t know a week before hand.’

I was interested to ask Kacie how she feels her brand combats negative stereotypes of Americans being in-sular and untravelled. ‘If you live in the middle of America, to get to the East coast it can cost $400. Let alone travelling overseas. Most Europeans don’t understand what life is like for the average American. What I aim to do is open up those doors and share another perspective. Understanding and appreciating those of other cultures is the number one tool we have to respect.’

Kacie’s career versatility is a perfect example of embracing the unexpected. I ask her for any advice she may have for students wanting to expand their circles and discover life in other countries. She says that we shouldn’t become wrapped up in one sole purpose. ‘The world is too wide to settle in one place with the same job your whole life. You’re allowed to have other hobbies and interests. It’s ok to pursue multiple things. As humans, we all want the same things, we just achieve them in different ways.’

“I made a promise to myself early on that I didn’t want to curate anything. I gradually realised that I was never going to please everybody.”

Images Courtesy of Kacie Rose.
Study the social sciences in the heart of London
You may have heard of the tradition some tutors maintained in the 20th century of offering port or a similar beverage to students whose tutorials happened to fall at either lunch or after 6pm. Well, one of my tutors has stuck to this tradition - though in quite a different way. She is very interested in things like yoga and meditation, and is keen to keep a balanced and peaceful mind and body, which I admire. I'm also aware that she is a lady who sticks unwaveringly to a specific schedule. I was to soon discover the extent of her punctiliousness. One of our tutes this term fell at 11:30, as it had to be rescheduled from a previous week. As it happens, every day, at midday sharp, she engages in a routine of yoga - as soon as it hit 12pm, she started rolling out a mat, turned on some calming music, and began her whole meditation routine. She gently told me that I could follow along with her if I wanted to, though I felt too awkward to join in. In silence, she did her yoga, while I sat there trying not to look too much, and then, after fifteen minutes, she slowly got up, rolled up her mat, and sat back in her chair. She then picked up right where we had left off in our discussion: 'So, what do you consider is the value of Smith's theory?'

**Magdalen deer announce plans to form own college**

The deer at Magdalen College have announced plans to break away and form their own college. Tentatively named 'Grove College,' it will accept only deer as students.

The move comes amidst rising tensions between the deer and the college, which hit a critical point last Trinity after several deer attempted to flee Magdalen and claim asylum at St Catz. The deer have long complained that being restricted to the Grove deer park is a violation of their freedom and their right to education. 'We treated like second-class students, just a spectacle for humans,' said the deer's current president, whose name can be transliterated as Stag Hammarkjöld. 'Many of our younger fawns cannot even read or do basic maths. It's like the College doesn't even care about deer education. Why even have deer here if you're not going to teach them?'

Grove College will be located on the current deer park, and unlike most colleges will be principally based outdoors, including Oxford's first open-air ICR and a ground-level library. The blueprints also include a sectioned-off area of land labelled 'the human park,' though Hammarkjöld is yet to clarify exactly what this means.

The college will offer its deer students a cervid-centric approach to traditional Oxford courses. The Deer Philosophy course, for example, will study the theories of deer philosophers like Plador, Albert Camoose, Jacques Doerida, Judith Butler, and Munt-Jacques Rousseau. Deer Chemistry will study the discoveries of Buck-minister Fuller, Deer Literature will read the works of Antikery Burgess, and Deer Theology will cover the life of venerated saint St Rudolph the Red-Nosed.

If the plans go ahead, Grove College will be the first college to accept a non-human student since 2006, when Regent's Park's Joaninha accidentally admitted a swarm of bees to read Classics. However, Magdalen College have strongly objected to the plan, calling it 'dangerous separatism.' They have also received support from Hertford, who fear their college crest may lose its uniqueness. Yet despite this opposition, Hammarkjöld has promised to press ahead with the plans. Interestingly, human students at Magdalen are predominantly in favour of Grove College. One student, who has asked to remain anonymous, remarked to Cherwell, 'They deserve it. I mean, they're such majestic, sleek, beautiful, sexy beasts, with their powerful hooves and their enormous hind muscles. I'd happily be put in that human park.' Meanwhile, the Magdalen rowing captain merely commented, 'Well, at least they'll be easy to bump at Torpids.'

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Thomas Bristow
Editor-in-Chief

In the distant past of First year, I applied to the Books section of Cherwell. My interview was terrible (I was still drunk from the night before), and I was understandably rejected. As you can imagine, it’s strange to feel like being here now, in Fourth year, signing off as Editor-in-Chief. After that interview, I went on a stroppy hiatus for a couple of terms before I was hired as a columnist (to the paper’s own detriment). I was then a Films editor for the Culture section, and for whatever reason found myself at a press viewing of a Cézanne exhibition at Tate Modern. That term. I walked around the gallery, not really sure what I meant to be doing there, and then hastily got the train back to Oxford. After that I did Music, Culture and then found myself where I am now, to my own astonishment. Having been involved with the paper for five terms now, I can honestly say it has been a pleasure. Even as a section editor, you have the opportunity to engage with different people who all bring different, very often insightful, ideas to the table. To see so many students keen to write about all manner of things is amazing. I’ve learnt an enormous amount as an editor, not only content-wise and with InDesign, but also in terms of how different people see the world. People may not always agree, but opinions matter. Cherwell has been independently facilitating the voice of Oxford’s students since 1920, and to have played a small part in its history has been a real privilege. I’ve had the opportunity to work alongside some extremely talented individuals, and to have read some truly exceptional pieces of journalism. Thank you to everyone who edited and contributed this term, you are what ensures that the paper keeps going, and we could never have done this all without you. Hopefully many of you will return to Cherwell next term. We leave this paper now to Bintia and Anuj, whom we know will do an excellent job in Hilary. Thank you also to our readers, who are the life-blood of our paper. We hope you enjoyed reading it this term. And for anyone who is wondering whether to get involved, just do it.

Cherwell has existed for over 100 years now. Here’s to many more.

When Suzanne reminded me that I had to write this, I had just gotten back from watching Saltburn. The film appears to have made waves in Oxford, and basically nowhere else. It has garnered tepid reviews all around, most of which call the film a rehashed Brideshead Revisited strung along with thriller elements. But this is not a review.

Instead, I wanted to write a little on the Oxford literary world, which defines the place and probably made you want to apply here. Saltburn was the first piece of Oxford-themed media I have consumed since having come to Oxford, and it was deeply disappointing. Each character had a real-life corollary, and, quite frankly, I shall never look at Brideshead in the same way ever again.

It is quite often said that there are no original experiences: nothing reafirms this more than a film which enacts the spaces you move through daily, the tutorials you turn up late to, the essays you re-gurgitate, and the interactions with people you not-so-secretly hate. That being said, I wasn’t convinced Jacob Elordi’s character claiming he had a tutorial on Jilly Road, also him referring to a tut as a “tutorial” in conversation. I am sure this uncanny valley must have entrapped students a couple generations prior reading Maurice, or Brideshead, perhaps even shall. Even though their character narratives are obviously fictional, the nuggets of real-life they bear are overwhelming. It is probably useful, nonetheless, to watch some of my OU StoryCon notes on how ridiculous everything about this place is.

I’m not sure if Saltburn was a good film or not. I know I’m biased, but it was worth the overpriced Curzon ticket though. If only for the self-scrutiny it inspired. I will probably come back to it again in years to come, just to make sure that I haven’t gone too far with the whole Oxford thing.

Suzanne Roltelne
Editor-in-Chief

Since joining Cherwell’s news team in MT22 I have enjoyed intravenous Oxford gossip, some rather serious, some less so. On one bright and windy day last Hillary, for example, I was tasked with confirming the alleged closure of crewmate Temple Lounge, which rapidly became a prolonged side quest. Phone calls to the restaurant, the sister branch in London, and the Oxford Mail journo who had mentioned the closure yielded nothing.

Egged on by the prospect of avoiding my reading list for the rest of the afternoon, I finally turned up outside Temple Lounge. The building was boarded up and surrounded by rubbish. After doing a lap of the block and loitering on the pavement for long enough to look slightly suspicious, I returned home.

I was ready to admit defeat. But passing the front one last time, I caught the faint chatter of a radio, and mustered the courage to knock. A man in dusty overalls at last dragged open the door, but when questioned shook his head and said, “Arabic.” We held a stilted conversation as I typed things into google translate and held the phone up for him to read. Eventually he backed back into the cloud of plaster dust and re-emerged with the owner’s phone number scrawled in permanent marker on a crumpled piece of cardboard. Essay neglected but clutching my cardboard trophy I returned home.

With the end of my time on Cherwell in sight, I know this spontaneity is something I will miss. So far.

On other occasions I’ve dragged my very patient flatmate away from our lunch to photograph counter-protesters trying to dodge police, been to one too many post-club maccies trips, ending up taking seriously & Revolting rugby games.

Throughout my time here, I’ve had the pleasure of working with a really wonderful bunch of fellow students who’ve valiantly sacrificed themselves to their reading lists and problem sheets to ensure Cherwell trundles on – thank you, all of you. I am delighted to pass the baton to Bintia and Anuj, with whom the paper certainly has a bright future.
It’s not for nothing that they call Pevek the city of romantics and daisies”, local resident Irina Shuvalova tells the camera. She is wearing both a puffer coat and hoodie in a living-room-cum-greenhouse in the Soviet-built former port town she describes, which is nestled cosily within the Arctic Circle on Russia’s north-eastern coast. Panoramas of the city showcase characterless flat blocks, dilapidated industrial enterprises, and – to Irina’s credit – patches of daisies battling against the brutal winds from the East Siberian Sea.

The discovery of uranium and tin deposits in the 1940s made Pevek’s position in the Channskaya Bay perfect for the delivery of equipment, but once the mines were closed and the gulag workers had left, industry in the town dried up. Optimism returned when Pevek became the home of Russia’s first floating nuclear power plant in 2020. The New York Times said it could be the ‘power plant of the future’, claiming it would employ 300 people which – although figures are currently unclear – would constitute a significant proportion of Pevek’s population.

And though Pevek seems unremarkable, and the Akademik Lomonosov (as the barge is named) does not look particularly inspiring, this development is an unlikely symbol for the unnoticed regeneration of Russia’s most remote districts.

Where does war according to Russia’s West leave its East?

Cherwell Features reflects on the impact of the more widely known state of Russia’s West on the treatment of Russia’s East
The President of the Russian Union of the Travel Industry told Ria buoynantly that demand for domestic tourism has risen by 30% in the last couple of years. He conveniently omitted the qualifier that Russians are currently prevented from visiting most international destinations by visa bans and a lack of flights abroad. Much like the Chinese transnational oil project, promotion of domestic tourism is yet another solution to the ramifications of the invasion of Ukraine. Branding the Far East as a thrilling wilderness is a consistent effort that goes beyond state-sanctioned tour group adverts. It has been given a prominent stage at the dazzling Forum-Russia exhibition in Moscow, which is currently showcasing Russia’s regional cultures and landscapes to the capital’s population. One particular event was dedicated to recognising the winners of the ‘Far East – Land of Adventures’ travel competition, where the Grand Prize was awarded to a local who completed a 500-kilometre solo-kayak trip around the bay of Vladivostok. Winners in the ‘Winter Travel’ category, all of whom were from the Far East, respectively completed a seven-day bicycle hike, a dog sled race, and a horse trek along the Kolyma highway (the latter notable for sharing its name with the Stalinist gulag).

Promoting residents of the Far East themselves as courageous and determined is perfectly synchronised to enormous billboards showing Russian soldiers with the defiant text “We will succeed in everything!”. The war and civilian life in the East become ever more subtly intertwined.

But the more immediate practical function of the competition was articulated by the convenor (a deputy Prime Minister) who praised the winners for the videos which they had to submit as part of their entries, which would encourage others to go “in the right direction, to the Far East”. The promotion of internal travel on multiple fronts seeks not only to provide the remote regions of Russia with economic inspiration, but contributes to the

enticed or coerced into greater integration into the Russian Federation. But there is an obvious divergence in practice, if not in theory. So far, the Far East has only invited flattery; Putin voiced his admiration for Kamchatska after visiting the immersive regional stand at Forum-Russia, conceding that he had never seen anything so beautiful. Indeed, Chukotka’s governor (previously First Deputy Prime Minister of Luhansk) stated he hopes to replicate his President’s reaction in others, expecting that acquainting Muscovites with his region could foster greater ‘closeness’ between Russia’s East and West. Opposition to such ‘closeness’ in the sparsely-populated remote East is not on the cards, but the comprehensive vision of the Kremlin’s policies - aiming at greater integration and centralisation with Russia - is certainly worth noting.

For the inhabitants of the Far East themselves, the material benefits of this region will have far more of an impact than the state’s verbal admiration; the governor of Chukotka recently announced plans to open the local ports to cruise liners, a new regional centre for instruction in the mining industry is being set up in Kamchatka, and state media reported just this month that the cheapest mortgages in Russia are to be found in its distant North East.

While extreme remoteness, 69 days of almost complete darkness, and living by the ruins of a gulag may not sound immediately inviting, Pevek and the settlements of the Far East are being positively redeveloped and growing in attraction. Irina Shuvalova contrasts the deprivation of the 90s, when her daughter would peer into an almost-empty fridge and ask for bread and butter, with the vitality currently being channelled into her town. She celebrates the resumption of shipping activities, accompanied by the appearance of brightly-coloured painted murals on the flat blocks which have given Pevek a veritable facelift.

Last month Pevek even made it to the national news, as discussions over the construction of a second floating nuclear power plant have apparently begun. The memorandum quoted in the article was sent by the government to Rosatom (responsible for the initial barge), and lays out the importance of “ensuring the socio-economic development of the region” with a project which could both help in the extraction mineral resources, and provide energy to inhabitants of Chukotka.

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Are We Running Out Of Heroes?

James Forsdyke

muses on the highs and lows of superheroes in flight wondering why the filmic genre is plummeting

It's hard to know exactly when the concept of the action-come-superhero movie started spinning out of control. I'm not sure if I'd place it in 2015 with the release of Ant-Man, or perhaps the release of Ant-Man and the Wasp in 2018, but it certainly seems to have happened before the premiere of Ant-Man and the Wasp: Quantumania in 2023. I'd say it was probably sometime between the release of the first and the eleventh of the Fast and Furious films, but definitely not recently enough to warrant consideration of the hair-brained Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Mutant Mayhem. Maybe it's a me-problem. Maybe I just don't care for big-budget action films, about things that don't exist and powers which defy the laws of physics. I realise that for many, going up watching Disney films (other franchises are available) was a right of passage, but for me, it was primarily Top Gear (the May-Clarkson-Hammond era, obviously) and secondly, like most PPE students, The Thick of It. I always enjoy a sense of realism. There's something wondrous about seeing three relatively normal blokes - anti-heroes having learned nothing. It could be cybersimic, but it feels like a running trend. How do you churn out so many films based around the same premises? It's easy to understand why. If it makes a net profit then it's a win. Perhaps the first one was popular, and the time has come to ride that wave of success into a sequel, and then a prequel, all the way into Fishman 14: Playing Cod - A Battening from Trouser Space. Why can't people come up with an idea, see it through, and then know when to stop? The ending of the original Italian Job in 1969 was so brilliant, a classic, to a large extent because: that was it! No more. Finished. Done. (Spoiler alert!) The literal cliffhanger invites viewers to speculate, to ask themselves the question: 'Why?'. If it was never part of the plan to make one, and it wasn't necessary for any reason to do with the value of the work, then it begins to look like the purpose is solely to generate revenue, and the knowledge of this surely has to count against the creative value of the project. When people other than those who originally generated the idea add to a work, I regard the project as fan fiction. There is something valuable about the intentions of the original creator even if they don't absolutely and solely define the work.

In 1926, Buster Keaton's The General was released. He later said of it in 1963: "I was more proud of that picture than any I ever made." He believed that he'd put something into the film that was worth more than the money made, and it wasn't necessary for any reason. I think there's a lesson to be learned there. When you can copy something else, perhaps make it slightly different, such that it draws a crowd and gives people what they appear to want? Secondly, a lot of people already invested in the industry depend on it having learned nothing. It's hard to know exactly when it came to move on, to do something else. When does it come to move on, to do something different, such as the speech Ricky Gervais gave at the Golden Globes in 2020 which subsequently went viral. So I'll return to where I began, to think about what a people might like. Readers might have noticed that I listed a variety of different superheroes at the start, so how can we be running out of heroes? Indeed it seems like the domain of realism I spoke of earlier, we have a tendency to admire that. Where then are the antiheroes of cinema? Why don't we admire the small-budget student movie?

Perhaps - messing about and achieving amazing goals, seeing some incredible places along the way. But often, that sense of realism leads one to ask the inevitable question: 'I can imagine there's some truth to this, I wonder how much?'. I suppose that many great ideas have escapist elements to them. But some seem too over-the-top, unrealistic and formulaic to the point where we come to the end avails 'But what happened next?!'. But the reason to make a follow-up to that, a true follow-on sequel would have fundamentally changed it. To know exactly when to stop and to leave the story as it is - I think that's part of what makes a great work. Often sequels, particularly those which are made to fit post-production of the first or 'added on' to the existing work, can leave people asking much effort into it, taking pride in telling the story in detail with a rich historical understanding that brought it into, perhaps, the same domain of realism I spoke of earlier. The protagonist is certainly another unconventional, imperfect hero. The story wasn't so simple or straightforward. The film wasn't successful, either monetarily or in terms of its acclaim, but is now widely regarded as a classic, and it's still famous for containing the most expensive single scene in silent film history: a train wreck over a wooded bridge above the Row River, Cottage Grove which, at the time, set the record back $42,000, or today around $600,000. In a way, this demonstrates two points. Firstly, money wouldn't necessarily bring immediate success with it, but more importantly, when risks are taken looking back in the long run we might eventually find ourselves appreciating them all the more. In this case, the risk was to a large extent financial, but it doesn't have to be, it could rather be woven into the narrative.

History, I think, rewards those who choose to throw everything at their creative endeavours, to do it their way rather than to replicate what is popular from a set of metaphorical 'formula-book'. It fascinates me when people create, not for the acclaim or the gain now, but to know that what has been achieved is exactly what it was intended to be, regardless of whether it becomes popular or not. So why aren't there more people who are willing to create something that they genuinely care about for the sake of their enjoyment? I suspect it's a combination of factors: Money, for one. Why take risks when you can copy something else, but make it slightly different, such that it draws a crowd and gives people what they appear to want? Secondly, a lot of people already invested in the industry depend on it having learned nothing. It's hard to know exactly when it comes to television, culture and entertainment. It's no wonder then that modern film and media seem to perpetuate the same sorts of messages, in similar sorts of ways. It usually requires a massive budget to make a film, and that seriously limits to a diverse array of people from entering the market and having an influence on our culture. Sometimes prevailing narratives can be a conservative which makes them liable to believe in the world from a sort of meta-perspective.

So I'll return to where I began, to think about what people might like. Readers might have noticed that I listed a variety of different superheroes at the start, so how can we be running out of heroes? Indeed it seems like the domain of realism I spoke of earlier, we have a tendency to admire that. Where then are the antiheroes of cinema? Why don't we admire the small-budget student movie?

Why don't we afford more respect to the film born of an independent writer's passion? Why don't we give some time to those who create something original or at least to those who know when the time has come to move on, to do something new? I think we can learn from one another through the medium of film, and it's definitely a concern that at the moment it seems, we're only learning about a limited part of a collective story. Our heroes aren't always wearing a cape.
How to judge a book by its cover

Ananya Parakh

Let's be real. You're in Blackwells looking for a book to read if you're cool, and buying a mug with a world map on it if you're not. You wouldn't sit there and flip through the pages absorbing the information in the book to then decide whether or not you should spend 8 pounds on it after you have practically fully read it. If you do that, you're a sociopath. Therefore, judging a book by its cover is a skill that is essential for any reader's repertoire.

The first thing that would catch any normally functioning human's eye, would be colour. Yeah, pretty books make for great coffee table decorations, but no, you must not be lured by that. Resist the temptation. What are you allowed to judge a book by, though, is the name. Usually. Well written books tend to have interesting names. Maybe some alliteration thrown in there, some banter with words, something just so charming that you feel just something classic or comforting or beautiful. A few examples of the following are, The Elements of Eloquence (great relevance for the book's content too), The Enchanted April (doesn't that just sound like a beautiful read?) or Where the Crawdads Sing (What are crawdads? And why do I care about where they sing?). But this doesn't always work. For example, 'Pineapple street'. I thought it was a cute name, but it's a shit book.

The next thing I'd consider would be the author. Have I heard their name before and in what context? Did someone cringe at their name or was there reverence and brimming excitement? Was it booktok or a Guardian recommendation? I mean you do you, but I'd totally judge. Some classics like Agatha Christie, Virginia Woolf and George Orwell are just timeless, and George Orwell are just time-lesss and you could blind pick those up and know they won't be bad. A risk pays off sometimes though, but if you want to play safe, the older ones that are still sticking around bookstores are usually pretty good.

Lastly, the vibes. Did you see it in a section that is surrounded by similarly good books? Is it close to other books that you have read and liked in the past? Does the blur sound unique and make you feel something? Does it make you wish that there was more? If the synopsis feels too long you're not getting through 5 pages of that book. Skim through the first page of the author's introduction if they have one(trust me). Is that engaging? If yes, that book will change your life.

Of a compulsion to not discriminate against any books, I would like to state that all books offer a special insight into the writer's perspective on life. Now that's out of the way, here's a couple of basic rules: if the book has been adapted into a young adult movie, it goes down by 5 points. If it has pictures of real people instead of graphics, minus 3. If the reviews on the book say 'deliciously fun,' 'poignant' or any stupid word you could use to describe your chicken, minus 10. If it talks about taking you on a journey, run the other way. Now that you're fully equipped with the skills of judging a book by its cover, I wish you all the best with wise spending and enjoyable experiences for the rest of your life's journey.

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Review: Parables, Fables, Nightmares by Malachi McIntosh

Rufus Jones

This book is the first short story collection published by Malachi McIntosh. A short traditional story collection can be likened to a gallery of sameness - great pictures with few stylistic differences - essentially stories varying only in content rather than in style.

The uniformity often found in such collections can put people off, since they appear less exciting. But insipid sameness is nowhere to be found in McIntosh's work.

The collection is a unique one compared to others I've read recently - like Raymond Carver or Ernest Hemingway say - as it is not exclusively made up of pieces structured as typical short stories. For instance, one is a list (White Wedding), one is a two-page piece, one is without a title. McIntosh uses the tried-and-tested short story format as a starting point and goes from there. This experimentation is not done purely for novelty's sake, however. If a story's format is unique, it serves a clear purpose: to enhance the reading experience in a way a conventional structure cannot; whether to make a joke funnier or a sad moment sadder of each of his stories which vary wildly in voice and circumstanc-es; he has a way with each of these that makes them a delight to read for entirely unique reasons. The voices of his characters, whether a dedicated but neurotic mother trying to prove the world's opinion of her child wrong (Examination) or a well-meaning but cranky father who discovers his adult son no longer resembles the child he knew (Mirrors), sound idiosyncratic and genuine. To write in a number of distinct voices with confidence and ease is no easy thing.

McIntosh's uncanny and inexcusable ability to write astonishingly rich and original descriptions is clear throughout. Two of my favourites are from the story White Veiling: the first is a description of a sexually-frustrated fiancé who resolutely abstains like a 'hitchhiker's thumb forever thrusting out below his waistband'. My prim readers should note they are not all as ribald as this. They are equally as humorous, though.

As with every short story collection, the great ones cast a long and uncompromising shadow which make the more flawed stories stand out. Hemingway is one example: The Snows of Kilimanjaro and Big Two-Hearted River hole into the lock of each piece, it is tempting to use the mediums listed in the title instead. To discount them would be a mistake but to rigidly sort each story into either a parable, fable or nightmare misses the point. McIntosh's clear vision of the short story's capabilities and his skilful manipulation of them ultimately makes the vivid and multivarious ways a short story can turn out appear obvious.
Genetics
by Kiaya Phillips

What beauty is there In the anger that spills from your lips? After every kiss A fight Uneven ground I've become so good at telling lies The droplets fall; I wipe them away Without a thought You used to brush them from my cheeks With tentative hands and shaking fingers

I really am my mother's child But I have my father's rage Pent up inside My brother just has his eyes From which, I turn away Though I love my brother dearly All the pain And the exercises And yet he grabs my hand, still Pleads with those eyes That belong to a different face One much less kind. I could run But my fate would find me As it travels through my veins Filing through my DNA I was born to wear this broken crown Genetically programmed This damaged commodity.

Why don't we have any mega-popstars’ anymore?

Zahra Ahmad

This August, Billboard released an article asking the question: where have all our popstars from the 2000s and early 2010s gone? It was met by widespread online conversations, reflecting the deep-rooted concern within the music industry that the number of recognizable faces in pop music have declined in recent years. Labels are no longer relying on these ‘mega stars’ as the foundation for their incoming profit because pop stars are no longer breaking into mainstream media in the same way they had in the decades prior. Steve Cooper, the former CEO of Warner Music Group, stated at the Goldman Sachs Com m unity and Technology Conference: “what we’ve done over the last number of years is reduce our [finan cial] dependency on superstars.” Even the record labels have been forced to change their tactics to keep up with the developing industry. Now, record labels financially depend on a larger number of smaller artists, helping them to create dedicated, but more intimate, fan bases who will buy tickets and merchandise. This is a step away from record labels funneling their money into a small number of ‘mega pop stars’ and relying on them and their star power to make up the majority of their profit.

So what does it mean to be a pop star in today’s day and age? In the early 2000s, ‘making it’ as a pop star meant being on the front cover of magazines, hounded by paparazzi, winning Grammys, and selling out arenas. But now, an artist’s success is measured completely differently. Having a couple hundred thousand streams on Spotify or blowing up on TikTok are celebrated as huge accomplishments. What defines someone as a successful pop artist has narrowed - international and mainstream fame is no longer the aim. But why and how has this happened?

In the age of social media and ultra-personalised online algorithms, individuals are increasingly being shown content which is tailored to their interests. Gone are the days when we would collectively read the same news from the same tabloids from the same sources. With algorithms as sophisticated as TikTok, we see the creation of pop stars or new emerging musical talent, but only to a select audience. Musical-theatre star-turned-pop-musician Renee Rapp debuted her first album this August. Her first American and European tour saw her sell out venues with capacities of around 5,000 seats. A decade ago, this may have led some to say that she was on the cusp of becoming a major pop star. But now, her tour videos and album press are only being presented to those who want to see it. She is popular among her loyal fanbase, but the previous wide reach that pop stars were able to turn into international fame is not available. Instead, musicians aim to form smaller, but more loyal, fanbases…

TikTok has also changed who record labels sign, and in what way they do it. Record labels have grown to place a huge emphasis on artists having a notable social media following before they can even be considered for contract. Gone are the days of years of artist development where record labels help to discover and support underground artists. This contributes to the lack of ‘once in a generation’ pop talent. Beyonce had her time in Destiny’s Child, her former girl group, before taking the world by storm as a solo act. Taylor Swift was able to release her debut album before international hits ‘Love Story’ and ‘You Belong With Me’ featured on her second album. Without record labels backing artists who might not find instant success, they leave thousands of artists undiscovered.

Instead, record labels are signing the artists with the most followers and engagement, not necessarily the ones with the most artistic promise. What makes this worse is this tacit clearly is not working. One A&R executive stated that “labels signed more and signed worse than ever before in the decade plus I’ve been at a major”. The problem is that TikTok is not designed to promote and sustain an artist’s career, but rather individual songs. In the 2000s, when streaming was not as widely used as it is today, labels had significant control over what songs were put on the radio. Record labels could control what we listened to and ensure that certain artists had radio play. Now, however, streaming and TikTok hold much more importance within the industry. Even if an artist has a hit TikTok song, the wider online audience is unlikely to hear the artist’s later singles. The small success which pop artists can grasp onto is hard to transform into a long-lasting career within pop music. For example, Katie Gregson-MacLeod came to TikTok fame when a video of her singing her song ‘Complex’ garnered 9 million views. It became widely shared and talked about on TikTok and led to her being signed with Columbia Record. Despite her strong artistry and compelling lyrics, the majority of her videos now have under twelve thousand views. This is out of MacLeod’s and her Columbia Record’s hands - it is simply the nature of TikTok, proving how risky it is to rely on it.

As an aspiring pop artist myself I can attest to the industry’s growing frustration, especially among independent artists, at how TikTok has grown to play such a seismic role in music today. If you want to be discovered and signed and funded by a label you have to start playing the game, which is no longer about artistry but online numbers. Of course, you cannot ignore the huge opportunity that TikTok and other social media platforms offer to artists, allowing them to promote their music to millions of people for free and fairly easily. However, the reliance that the industry now has on TikTok is, I believe, a failure on the part of record labels. This approach to discovering and signing artists is not sustainable, and I’m sure in the next few decades when the influence of TikTok slowly decreases record labels will have to rethink their current strategy.

This is not to say that we will never have a mega popstar again. Olivia Rodrigo released her sophomore album ‘Guts’ this September which topped the album charts in 14 countries and gained her 6 Grammy nominations, including Album of the Year. Dua Lipa has just released her first single titled ‘Houdini’ since her second album ‘Future Nostalgia’ which received over 6 million unfettered streams on Spotify in its first day, her biggest debut yet. We still see pop stars stake their claim in the music industry; all hope is not lost, but the age of a music industry which runs off the monetary power of dozens of rising and established pop stars are over.

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The slow death of ASOS: a retail giant in decline

Eden Kilgour

In the ever-evolving digital realm of fashion retail, ASOS once stood as a shining star - a household name which soared to success over the pandemic. However, ASOS' domination of this industry has taken an unexpected turn, finds itself in a potentially irreversible financial situation as the company's profits plummet. The future of this retailer is in jeopardy, begging the question: how has ASOS found themselves in this position, and can they can carve themselves a road to recovery?

Upon the onset of lockdown and the consequential closing of most high street stores, many turned to online retailers for their retail therapy fix. This marked a pivotal moment for ASOS, who experienced a staggering 32% surge in annual profits in October 2020. Yet today, their financial predicament seems drastically different.

Recent reports indicate a concerning drop in UK sales by 13%, coupled with a forecast predicting a decline between 5% and 15% in the year leading up to September 2024. So how has ASOS faced such a fall from grace? ASOS may blame the drop on the soggy July weather, but it is arguably their inability to adapt beyond their lockdown stratagems that caused this sharp decline. Of course, the closing of high street stores was eventually followed by their reopening, many of which returned with a vengeance boosted by re-vended spending. Following this, many shoppers shifted away from online buying, and towards physical stores once more, on account of a renewed desire and appreciation for the in-person experience, leaving ASOS in the dust.

Delving deeper into the intricacies ASOS itself, the fundamental question arises: What sets this retailer apart? ASOS boasts high-quality, trendy and affordable products across an extensive range, characterised by both own-label and third-party brands targeted directly towards the demographic of 20-somethings. It appears however, that this plethora of products perhaps does more harm than good, since potential gems become lost in a sea of over-saturation. ASOS have been recently attempting to bolster its reputation with '20-somethings' for being 'trendy' via its social media campaigns that you may have seen on TikTok or Instagram in collaboration with various 'influencers'. Despite these efforts, there is a discernable argument that evolving consumer behaviour is outsaving ASOS' ability to adapt, and the products

Arguably the most detrimental challenge to ASOS' business, however, lies in its intensifying competition. With the simultaneous lockdown ascent of brands such as Shein and, more recently, Temu, ASOS simply cannot compete price-wise due to the ultra-fast fashion nature of companies. Otherwise, concerning customer reviews for perceived retail is becoming increasingly clear that consumers are favouring hybrid brands such as H&M and Zara over solely online retailers such as ASOS. Intuitively, ranges in consumer values are affecting ASOS, in the sense that the rise of second-hand companies such as Vinted is gaining momentum and posing an additional challenge to this evolving market.

And of course, we cannot ignore the elephant in the room - the rising cost of living. For young people, and particularly the targeted '20-somethings'. Demographic of ASOS, funds are dwindling. Financial strain means it is increasingly difficult to splash the cash on new casual wear whilst struggling to afford the upkeep of food and rent.

Ultimately, the survival of ASOS hangs in the balance. Despite the optimistic outlook of Chief Executive José Ramon Saenz de Santa Maria, who anticipates a resurgence in 2025 post-decline, there are multiple hurdles that ASOS must first conquer. ASOS has acknowledged the need for strategic changes to overcome their current financial challenges and return to its former position. The core of this plan centres around cost-cutting, evidenced by a 30% reduction in stock, the elimination of 100 jobs, and the removal of 35 unprofitable brands, alongside operational costs. Yet, does this plan pose more problems than excess expenditure, leaving the critical question: Is cost-cutting enough to navigate the company back to prosperity? The answer to this remains a lingering and unanswered, and lies at the root of ASOS' journey to financial recovery.

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Unveiling the Suburban Secrets of Desperate Housewives

Nina Naidu

I watched Desperate Housewives for the the Real Housewives reality TV shows. While the confusion is somewhat understandable, given that the Real Housewives franchise drew inspiration from the former’s success, it’s a complete misrepresentation of the captivate drama that unfolds in the hit early 2000s mystery show, a series I’ll continue to rave about indefinitely.

Created by Marc Cherry in 2004 and spanning eight seasons until 2012, Desperate Housewives is a comedy-drama that delves into the lives of four suburban housewives residing on the fictional Wisteria Lane after the suicide of Mary-Alice Young. Each harbouring their own secrets, the housewives discover the myriad of deceptive secrets that Mary-Alice left leading up to her death. Every season introduces a new family to the lane, bringing with them a mysterious secret that slowly unravels, ensuring a continuous supply of drama with an expansive cast. No one on Wisteria Lane is immune to the harsh realities that shatter the illusion of the perfect suburban family.

The ensemble includes the “perfect” domestic housewife Bree Van De Kamp (Marcia Cross), desperate to salvage her marriage with a cheating husband; the ambitious businesswoman Lynette Scavo (Felicity Huffman), eager to be in the center of the workforce after years as a stay-at-home mum of four; the former supermodel Gabrielle Solis (Eva Longoria), struggling to adapt to a quiet suburban life; and single, klutzy Susan Mayer (Teri Hatcher), yearning for love. “Desperate” perfectly describes these women, who employ any means necessary to achieve their desires, often leading to conflicts, deception, and fractured relationships (although the show definitely puts every character through the wringer at some point). Packed with scandals, murder, and sex, each episode offers a binge-worthy experience.

Beyond its surface entertainment, Desperate Housewives courageously tackles weighty topics, including alcoholism, suicide, and cancer, approaching them with a maturity that is absent in other melodramas. It raises thought-provoking questions about the challenges women face. The show, with its predominantly female cast, places the voices of wives and mothers at the forefront, making it a pivotal force in representing this demographic. Noteworthy performance es by Felicity Huffman and Marcia Cross have earned accolades, including nominations and wins at the SAG Awards and the Golden Globes. The show is also progressive regarding gay relationships, as Marc Cherry cites his own family as inspiration for the Van De Kamps, who eventually come to terms with their son’s sexuality.

Despite its juicy drama and heartwrenching moments, Desperate Housewives is undeniably a product of its time, with positive and negative aspects. The show, a reflection of the early 2000’s, insen sitively engages in harmful societal issues such as pervasive fat-shaming, problematic storylines involving human trafficking, police brutality, and a demonising stance on abortion (allegedly due to restrictions enforced by the ABC channel). On the (somewhat) bright side, though, Felicity Huffman’s infamous 2019 college admissions scandal certainly would have fit within the world of Desperate Housewives.

While some storylines haven’t aged well, the series continues to captivate audiences, boasting a dedicated fanbase that remains active on platform Popsugar. Unfortunately, controversy is where controversies are often debated. Streaming services such as Disney+ have also introduced new audiences to the shocking mysteries of Wisteria Lane.

Although the show has its share of bizarre and poorly aged moments, Desperate Housewives has left an indelible mark on many hearts, both during its original run and now, in the era of streaming. The series’ enduring popularity is evident in the number of fans who still share their memories, its memorable moments and characters. If you’re in search of a scandalous yet light-hearted comedy interwoven with frantic melodrama, akin to shows like Pretty Little Liars or Grey’s Anatomy, then Desperate Housewives is the perfect choice for you.

Image Credits: CC BY 2.0, William
Kelsey Moriarty

I think I have always wondered how the first kiss came about. A quick Google search produces a very professional 2500BC as an answer but there’s something terribly factual and unsatisfying about that – I want to understand what happened just moments before. The first kiss must’ve been so breathtaking and exciting. It’s no wonder the action has been replicated billions of times since, in moments of nearness, passion, anger, and frenzy. Kisses convey emotion and attachment in a way that transcends the spoken language, and appeals rather to an innate human understanding of love and relationships.

Art has met this in many ways. Marina Abramović and Ulay’s 1977 performance piece Breathing In / Breathing Out involved the two artists blocking their noses with cigarette filters and pressing their mouths together until they both passed out nineteen minutes later. Neither could inhale anything but what the other had already exhaled. Abramovic’s performance art is known for testing the limits of the human body, but this work with Ulay particularly highlights the convergence of bodies – the co-ordination of positioning, movement, and something so singular and ritual as breathing. During the performance there were microphones taped to their bodies, and the unified frenzied fight for breath shows the merging of physical function and identity that takes place during a kiss. It is a moment in which individuals are quite literally inseparably blended – their desires, vulnerabilities, and affect.

Lancelot and Guinevere together. Rodin produced three full scale versions in his lifetime. All of this creates an idea that the marble kiss feels almost as if it exists out of time and space. It feels as if it could exist anywhere – the marble is Grecian in character, the pose. The pose is reminiscent of Breathing In / Breathing Out, but the fusion of the marble mouths gives the piece a static quality, and a sort of poetic permanence. Also notable is Rodin’s approach to sculpting women – rather than portraying them as passive recipients of passion, he depicts them as active participants, ‘full partners in ardour’.

In the realm of painting, Klimt’s The Kiss is the most obvious point of discussion. Toulouse-Lautrec’s work The Bed, The Kiss / Au Lit, Le Basier, however, is more subtle and casual in its portrayal of intimacy – the women in the painting are wrapped in a soft embrace and kissing gently. The tight composition stresses the privacy of the setting, as well as the centrality of the figures to the heart of the painting. Softs reds and yellows flesh out the figures, giving them life and warmth. The brushstrokes are loose and tender, practically kissing the canvas and making the moment all the more intimate. Toulouse-Lautrec could’ve quite easily sensationalised it and been celebrated, but instead focuses on depicting it as-is – an act of everyday, mundane intimacy. Read the full version on Cherwell.org!

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Review of Enemy of the People: Comedy or a Straight Drama?

Ralph Whitworth

Henrik Ibsen wrote to the publisher of his 1882 play An Enemy of the People that I am still uncertain whether I should call it a comedy or a straight drama. The play’s balance between comic elements and serious themes has posed a perennial challenge for directors in the 140 years since it was written. But Valerina Tjandra’s recent production of Ibsen’s individualistic outcry has come down decidedly on the side of comedy.

The comic choices are clear from the outset when Mrs Stockmann arrives to provide the characters with three oversized bottles of spirits, which they then pour generous glasses from. The bottles remained on stage and continued to be drunk from for the entirety of the production. This is followed by an ingenious decision to have both Dr Stockmann and his brother, the mayor, use a large presentation stand to reveal their ideas by dramatically flipping the paper. The culmination of this technique, perhaps, is the scene when Dr Stockmann walks in on the Mayor, Hovstad and Alaksen plotting. This provokes the Mayor to then scurry repeatedly round the floor of the room, making desperate attempts to seize a glass of spirits. All this was very funny and only enhanced by the acting performance given. While there were no standout performances, the supporting characters of Hovstad, Billing and Alaksen delivered their lines with enough melodramatic energy to have the audience chuckling constantly. The pompous formal costumes added to the atmosphere of exaggerated silliness which carried us through a rolling first half. As long as it wasn’t taken too seriously, it was a lot of fun to watch.

However, this strategy began to run out of steam after the interval. It’s at this point in the play, when Dr Stockmann stands before a town meeting and Ibsen tries to pull his philosophical punches, and the jubilant chaos of the first half had meant it now became very difficult to take anyone seriously. Even Dr Stockmann’s performance, of central importance to the message of the play, was mumbled and uneven at times. Combine this with an unnecessary interactive voting gimmick where no one, least of all the actors, seemed to know what the plan was, and you had a town meeting where it was hard to tell which farces were deliberate and which were unintentional.

The ending of the play (famously inconclusive) attempted for a more serious tone, and to some extent achieved it. The ruined set, scattered with dropped household items and scraps of recent Cherwell editions which took the place of Dr Stockmann’s papers, provided a somewhat moving background to the emotional elements. In which, a stifled Dr Stockmann tries to assure his family of his affection by kissing the plastic doll which functioned as a newborn son, and asking for their support in return. But even this was broken up by elements of slapstick humour, like when Dr Stockmann chases Hovstad and Alaksen out of his house with his walking stick. After all of this chaos, the play’s final ending was abrupt and unexpected. ‘An Enemy of the People’ is a difficult play to produce. If even Ibsen was uncertain of what he wanted out of it, it’s no surprise that directors find it difficult to take a stance as well. Valerina Tjandra’s comic angle was highly successful in a first half where the characters’ ridiculous personalities are hard not to make fun of. However, humour can only get you so far. This was by no means a masterpiece - but upon leaving the theatre, I could not deny that it had been a highly enjoyable watch.

Photography by Eliana Kwok
The Not So Secret History: family dynamics

Flora Symington discusses the developments of the relationships of those living in her Cowley house.

After the madness of the first half of term, these last few weeks have been seen at least three of the household retreating back into the house to hibernate and catch up on the work we should have been doing earlier. Although it’s been nice to see more of each other, one of the side effects I’ve observed is a certain fraying of tempers, particularly among those who perhaps spend a little too much time together. I’ve remarked to other friends that I feel like I’m living with two pairs of siblings, and it became apparent this week that, under the same roof, family dynamics, ours has its breaking points.

Let me begin by saying that I have nothing but admiration for the way the Classicist and the Thespian have maintained cordial relations throughout not only living together but also working together for months on an incredibly stressful production. From what I can tell, the secret to their success lies in spending lots of time in bigger groups, followed by late night debriefs of these gatherings before bed.

The Poet and the Chef, on the other hand, spend a fair amount of time alone in the house together, and two months in the cracks are starting to show.

The Poet has two brothers, and as an international student they don’t get to see them very often, so I’ve often imagined that they must miss them a lot, and have transferred some of these affections onto the Chef by way of a substitute. At least, that’s what I tell myself. ’Affections’ is a strong word. What I’m really getting at is that the Poet likes to bully the Chef, reserving for him a tone much harsher than the rest of us are ever subjected to. I once accidentally turned the light off as I was walking past the kitchen, having not realised the Poet was still in there, to be greeted by a shriek of ’Hey! How dare you, you knew I was - oh, I’m so sorry, I thought you were someone else.’ The Poet did at least have the decency to look guilty - clearly, they would never have dreamed of Screaming at anyone else like this, but within the remit of their relationship with the Chef it’s apparently fair game. I’ve often seen them walk into the kitchen while the Chef is cooking and spend a few minutes standing behind them at the stove making critical remarks about the food, or laughing at an item of clothing that’s arrived in the post for them. The Chef’s policy is usually to take this lying down (they have two younger siblings and are, I’m sure, used to it), but recently they’ve started biting back. In one instance, they told the Poet they didn’t like their outfit, whereupon the Poet jumped right back down their throat, telling them they didn’t understand the rules of friendly sibling bullying: ’it has to be playful!’ If it sounds thus far like I’ve been painting a rather one-sided account, let me set the record straight. The Chef has their faults when it comes to cleanliness and general housekeeping, and the Poet is more tolerant of this behaviour than the rest of us put together. It all came to a head this week, however, when a bath mat belonging to the Poet, that went mysteriously missing in about September, miraculously reappeared in the Chef’s bathroom. I have rarely been as tense (outside of a theatre) as I was watching this great showdown: the Poet stood in the kitchen doorway, dripping wet mat in hand, while the Chef sat back on the sofa, insisting what was before them was, in fact, a hand towel, and therefore not stolen goods. As my head flipped back and forth between the two like a Wmblen admonisher, they did not break eye contact, holding each other’s gaze for what felt like an age. Finally the Chef broke the silence: ’Ok, it might be a bath mat. Sorry.’ I waited for the explosion. But, to their immense credit, the Poet just nodded, and took the mat back to their bathroom. Given the number of times the Poet has had to stand dripping on a cold bathroom floor after a shower in the last few months, not to mention the amount of hours spent looking for the accused mat, I have to commend them for the restraint of their reaction. I’m not sure I could have done the same.

As with all housemate sagas, however, the story doesn’t end there. A few mornings later, the Poet went to get the milk out of the fridge for their tea, and stood up holding an empty pint carton. Their hands were trembling. ’I’m going to go and hit them over the head with this right now’ (the Chef was in bed nursing a hangover). I protested that it might not have been them, and anyway, maybe hitting them wasn’t the right option. ’I just saw them leave the kitchen with a cup of tea. And they knew I was making tea too!’ ’Deep breaths,’ I advised. ’I needn’t have worried.’ Instead of making their way to the door, they simply put the carton in the recycling, and checked the other fridge. I can’t speak for what would have happened if there hadn’t been more milk in there, but based on the bath mat incident I have to believe their characteristic restraint would have prevailed. That’s what siblings are for, after all: you can drive each other up the wall, but in the end you love them anyway. Household harmony prevails.

Flora Symington

The Tier List

Streets in Oxford

Turl Street

A slightly quieter street just off Broad Street, Turl Street is perhaps the quintessential “Oxford” street, with the yellow brick buildings that surround it.

Little Clarendon

Full of cute, independent coffee shops, charity shops, and restaurants, Little Clarendon is a pleasant street in Jericho. The fairy lights are the cherry on top.

High Street

The High Street can be crowded, but it is a convenient way of getting to important places like Exams Schools. There are a few colleges on the High Street, which makes it a sort of whistle-stop tour of Oxford.

Cornmarket

Super crowded even on a good day, Cornmarket is normally swarming with people, music is performed a little too loudly, and cyclists zoom past you. A usually unavoidable sensory overload.
"Intruder Syndrome": the new imposter syndrome

Matt Taylor

The feeling of dislocation at the University of Oxford is familiar to most of us. Like, somehow, you’re not supposed to be here. Usually, people will call this imposter syndrome - the feeling of being unworthy of your position and persistent fear of being exposed as a fraud for lacking fundamental knowledge or skills. However, if you are like me and come from an under-represented background or a low-income one, or, as in my case, both, I would argue that what you are feeling isn’t imposter syndrome but intruder syndrome.

We all know the classic signs of imposter syndrome, best summed up by the fear of someone tapping you on the shoulder and saying, "Hey, we’re really sorry, but we've made a mistake." It is a real thing, but honestly, this is just not how I felt. An imposter is someone who thought their way in, maybe because they always thought it was inevitable they would end up here. Intruder syndrome is entering a world you were simply never supposed to be in. I’m about as far away from the typical Oxford student as you can get. The odds of being here are slim. I grew up in the care system. Just as there is a stereotype for the Oxford student, there is also one for kids from children’s homes - that was me. I was kicked out of mainstream education in Year 9 and left with 2 GCSEs. Statistically, I had more chances of achieving a place in the country’s prison system than this university’s college system. No matter how far away from that life I travel, that reality has never left me. This isn’t a world I’m supposed to be in.

When I was allowed to enter a university building as a student for the first time, I felt like a burglar. I had somehow found a back window open into a world I didn’t have permission to be in, and I entered anyway. I was not an imposter; I was an intruder. This distinction is essential. Because to be an imposter is to throw away the ten years of hard graft it took for me to be given a university card. I wasn’t prepared to do that. Neither should you. When I’ve spoken to those from under-represented backgrounds at the university, it’s also a sentiment they share.

Sustainable shopping: a guide to Oxford charity shops

Emma Jeffries

Charity shops are a great way to be fashionable on a budget, as well as shop sustainably. As a seasoned charity shopper, I am here to provide a guide to the Oxford charity shops.

Oxfam bookshops

These quintessentially Oxford charity shops, on Turl Street and St Giles’, cater to what Oxford students like most. Books!

There are sections on literature, history, modern languages, art, philosophy, religion, and music - and the list goes on. Perhaps a bit pricier than books in non-Oxford charity shops, but the selection is amazing and it’s a much cheaper alternative than Waterstones. My entire collection of Medieval literature is courtesy of Oxfam St Giles’.

Oxfam superstore

The charity shop of all charity shops. About a 20-minute cycle or one-hour walk from the centre of Oxford, it’s a bit of a hike, but well worth it.

The selection is huge. There is a wide range of books, and there’s a particularly nice section on antique books and folios. There is also lots of clothes and a large men’s section, which is pretty rare. The homeware is again extensive, and would be perfect if you are looking for some crockery for your second-year house. It’s what you’d expect from a superstore: it has almost everything.

Oxfam (Broad Street)

Quite a small charity shop with a real mix (with some very cheap cutlery if your housemates have been stealing yours). There is a particularly good range of sheet music in the basement.

Little Clarendon Street and Jericho

These three charity shops are particularly good for crafting. If you hopped on the 2023 crochet bandwagon like me, then this one is for you. Mercy in Action has a nice big basket of fabric officious if you’re more of a seamstress, and Sobell House is where I sourced quite a few of my crochet hooks.

Sobell House also has a particularly cheap sale for clothes hidden downstairs if you are looking for some bargains. Conversely, if you are looking for some more luxurious clothes, head to Jericho – I’ve seen Doc Martens and roller blades in there!

Cowley

Some of the charity shops in Oxford can be pretty pricey, but Age UK just over Magdalen Bridge is probably the cheapest! With a particularly large selection of dresses, it’s well worth a visit if you like an Oxford formal – especially since it’s so close to the centre.

Barnardo’s and Oxfam a bit further into Cowley are also pretty good – Oxfam as usual has a stellar book selection. But beware of the earlier closing time of Barnardo’s – I’ve only been once because I always seem to time it wrong!

Summertown

A bit further afield, but these are great for designer pieces. And if you have a bike, they’re only about 15 minutes away.

The Oxfordshire Animal Sanctuary is also especially good for books, with a large nook at the back of the shop dedicated to them. I’ve even found one of my set texts in there. For the highest quality clothes, I’d recommend Scope and Helen & Douglas House, which have some particularly nice pieces between them.

The charity shopping scene in Oxford is definitely book-orientated, but as a history student I have to say I don’t mind at all – although beware of the trap of buying books you could borrow from the library!
The nightmare visa: how (not) to prepare for your year abroad

Nina Naidu

I am among those regretfully desperate individuals who, over three years ago, naively scoured UCAS for any opportunity to flee this rainy country and study abroad. I stumbled upon Italian and Linguistics and fast forward a couple of years, here I am. It suddenly struck me that a year abroad actually requires careful consideration. Apparently, you can’t simply show up unannounced expecting an Aperol Spritz… you need something called a ‘visa’. However, against all advice, I fumbled and did not prepare my own visa appointment in advance.

Fortuitously, giving zero thought to my year abroad’s activities worked in my favour. As the only person at St. Hugh’s studying Italian this year, I only had to wait for my tutor to email Collegio Ghislieri at the University of Pavia as they have an ongoing exchange program. Suddenly, I was about to spend a whole academic year studying...something. I’d applied to study Modern Languages – yes, all of them – but this was a major oversight I was willing to ignore. Signing a few learning agreements seemed enough to me. If I came back speaking five languages, then why not? Italy, here I come!

Enter Brexit. As a British citizen without an EU passport, I acknowledged that I was royally screwed and in need of a visa. To add fuel to the fire, Italian bureaucracy tends to be incredibly slow. After fervently checking the visa website, I finally booked an appointment in June for mid-August when I was due to fly out to Milan in mid-September. Scrambling through my documents the night before, behind schedule and without enough time to gather everything was another mistake. While I take responsibility for not collecting them earlier, no one should pay £2 per page to print anything and certainly not at a visa centre and especially not when frantically printing minutes before meeting with the visa officer.

The cherry on top was the disastrous appointment itself where I was informed that to spend a whole year in Italy, I’d need a minimum of £8,000 in my bank account. Given two hours to cough up, I inevitably had to call my dad, begging him to temporarily transfer his savings over for proof of financial security. This requirement was not communicated beforehand. Perhaps I should have prepared more thoroughly earlier or perhaps I should not have to run 1.5 miles to the nearest HSBC for a transaction receipt in 2023.

Following this mortifying appointment, they scooped up my documents, telling me all I had to do was wait. Fabulous! Now I could spend the whole summer losing sleep over whether my visa will be rejected or not. After what seemed like forever (a whole week), I received a cryptic email stating my visa application had been sent to the embassy. I thought nothing of it until a few days before I was due to leave for Italy, having received no other emails. I called the visa centre helpline and emailed several times, asking whether the email meant I could pick up my passport, but each time, I was told to wait for another email. Weeks passed, and I hadn’t experienced peak stress up until this moment of desperation when I ended up going to the visa centre. It turns out the cryptic email was indeed giving me permission to pick up my passport. Why couldn’t they just say that? It didn’t matter anymore since at least now, I knew I was getting on that plane to Milan for certain.

I was really lucky when it came to my visa application, as my college facilitated finding a study placement and getting a study visa was undoubtedly less stressful than a work visa. Although I wish that I had begun the visa process earlier, it’s even more important to sort out the kind of placement you want well before the summer leading up to third-year. The sooner you start looking, the more your future self will thank you for avoiding unnecessary stress. While overwhelming at times, I promise it will all be worth it.

Remember to give yourself time to adjust

Take it from us: starting university can be an overwhelming and daunting experience, and feeling homesick is to be expected! First and foremost, know that you’re not alone in this. It’s completely normal to miss the familiarity of home and the comfort of friends and family. Perhaps try and fill the void you are feeling by gradually immersing yourself in university life. Join clubs or societies that align with your interests: this is a great way to meet new people and make friends who share similar passions. Attend university events, and don’t hesitate to strike up conversations with fellow fresher in lectures and labs. Building a new support network can help alleviate the sense of loss that you might feel from moving away from your old one.

Another suggestion might be to make your living space feel more like home by decorating it with items that bring you comfort or remind you of loved ones. Schedule regular calls or video chats with family and friends, maintaining a connection with your loved ones while adapting to your new environment.

Remember, adjusting to university life takes time, and it’s okay to seek support from campus counselling services or student support groups. They can provide valuable resources and guidance to help you navigate through this transitional period.

Make the most of the time you have before the vac

The way we see it, you have two options: waste two weeks being miserable about missing home, or enjoy the last two weeks as much as you can and go home with lots of stories to tell your family. We know which option we’d prefer.

Oxford is full of so many great things at Oxmas. Go to the Broad Street Christmas market; wander the city drinking hot chocolate; give yourself an essay off and do minimal reading to make some you time; go to Christmas formal… the possibilities are endless! Feeling homesick and have some time on your hands? Go for mulled wine at the pub. Wander and see the sights. Go try all of Whittard’s taster hot chocolate. Time flies when you’re having fun - and time flies faster the more fun you have.

Not to mention, you will have made some great friends this term who probably come from all over the country and when the Christmas vac starts, you won’t see them.

Double Take:

Dear Cherwell... I’m a fresher really missing home, what do I do?

We ask our resident agony aunts for their advice on your problems.
Best matcha (latte) in town

Kobi Mohan tries different matcha lattes in Oxford

M atcha is a tea steeped (ha ha) in history, tradition and the patchwork of philosophical and religious traditions that have shaped Japan. As a former avid anime watcher, I came to know of the drink from television shows, though for many years it remained a thing of glossy animated fiction for me. That is until I finally tried the tea for the first time a few years ago and have since found increasing comfort in its morose and subtle flavour. For the sake of systematising my opinions and perhaps also assisting fellow matcha fans, I will be reviewing the options for matcha available in Oxford.

First, I think it would be helpful to establish what matcha is before the reviewing begins, both for the matcha-curious and others who the matcha hype has somehow not reached. Matcha is a traditional Japanese green tea made from a finely ground powder of meticulously grown and processed green tea leaves. Matcha literally means ‘rubbed tea’, in reference to the process by which ceremonial grade matcha is ground down to a fine powder in a granite mill. The earliest origins of the drink can be found in China during the Tang dynasty but matcha as it is now known and the associated extensive preparation methods and ceremony are Japanese in origin. Matcha was introduced to Japan in the 12th century by the Zen Buddhist monk Eisai who brought from his studies in China some tea seeds and established a practice known as ‘the way of tea’. At the time, there was a common conception that the world was in a state of ‘mappa’, which in Japanese Buddhism is the age of the degeneration of the Buddha’s law. For Eisai, the perfect preparation of matcha was to be an exercise of devotion honouring the beauty that could be found among an otherwise imperfect world. This may be the origin of the modern Japanese tea ceremony and its many iterations which continue to be a cultural, spiritual and social activity for many, rooted in the philosophies and practices of Zen Buddhism and Shintoism.

It’s worth noting that I actually failed to find a single café that offered matcha as it is traditionally made: ceremonial grade matcha powder prepared with hot water in the ceremonial fashion. For this reason, I’ve had to widen the scope of qualifying matchas to include some drinks which stray from the tradition of matcha somewhat such as the various matcha-flavoured drinks, including matcha lattes that, though often delicious, are not necessarily authentic. With these limitations in mind, let the matcha (latte and flavoured drinks) review commence!

According to various sources, good matcha should have slightly vege notes, a touch of bitterness, nuttiness and an overall smooth and subtly sweet taste. When judging this series of matcha-adjacent drinks, I will account for authenticity of flavour worth four points and use of traditional powder over syrup, overall flavour and price each worth two points, for a total of ten potential matcha points to earn!

Art Café’s matcha latte has a really lovely and smooth flavour, subtly sweet and made with traditional powder, this latte is definitely worth a try. At £4, this was pretty mid-range on price and honestly worth the bit extra. 9/10

Leoni’s iced matcha latte is pretty similar to an iced vanilla latte in terms of flavour. It’s a bit on the sweet side but still pretty tasty. It seems to be made with a pre-mixed solution but the solution does, apparently, use actual matcha powder, which is surprising for a chain of its scale. 5.5/10

Starbucks’ iced matcha latte uses traditional powder, which is very apparent from the clumps of sediment you might find at the bottom of one of its drinks. As far as flavour goes, certainly there is a flavour but I’m not sure it’s one I particularly liked. 4/10

In Cha’s matcha macchiato is ridiculously good, a smooth blend of matcha and milk served chilled. At £6.05, however, it is the most expensive drink on this list. Though the drink itself is quite large, a single matcha drink setting you back nearly two meal deals has to lose that delicious milky matcha concoction some points. I was unable to fully investigate whether syrup or powder was used in the making of this drink but my housemate and resident barista friend suggested that it was possible that some sort of premixed solution made with matcha powder might be ing used. 7/10

Based on the matcha (lattes and flavoured drinks) that I have surveyed, it seems Art Café’s matcha latte is the finest matcha in the land (of OX1). Art café’s matcha latte delivers all the subtle notes of sweetness, slight bitterness and vegetalty that google has suggested I should expect from a good matcha, and at a medium price point. Also, it was absolutely delicious. Beyond that there’s not matcha else to say really.

Weird food combinations that just make sense

Vedika Rastogi considers weird and wonderful food combinations

As I scrolled through my TikTok feed, I couldn’t help but be intrigued by the range of peculiar ice cream flavors from Heinz ketchup-up to Baked beans, courtesy of the Anya Hindmarch pop-up store. It led me to consider unconventional food pairings. While I’m aware that these combinations may raise some to raise an eyebrow or two, I believe they’re worth exploring. They could very well become a regular addition to your weekly Tesco shop.

Hawaiian pizza

A divisive choice for some, it is undeniable that the saccharine pineapple balances out the savory ham. The inception of this unique pizza can be boiled down to its creator’s culinary exploration, drawing inspiration from the art of blending sweet and savory flavors in Chinese cuisine. In spite of savoring a range of pizzas during my summer in Italy, trying various types from those adorned with porcini mushrooms and fresh truffle shavings to experiencing the original Neapolitan pizza - I grudgingly admit Hawaiian pizza will always be my go-to. Unsurprisingly, during my time in Rome, I didn’t encounter pineapple as a topping. However, I did notice a peculiar combination: potato on pizza, which some may consider an even odder pairing.

Ham and fruit

This classic combination perfectly balances the savory taste of ham with the natural sweetness of different fruits. Thinly sliced prosciutto wrapped around juicy melon or ham-wrapped figs showcase the interplay of flavors when contrasting elements coalesce.

Watermelon and feta cheese

A summery treat that provides both a burst of sweetness and transforms an otherwise bland fruit into a more satisfying snack. A refreshing salad option that marries the juicy, crispy taste of watermelon with the crumbly, salty feta.

Nduja sausage and honey

An elite combination which relies on the spicy kick of the soft spreadable sausage is complemented with the sweet, golden allure of honey. It works best on top of a cracker or pizza, and even has the potential to be paired with burrata if you want to elevate a midnight snack.

Popping candy and crème brûlée

A Christ Church classic, this dessert serves as the perfect conclusion to any formal. My own affection for this sweet treat blossomed from Freshers’ Formal. The inclusion of popping candy was instrumental in rousing me from a wine-induced stupor while seated amongst my tutors.

Caviar and ice cream

It might sound like an unusual duo, and it is not one I have been fortunate enough to try. However, the contrast between the simplicity of ice cream and the opulence of caviar has piqued my interest and given the chance to try it, I would.

Old Rosie

Not food, but it has interesting enough taste to raise eyebrows at the Pub. The aridity of the cider must be combined with a pack of brown bag crisps (preferably smoked chilli).
Driving towards a sustainable future

Alice Banfield

For a while now, there has been a growing awareness of the need to reduce our carbon footprint. This has led to a shift towards more sustainable practices in many industries, including sports. In this article, we will explore the efforts being made in cricket to reduce its carbon footprint and create a more sustainable future.

Sustainable practices in cricket

Recently, cricket has taken steps towards more sustainable practices. This includes reducing the carbon emissions associated with travel, implementing recycling programs, and using renewable energy sources. These efforts are not only good for the environment but can also help reduce costs in the long term.

Reducing travel emissions

One of the most significant contributors to carbon emissions in cricket is travel. Players and officials often travel long distances to compete in international tournaments. To reduce this impact, teams are looking for ways to travel more sustainably, such as by using trains instead of planes.

Recycling and waste management

Recycling and waste management are also major areas of focus. Teams are implementing programs to reduce waste and recycle as much as possible. This includes recycling plastic bottles, waste paper, and other materials.

Renewable energy

Renewable energy is becoming increasingly important in the cricketing world. Some teams are exploring the use of solar power to provide energy on the playing field, while others are using it to power their facilities.

Conclusion

In conclusion, cricket is making significant strides towards a more sustainable future. While there is still much work to be done, the efforts being made are encouraging and demonstrate the sport's commitment to reducing its impact on the environment. As fans, we can support these initiatives by choosing to watch matches on TV, which reduces the carbon footprint associated with travel to the game.

A goodbye to Australia’s Golden Generation

Raghab Chari

Near the start of the Ashes in England, ESPN-Cricinfo published a graphic asking viewers to comment on which player would be the first to retire. Pat Cummins and Steve Smith were the most common picks. If you were asked to name one thing that has made Australia’s golden generation so special, you might think of their white-ball talent or their ability to handle pressure. However, as cricket continues to evolve, new challenges arise, and the task of Mendonca to the strength of today’s legendary 2005 team, the original Australia’s Golden Generation, seems even more daunting.

Despite the many challenges, this generation has left an indelible mark on the sport. Their performances in recent years have been nothing short of extraordinary. From winning the World Cup in 2015 to claiming the Ashes in 2017, they have shown the world what it means to be the best in the business.

Looking back on their careers, it is clear that this generation has been blessed with some of the greatest cricketers the world has ever seen. With their退出, the sporting world is left with a void that will be difficult to fill. As we say goodbye to this generation, we can only hope that the next generation will rise to the occasion and carry on the legacy of these Golden Generation stars.

Investment in (Men’s) sport needs to slow down

Zoe Aberje

A few weeks ago, listening to Ian Wright’s 60th birthday podcast special I picked up on something very interesting. When asked what he wanted to see for the future of cricket he responded helping grow the women’s game and when asked why he responded, “It’s really pure.” I wasn’t really sure to interpret this comment but looking at the way the sport interacts with its fans, growth and investment against the men’s side, I feel pretty confident to say I have grasped the distinction.

When investments are made into the women’s game, it is a decision by shareholders and investors to grow the sport in the name of fans, the competitors involved and for the general growth of the sport. When a large investment is made in the men’s side, the intentions are different. It tends to be short-sighted. Meanwhile, teams have been busy redesigning freight containers so that more efficient aircraft can be used to transport equipment, leading to a reduction in emissions of around 19.12%. For European races, biofuel trucks were used for transportation, with Mercedes reporting a cut in emissions by around 90%. In 2022, Travel of personnel also has a large impact on emissions, so fans are currently being encouraged to travel using public transport, and broadcasting operations are beginning operations beginning to be carried out remotely.

Constant changes have already been made, signalling the sport’s commitment towards sustainability. Of vital importance that I continue to prioritise sustainability and reimage its practices to work towards a greener future. I know which have already been made are encouraging, but the net zero plan is highly ambitious and much more needs to be done to ensure a green future for the sport.

The key idea in tackling this issue is by region-growing, look to the UK only, Arsenal and cont. WFC smashed the t h WSL average attendance record last season with 17,501. While the trajectory of the women’s game is not going to be overnight, this increase in support for the women’s game is a positive. The women’s game is a decision by shareholders and investors to grow the sport in the name of fans, the competitors involved and for the general growth of the sport.

While the trajectory of the women’s game is not going to be overnight, this increase in support for the women’s game is a positive. The women’s game is a decision by shareholders and investors to grow the sport in the name of fans, the competitors involved and for the general growth of the sport. When a large investment is made in the men’s side, the intentions are different. It tends to be short-sighted. Meanwhile, teams have been busy redesigning freight containers so that more efficient aircraft can be used to reduce the carbon footprint of cricket matches.

As the sport continues to evolve, it is important to consider the impact of our investments. While we can applaud the recent investments in the women’s game, we must also be mindful of the impact of our investments in the men’s game on the planet. The sport is facing a challenge, and it is up to us to ensure a green future for the sport.
Kevin and Timmy let it out

by Sean Hartnett

ACROSS
1. Garment is most scratchy, apparently (6)
3. When Mike’s not there, the monkeys make fries (5)
6. Sounds superior, but it’s actually second rate (4)
7. Tear writing implement is mature (5)
8. Play makes doctor and mother extremists (5)
9. Gossip curse makes religious music (6)
10. Allegedly steal a plucky thing (4)
15. A friendly greeting is the first part to mindful stretching (4)
17. Warrior hidden in Panama zone (6)
19. Italian plumber first looks up into gas ignition (5)
20. Short album makes up half of a long poem (4)
22. Jabber on about card game (5)
23. We hear key to a vehicle in beige fabric (5)
24. Seems a golden fruit takes care of children abroad (6)

DOWN
1. Instrument sounds allegorical (6)
2. Brazilian city tango makes for a brawl (40)
3. A wicked thing (6)
4. Sprite’s beer goes right through you! (6)
5. South-west organ is uncouth (5)
6. Chinese invention placed on spine could be a bestseller (9)
12. Newcastle flower (4)
13. A playful French girl is a mixed up puzzle (6)
14. Capital city is reportedly characterised by high achievement and competitiveness (6)
16. Timepiece missing 250 is OK (5)
18. Interbranch organisation hides what’s at the bottom of the ocean (6)
21. Personal assistant around known for tilting attraction (4)
22. Without its head, what was trapped became old (4)

Cryptic Crossword by Sarah Beard

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DOWN
1. Instrument sounds allegorical (6)
2. Brazilian city tango makes for a brawl (40)
3. A wicked thing (6)
4. Sprite’s beer goes right through you! (6)
5. South-west organ is uncouth (5)
6. Chinese invention placed on spine could be a bestseller (9)
12. Newcastle flower (4)
13. A playful French girl is a mixed up puzzle (6)
14. Capital city is reportedly characterised by high achievement and competitiveness (6)
16. Timepiece missing 250 is OK (5)
18. Interbranch organisation hides what’s at the bottom of the ocean (6)
21. Personal assistant around known for tilting attraction (4)
22. Without its head, what was trapped became old (4)

Last week’s answers

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