

Trinity Term 2011
Volume 23 No 3

OXFORD TODAY

THE UNIVERSITY
MAGAZINE

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James Martin interprets our century

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COVER IMAGE: JOBY SESSIONS, ROB JUDGES



Trinity
Term 2011

Welcome

The future of the world and a University under attack

The past few months have seen the University attacked by the ruling coalition. In one instance, concerning the admission of black students, the Prime Minister got his facts badly wrong. On another occasion, a minister suggested that extra places at UK universities might be paid for in cash. Both instances appear to target Oxford's recruitment of students solely on the basis of merit. The University needs to stand firm on this matter. It cannot be expected to mend inequalities that are deeply rooted in society. Equally, however, its long commitment to meritocracy has already led the way to a wonderfully diverse, richly globalised student body. Without these students, and an equally diverse body of faculty, Oxford would be hard-pressed to play its leadership role in our increasingly complex and globalised world.

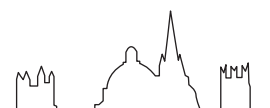
This issue's cover story examines the meaning of that world, with a no-holds-barred analysis by Dr James Martin – Oxonian, computer expert, educator and benefactor. His essay chimes with the Alumni Weekend on 16–18 September, *Meeting Minds – 21st Century Challenges*.

Among other features, ranging from Sir Andrew Motion's protest at library closures to PG Wodehouse's impact on the English language, do look at the amazing photographs that form the winning entries of *Trees!* (p15) and consider our fabulous wine offer on page 43, an excellent deal with a charitable component. Finally, you can now read *OT* on the iPad (below). We welcome reader feedback on this move. ☺

EDITOR: Richard Lofthouse

NEW! Oxford Today now on the iPad. Link to the App store at www.oxfordtoday.ox.ac.uk

For your chance to win an iPad 2, complete our reader survey at www.surveymonkey.com/s/oxfordtodaytrinity



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Stephanie Cook

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Letters

Your correspondence

We welcome letters for publication, which can be sent either by post or by email. We reserve the right to edit them to meet space constraints; the best way to avoid this is to keep letters to 200 or fewer words. Unless you request otherwise, letters may also appear on our website.

In response to...

OT 23.1: 'First among equals'

Political attack and personal touch...

☉ I found the very informative article about Oxford prime ministers ('First among equals') in OT 23.1 most interesting and very appropriately topical. The resulting letters you published, relating mainly to David Cameron, certainly revealed something: I find it almost beyond belief that anyone, with or without a university education, can take such a childish line as to make someone's facial appearance the focus of a political attack. Among many other things, the fact that David Cameron attained a First is more relevant than his face. It is also surely not acceptable in adult debate to attack the cuts without showing even the slightest awareness of why they are happening. Political debate is one thing but ill-informed name-calling is quite another.

AUBREY BOWDEN
Merton, 1959

☉ In 1985 Oxford refused an honorary degree to Margaret Thatcher in protest at her higher education policies. The Michaelmas issue of *Oxford Today* had David Cameron on its cover at the very time his government was pushing through the tripling of tuition fees and the withdrawal of public funding for arts and humanities teaching. The related article is framed by headings including 'Meritocracy's rise' and 'Privilege ends'. While written before the current proposals were fully known, these headings are

painfully ironic in the context of the effective privatisation of higher education. Through the Russell Group, Oxford lobbied hard for an increase in tuition fees. Neither the Group nor Oxford itself has raised a strong voice to protect public higher education. Would Oxford today refuse an honorary degree to David Cameron as the instigator of these changes or honour a man who has protected its own interests? I wonder if *Oxford Today* might address these issues or should I just cancel my (modest) monthly contribution to Pembroke College on the grounds that I am not sure what kind of education Oxford stands for?

SARAH WILSON
Pembroke, 1985

☉ This is easy to explain [why there are so many Oxonian PMs]: the Oxford man behaves as if he rules the world while the Cambridge man does not care who rules the world and this in turn is explained by the fact that Oxford is in the centre of southern England while Cambridge is out on a limb. The Oxford men who went to the possibly recently started Cambridge in 1209 had suddenly discovered how uncomfortable life in the centre might be when a student had killed his mistress.

ALEXANDER
HOPKINSON-WOOLLEY
Balliol, 1955

☉ Congratulations on your selection of letters in the Hilary edition, about the Cameron photograph in the previous term. Congratulations also to the Prime Minister on becoming involved in another war, so early in his leadership, thus proving his adherence to a long tradition.

LENON BEESON
Wadham, 1944

☉ Your columns seem to attract some very glum correspondents. However, I was pleased to see the cover picture of David Cameron. So you have at least one happy reader out there.

ROGER SIMPSON
Wadham, 1957

☉ I was delighted to see the full colour photograph of John Henry Newman's room at Oriel College in the Michaelmas 2010 edition of your magazine. I've been a lifelong admirer of Newman's work; I am fascinated by his hesitation to becoming a saint, because he preferred the life of a man of letters. Indeed, the cosy vibrancy of his rooms suggests a complex personality who was first and foremost a scholar, bibliophile, and Oxonian, who later would influence both the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches. Please include in future issues such personal touches as these – portraits of alumni, as gleaned from something we can all relate to: the joy and charm of occupying an undergraduate room!

REYNALDO N OBED
Univ, 1966



Brave new world?

I have been following the debate over post-secondary education funding in the UK, and in particular, the Oxford defence of the undergraduate tutorial system. My experience of the Oxford tutorial system was nothing special. I was never intellectually stretched, rarely challenged. I had to work much harder, and in a more focused way, once I arrived in Canada as a young graduate student. During my academic career – at a severely under-endowed provincial Canadian university – I taught through lectures and seminars, with an office door that was always open. I believe that this method was as effective, and more efficient, than the much-romanticised Oxford tutorial system. The British government's plans for higher education may be unfortunate. But surely openness to other models of teaching and learning is necessary and appropriate.

JAMES K HILLER
Brasenose, 1962

For the love of God

How sad that some of your readers feel threatened by a Humanist leaflet saying, "There's probably no God". A quotation from Bertrand Russell is pertinent here. "Belief systems provide a programme which relieves the necessity of thought."

RICHARD GILBERT
Worcester, 1958

Bluff, Guile, Swagger...

In John Garth's article on Sir Tommy Macpherson, he seems to confuse the terms 'Nazi' and 'German army'. To imply that all members of the German army were Nazis is as absurd as to suppose all members of the British army were Conservatives. A huge number of German soldiers fought against their will, knowing that if they didn't they could be executed for desertion. As a British national living in Germany, such ignorance embarrasses and shames me.

PETER MOORE
Worcester, 1995

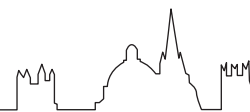


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6/7



Human traffic

In your Hilary issue you mention environmental disasters that are coming our way. Global warming and loss of rainforest. I see these disasters being largely caused by there being too many people on earth and the need to provide for them and give them a better standard of living. There are nearly 75 million human births over deaths every year. I find this number staggering. President Bush launched an immense 'war on terror' at the loss of a mere few thousand lives in a terrorist attack. We should value human lives less sacredly, and what Oxford thinkers should launch is a 'war against over-population'. It is the root problem behind environmental problems, and in spite of natural and entrenched attitudes against it, our world and our future depend on it.

STEPHEN CONN

Corpus Christi, 1961

Indebted

Your piece on the relaunch of OED Online (p9, Hilary issue) says "the first print edition in 1884 consisted of 10 volumes". The 10 volumes did not appear until the dictionary was finished, in 1928: 1884 saw the publication of just the first fascicle, A–Ant. And your editorial note after the letters on English usage (p6) had the solecism 'due to a lack of space': 'owing to', please!

AM HUGHES

Queen's, 1964

American dream?

In the Hilary issue, of the 14 new appointments from outside Oxford listed, eight came from establishments in the USA; the only other from abroad is a professor in American Government. The Vice-Chancellor came from Yale. It is suggested that the UK is becoming de facto the 51st State. Is Oxford becoming an offshore American university?

DAVID DIXON

Univ, 1960

Tutorials and tuition fees...

☺ On television I have seen the demonstrations by students in respect of students' fees, and I have seen at least one confrontation of Nicholas Clegg by a gathering of students. I have been struck by the students' attitude of seeming to think they have an absolute right to have their university fees subsidised by the taxpayer. And I have been appalled by the conduct of many of them in demonstrations and interviews. I have not been alone in these thoughts. It has seemed to me that those students do not appreciate the difference between states' obligation to subsidise compulsory education and the fact that there is no corresponding obligation in respect of university education.

STEPHEN GRATWICK

Balliol, 1942

☺ Oxford's tutorial is, in my opinion, world-class. Unrivalled, and the envy of Harvard. My law tutor at Lincoln, the late Brian Simpson, forced us to think, and think independently. No 'adequate' essays here! At our first session, he succeeded in inducing a colleague to agree that black was white. From then

on, intellectual sparring was rather lively. We were fascinated by our stimulating adventures into Criminal Law on Saturday mornings, straight from London, with the now Lord Goff, PC. At that time, with our heads filled with girls and rowing, we did not appreciate the brilliance of our tutors. As they say over here, "Perlen vor die Schweine"! PETER LANCASHIRE

Lincoln, 1957

☺ The article 'Age of Uncertainty' lays out the usual problems of lack of money and the desire to keep Oxford as it is. Yes, money is what you need to do this, but rarely do you ask for it. At some point in the magazine, you could have a box that indicates levels of giving, or you could just ASK! "There is no culture of giving, Gerry," a friend told me on a recent visit. Rather, indeed, people of my generation expected to pay little or nothing for a wonderful education, and thereafter not to think of making some return. You state that alumni increase their incomes by a figure way over £150,000, yet when it comes to a gaudy, they just expect the college to entertain them royally, put them up for

little or nothing, as though we are somehow entitled to it. I feel it is the other way round; the college is entitled to our generous support. The enjoyment of our wonderful experience goes on and on in your magazine, and rightly so, but then the vast majority walk away with their hands in their pockets.

GERRY DUNPHY

Brasenose, 1954

☺ Oxford was a wonderful experience a while back. I left The Queen's College in 1992 after gaining a degree in Zoology and a boxing Blue. Happy days. It seems to me that others could perhaps get the experience of going to the university if you stopped spending what must be a fair few quid on printing and sending out copies of *Oxford Today*. I'd be more than happy to get a copy via cyberspace and keep up to date that way. Is it appropriate to spend so much money physically printing and sending out the magazine?

CHARLES ALLDAY

Queen's, 1989

NOTE: Opt to receive *Oxford Today* digitally! Top right corner of our home page:
www.oxfordtoday.ox.ac.uk

Post-war healing

Sir Tommy Macpherson's recall of returning to Oxford after WW2 rang a Brasenose memory bell with me. I arrived at BNC in January 1947 after an incident which left me with two amputations, third-degree burns, facial damage, etc. Oxford built a secure bridge for me into the real world which has lasted to this day and will last into the future. Thank you.

SAM GALLOP

Brasenose, 1947

In Oxford we trust

A number of letters to *Oxford Today* strike a rather captious and sour note. I would like to see more praise for some of the excellent, well-researched articles.

KEITH FRASER

Univ, 1946

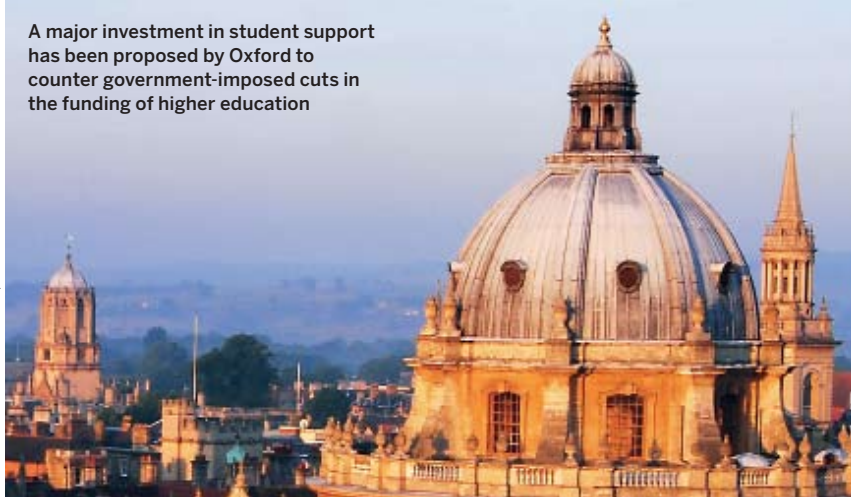
For full versions of these letters and to read further alumni correspondence, visit www.oxfordtoday.ox.ac.uk

Oxonian

University & alumni news

A major investment in student support has been proposed by Oxford to counter government-imposed cuts in the funding of higher education

LEONNEAL/AFP/GETTY IMAGES, GREG SMOLONSKI



Council adds student aid

Oxford has moved to protect student access

On 14 March, the University's governing council approved a wide-ranging new package of undergraduate charges and financial support, to take effect from 2012. Council's decision followed detailed discussions across the collegiate University, in the wake of major government changes to the funding of higher education in England and deep cuts in public funding.

As a consequence of these measures, the University calculated that in order for it just to break even, undergraduate tuition charges would need to rise to £8,000 per annum (more than double the current figure). The real cost of educating an Oxford undergraduate is estimated at £16,000 a year. The total annual subsidy provided by the collegiate University for undergraduate education exceeds £80m.

Against that backdrop, Council approved a headline tuition charge of £9,000 per annum (the maximum allowable under new government regulations) but with a targeted system of waivers for students from poorer backgrounds. As a result, first-year Oxford students from the lowest-income households will have their tuition charges limited to £3,500. For later years of their course, the charge would be £6,000 per year. Students with

household incomes up to £25,000 will have deferred charges of between £6,000 and £8,000 per year.

No tuition charges will be repayable until a graduate is earning above a government-set threshold.

Council also approved plans to expand bursary provision, which assists students with living costs, and is designed to ensure that no student has to find a job during term. First-year students from the lowest-income households would receive a bursary of £4,300, dropping to £3,300 in later years. Students with household incomes of up to £42,000 would receive a bursary on a sliding scale.

Dr Sally Mapstone, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education, described the new package as "surely one of, if not the most generous in the country".

Oxford's real additional income from tuition charges will be about £10m, of which more than £7m will support students. The University's spending on financial assistance and access work will increase to more than £15m a year.

These plans are subject to approval by the Office for Fair Access (OFFA), and aim to widen access to Oxford from under-represented groups ranging from particular neighbourhoods, schools and colleges to people from disadvantaged backgrounds, or those with disabilities. ☺

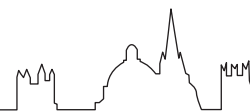
Boats, quizzes and wine...

The University's Blue boat upset the odds to win the 157th Boat Race, beating Cambridge by four lengths. The dark blues eased to victory in a time of 17 minutes and 32 seconds. There was further joy for Oxford as they won the Women's Boat Race at Henley, watched by Sir Steve Redgrave, whose daughter Natalie is in the Oxford crew. The Isis boat also triumphed, beating Goldie by six lengths. In a landmark victory in the University Challenge competition, Magdalen College not only beat the University of York in the final quiz, but also won the overall competition for the fourth time – no other institution has won it more than twice. The team was made up of undergraduates Matthew Chan and Will Cudmore and graduates Kyle Haddad-Fonda and James McComish. Finally, the 58th annual Varsity Blind Wine Tasting Competition, sponsored by champagne house Pol Roger, went the other way. Oxford lost to Cambridge at the Oxford–Cambridge Club on Pall Mall. The damage was done by what Oxford star James Flewellen described as the "gauntlet of obscurity" thrown down by Pol wine selector Cassidy Dart. The whites all looked identical and the reds included obscure varietals like Blaufrankisch and Mencia. The light blues won a free trip to Épernay, where they will go head to head with the 2010 French winners. ☺

See page 43: an appeal for memoirs of Varsity wine tasting, and a unique READER WINE OFFER



Oxford's exhausted, dark blue crew, triumphant after rowing to victory in the 157th Boat Race



America's First Lady comes to Oxford

Michelle Obama met pupils from a London secondary school in Christ Church College, on 25 May. The trip to Oxford, by the girls of Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Language College (EGA), arose from Mrs Obama's surprise visit to the school in 2009 during the Obamas' first official UK visit. ☺

Duke Humfrey's Night success

Friends of the Bodleian campaign to preserve our written heritage

The second Duke Humfrey's Night event takes place on 15 October, the idea being to attract financial support from supporters of the Bodleian Library for the acquisition and preservation of fragile manuscripts. Highlights of last year's inaugural event include the acquisition of Louis MacNeice's papers and a pledge to restore Purcell's *Ode to St Cecilia*. The Friends' chairman Professor Richard McCabe, a fellow of Merton, has emphasised the urgency of preserving our written heritage at a time of draconian cuts in public funding.

☺ www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/bodley/friends

Notice: Implementation of a new library system will mean closure of the stacks from 7 to 18 July. Readers planning visits are advised to order material by 1 July or to contact reader.services@bodleian.ox.ac.uk



ADAM MIDDLETON PHOTOGRAPHY

Beating Alzheimer's

In a potentially dramatic breakthrough, Oxford scientists at the Department of Physiology, Anatomy and Genetics have found a means of delivering drugs directly to the brain to 'switch off' a gene thought to cause Alzheimer's and other common memory and brain disorders. It will take several years before the technique can be safely released for widespread use.



Medieval whistle

The Bate Collection of Musical Instruments has been bequeathed a 13th-century deer-bone whistle from the estate of Mr Peter Henderson. Found in Abingdon during an archaeological dig in the 1960s, the whistle is believed to have been used for morris dancing and other revelries in which the player played a three-hole whistle in one hand while beating a drum with the other.



Banking biology

The Bank of England's financial stability director, Andrew Haldane, co-authored a paper on financial ecology with Lord Robert May, Oxford ecologist. It applies lessons from biology to banking and was featured on the cover of *Nature*.



STEPHEN CORNWELL

John le Carré deposits archive with Bodley

Eighty-five boxes of manuscripts, long kept in a Cornish barn, are the first batch of a vast literary archive that John le Carré, author of the Smiley novels and one of Britain's most significant writers, has passed to the Bodleian Library. Richard Ovenden, keeper of special collections at the Bodleian, said: "At a time when there are constraints on our public funding, the ability of British institutions to compete with American archives is diminishing. Gifts of this kind become even more important, and we are enormously grateful for this terrific act of generosity." Part of the beauty of the manuscript collection (the voluminous correspondence will come in due course) is that it shows, in the way that no digital archive could, le Carré's detailed working methods. "You can see the whole process of the creation of a novel. For *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy* there are 17 or 18 archive boxes of material that chart the generation of the story." Since the Bodleian was founded in 1602, it has benefited from many generous archival bequests.

NEW HEADS OF HOUSE

Balliol College

PROFESSOR SIR DRUMMOND BONE, FRSE, FRSA, has been elected as Master with effect from October. He was a Snell Exhibitioner at Balliol (1968–72) after graduating from Glasgow University. He became Professor of English Literature and Dean of the Faculty of Arts at the University of Glasgow, Principal of Royal Holloway and Bedford New College in the University of London, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Liverpool and President of Universities UK. Sir Drummond is an expert on Byron and president of the Scottish Byron Society.

Hertford College

WILL HUTTON has been elected Principal with effect from 1 September. An economist and leading public intellectual, he is former editor-in-chief of *The Observer* and joined The Work Foundation in 2000. He is currently chairing the Ownership Commission, established by the last Labour government, and due to report in the autumn. He has written numerous books, the most recent being *Them and Us: Changing Britain – Why We Need a Fair Society* (2010).



Honorary Degree (MA) NANCY KENNY

Lady Kenny was recognised for her tireless work for Oxford, including most recently as Director of the University's Alumni Relations Office. She was praised by the Public Orator for her "hard work, determination and tact in dealing with people".

Mansfield College

BARONESS HELENA KENNEDY, QC, has been elected with effect from October. She is Chair of Justice, the British arm of the International Commission of Jurists. In addition, she is Chair of Inquiry for the Equality and Human Rights Commission on Human Trafficking in Scotland and a member of the Government Commission on a British Bill of Rights. She is Master of the Bench of Gray's Inn, a Fellow of the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, president of the School of Oriental and African Studies and an honorary Writer to the Signet in Scotland.

St Cross College

SIR MARK JONES, Director of the Victoria and Albert Museum, has been appointed with effect from 1 September. He read PPE at Worcester College, Oxford and gained an MA at the Courtauld Institute of Art. He joined the British Museum as Assistant Keeper with responsibility for the collection of medals in 1974 and became Keeper of the department in 1990. Since 2001 he has held the directorship of the V&A, where he has led a ten-year, £120 million renewal programme.

Worcester College

PROFESSOR JONATHAN BATE, CBE, FBA, FRSL, Professor of Shakespeare and Renaissance Literature at the University of Warwick, has been appointed with effect from 1 September. Well-known as a biographer, critic and broadcaster, he has previously held posts at the University of Liverpool, as well as visiting posts at Harvard, Yale and UCLA. He is on the Board of the Royal Shakespeare Company and was chief editor of the RSC edition of Shakespeare's *Complete Works*.

60 seconds with...

Gero Miesenböck

Waynflete Professor of Physiology and fellow of Magdalen College



PHIL SAWER

Why neuroscience?

I believe it's the most fascinating area of biology and perhaps of science in general. We have no idea how the brain works, so there is huge potential for discovery.

What do you work on?

We are trying to understand how intelligent behaviour emerges when many nerve cells, which have little intelligence of their own, are wired together. We have little notion of what makes brain circuits smart, even so-called 'simple' ones like those of the fruit flies we study.

How are you going to find out?

We poke here and flip a switch there and see what happens. But this is difficult with the brain because we don't know where the switches are, and information processing, routing and storage all appear to be inseparably intertwined. Our method allows us to write and read information to and from precisely identified nodes in this tangled network of cells, by using light-controlled biomolecules and light to spy on and control signalling in the brain.

Why is this method special?

Because it is a powerful mix of optical communication and genetic engineering. Animals are bred so that specific brain cells either transmit information when exposed to light or emit a flash of light when they transmit information, so we can read and change the mind. In our case, the mind of a fly.

How is optogenetics different from traditional neuroscientific

research methods?

Neuroscience has generally been rather observational. People would record electrical signals from a single nerve cell and argue about how the signals related to perception or behaviour. I realised that being able to control neural circuits directly and precisely would settle many arguments.

Could the 'mind control' potential of optogenetics have an impact on future medical treatments?

People tend to associate 'mind control' with our optogenetic interventions but forget that there is no qualitative difference between influencing brain function through physical or chemical means. But optogenetic therapies would require the introduction of a foreign gene into the brain. At present, there are technical, ethical and legal barriers to human gene therapy.

Are there legal and ethical opportunities for optogenetics to benefit human health?

The most immediate opportunity is to identify new targets for drugs. Finding compounds that regulate certain cell groups may lead to new or better treatments.

What are your future plans?

A new research centre in Oxford, the Centre for Neural Circuits and Behaviour, where we will work to unlock the elementary logic of animal behaviour and report our findings in papers that will entice our readers through striking turn of phrase and visual imagery. There is a strong aesthetic component to everything we do.



To view a recent lecture by Gero Miesenböck, visit www.oxfordtoday.ox.ac.uk

www.oxfordtoday.ox.ac.uk

Science findings Edited by Penny Sarchet

Investigating the discovery of an animal subspecies and how research into pain relief could revolutionise treatment



The Indian grey wolf, pictured here, is a close relative of the so-called Egyptian jackal

NICK GARBUITT/NATUREPL.COM, SUPERSTEM/LABORATORY

A wolf in jackal's clothing

Analysing animal DNA helps Oxford scientists make wild findings in Africa

An elusive subspecies of jackal known as the Egyptian jackal is, in fact, a type of grey wolf. A collaboration, which included members of Oxford's Wildlife Conservation Research Unit (WildCRU), made the discovery by analysing the DNA left in the animal's droppings. This finding vindicates the suspicions of Thomas Huxley, the evolutionary biologist known as Darwin's bulldog who, as early as 1880, commented that the animal looked remarkably like a grey wolf.

This discovery has strong implications for the conservation of mammals in Africa. When the Egyptian jackal was thought to be a subspecies of the golden jackal, it was deemed to be of little

conservational concern. As an African wolf, however, this animal could be much rarer and its discoverers argue that determining its numbers and distribution is a priority. This wolf also poses questions concerning African canids. Dog family species are relatively similar in terms of their lifestyle, prey and ecological niches and scientists are keen to find out how this new wolf competes and interacts with other African canids, particularly the golden jackal, and the extremely rare Ethiopian wolf. Genetic samples indicate that this Egyptian wolf may also be present in the Ethiopian highlands, revealing the potential of DNA analysis to discover new species in relatively unexplored countries.

Patient expectations affect the potency of painkillers

MRI scanning has been used to examine the influence of the placebo effect and its opposite, the nocebo effect, on pain perception. Professor Irene Tracey, from Oxford's Centre for Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging of the Brain, led a study in which volunteers experienced localised pain in a number of

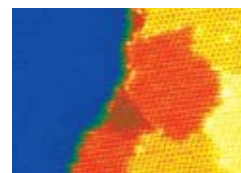
scenarios. Pain levels dropped after administration of an opioid drug, and then further again after the volunteers had been told that they were receiving the drug. After they were then falsely told that they were no longer receiving pain relief and would probably experience high pain levels again, pain returned to original

levels, despite the fact that the opioid was still being administered. This finding has important implications for pain treatment in hospitals, particularly for chronic pain sufferers, when a negative attitude resulting from previous failed treatments could hamper the success of new drugs.



UK babies born using new IVF embryo screening method

The first UK babies to undergo a new IVF test developed at Oxford have been born. A new chromosome counting technique developed by Dr Dagan Wells and Dr Elpida Fragouli at Oxford's Nuffield Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology makes it easier to choose embryos for implantation that have the best chances of survival. This microarray CGH method could increase a round of IVF's chances of success, reducing the emotional and physical toll of multiple IVF cycles.



Jewellery sonicator produces revolutionary nanosheets

A team led by Dr Valeria Nicolosi at Oxford's Department of Materials has developed a method for splitting layered materials into sheets just one atom thick. Using common solvents and pulses of ultrasound in sonicators normally used to clean jewellery, the team made nanosheets out of 150 different materials. Some act as conductors, while others display thermoelectric properties. This easy method of producing hundreds of materials with a range of special properties could lead to technological breakthroughs, including less wasteful batteries.



NEW APPOINTMENTS

Geography and the Environment

MYLES ALLEN

appointed Professor in the School of Geography and the Environment
Myles Allen, Lecturer in Atmospheric, Oceanic and Planetary Physics and Group Leader of the Climate Dynamics Group at Oxford, took up the post and became a fellow of Linacre College on 4 April.

Educational Assessment

JO-ANNE BAIRD

appointed Pearson Professor of Educational Assessment and Director of Oxford University Centre for Educational Assessment
Jo-Anne Baird, Professor in Educational Assessment at the University of Bristol, will take up the professorship and become Director on 1 October. Professor Baird will be a fellow of St Anne's College.



Chemical Pathology

NEIL BARCLAY

appointed EP Abraham Professor of Chemical Pathology
Neil Barclay, Professor of Molecular Immunology at Oxford, took up the post and became a fellow of Lincoln College on 21 March.

British Commonwealth

JAMES BELICH

appointed Beit Professor of the History of the British Commonwealth
James Belich, Research Professor of History at Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand, was appointed to the post with effect from 1 October. Professor Belich will be a fellow of Balliol College.



Cardiovascular Medicine

SHOUMO BHATTACHARYA

appointed Professor of Cardiovascular Medicine
Shoumo Bhattacharya, British Heart Foundation Chair of Cardiovascular Medicine within the Wellcome Trust Centre for Human Genetics at Oxford, took up the post and a fellowship at Green Templeton College on 1 December 2010.

Scientific Visualisation

MIN CHEN

appointed Professor of Scientific Visualisation
Min Chen, Professor of Computer Science and Deputy Head of the Department of Computer Science at Swansea University, took up the post and became a fellow of Pembroke College on 1 May.



Alumni Relations

CHRISTINE FAIRCHILD

appointed Director of Alumni Relations
Christine Fairchild, Executive Director of External Relations at Harvard Business School, took up the post on 7 March.

Turbomachinery

PETER IRELAND

appointed Donald Schultz Professor of Turbomachinery
Peter Ireland, Rolls-Royce Associate Fellow in Heat Transfer, Rolls-Royce, Derby, took up the post and became a fellow of St Catherine's College on 1 January.

American History

PHILIP MORGAN

appointed Harold Vyvyan Harmsworth Professor of American History
Philip Morgan, Harry C Black Professor of History at Johns Hopkins University, has been appointed to the post and a fellowship at The Queen's College for the academic year 2011–12.

Biomedical Engineering

ALISON NOBLE

appointed Professor of Biomedical Engineering
Alison Noble, Professor of Engineering Science at Oxford, took up the post and a fellowship at St Hilda's College on 4 April.

Economic History

KEVIN O'ROURKE

appointed Chichele Professor of Economic History
Kevin O'Rourke, Professor of Economics at Trinity College, Dublin, was appointed to the post with effect from 21 March. Initially on a part-time basis, he will take up the professorship full-time with effect from autumn 2011. Professor O'Rourke will become a fellow of All Souls College from 1 October.

Ancient History

NICHOLAS PURCELL

appointed Camden Professor of Ancient History
Nicholas Purcell, Lecturer in Ancient History at Oxford, has been appointed to the post with effect from 1 October. He will be a fellow of Brasenose College.

Development and Reproduction

PAUL RILEY

appointed Professor of Development and Reproduction
Paul Riley, Professor of Molecular Cardiology at University College London, has been appointed to the post and a fellowship of Jesus College with effect from 1 October.



History

LYNDAL ROPER

Regius Professor of History
Her Majesty the Queen has approved the appointment of Lyndal Roper, Professor of Early Modern History at Oxford, to the Regius Professorship with effect from 1 October. Professor Roper will be a fellow of Oriel College.

Molecular Biophysics

MARK SANSOM

appointed David Phillips Professor of Molecular Biophysics
Mark Sansom, Professor of Molecular Biophysics, Head of the Laboratory of Molecular and Systems Biochemistry and Director of Structural Bioinformatics and Computational Biochemistry, took up the post and became a fellow of Corpus Christi College on 1 April.

Islamic Art and Architecture

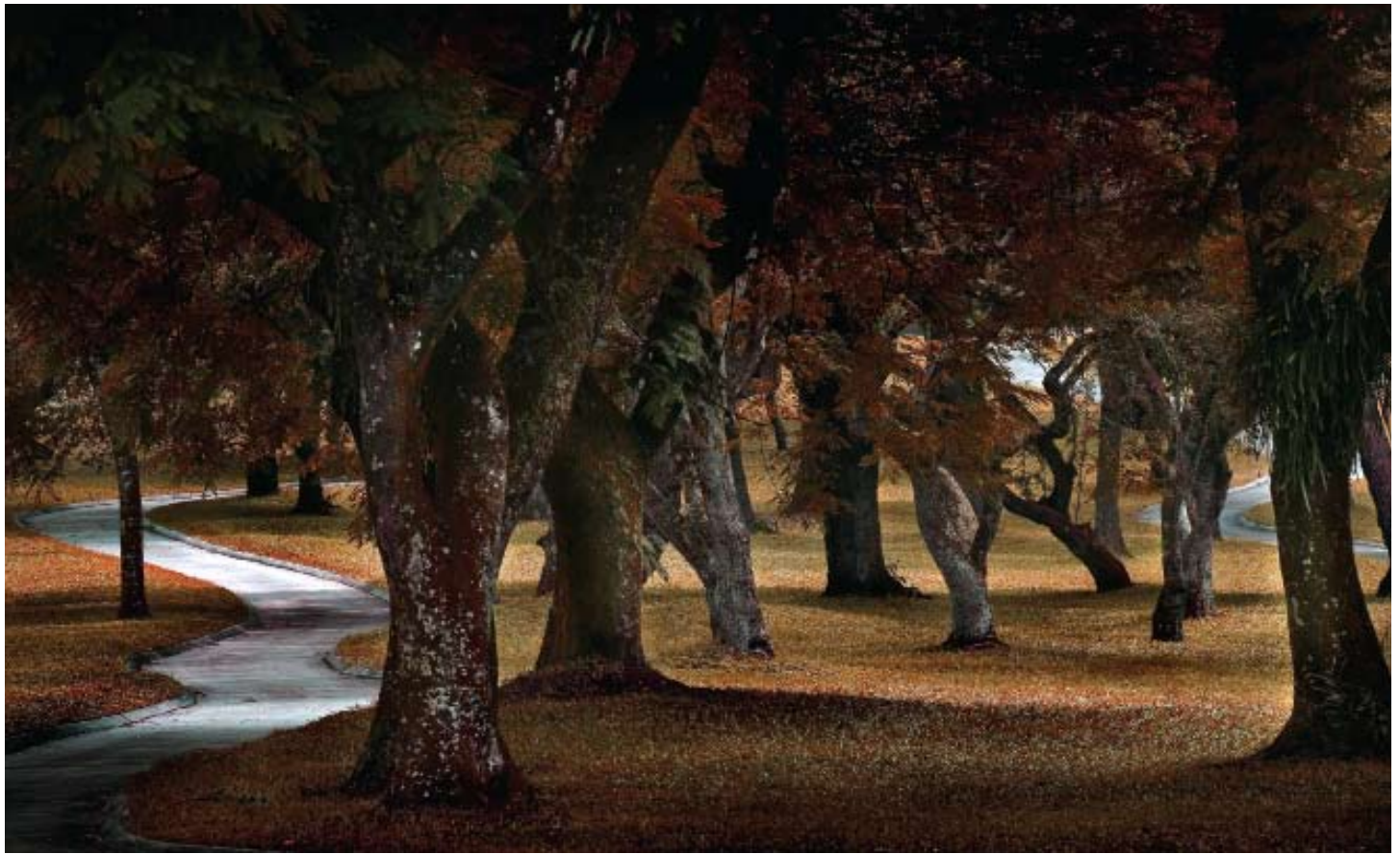
OLIVER WATSON

appointed Ieoh Ming Pei Professor of Islamic Art and Architecture
Oliver Watson, Director of the Museum of Islamic Art at Doha, Qatar, took up the post and became a fellow of Wolfson College on 1 May.

Humanities

SHEARER WEST

appointed Head of the Humanities Division
Shearer West, Director of Research, Arts and Humanities Research Council on secondment from a Professorship in History of Art at Birmingham University, was appointed to the post with effect from 1 August.



Trees!

OT photography competition results...

- 1st Autumn**
Ming Thein (Balliol, 2000)
KGNS Golf Club, Subang Jaya, Malaysia
- 2nd Sycamore Gap**
Stephen Senior (St John's, 1992)
Hadrian's Wall trail, Northumbria
- 3rd Winter Woods**
Rosamund Macfarlane (St Hilda's, 1967)
Beechwoods near Fulbourn, Cambs.
- 4th Orchards**
Henry Uniacke (Oriol, 2003)
Petrin Hill, Mala Strana, Prague

- Runners-up**
- 5 - Skeletons** (John Rux-Burton, Lincoln, 1992) Flinders Ranges, South Australia
- 6 - Windy Tree** (John Lloyd, St John's, 1961) Birk Fell, Lake District
- 7 - Fall Aspen Trees** (Amory Lovins, Merton, 1967) White River National Forest, near Snowmass, Colorado, USA
- 8 - Natick** (Tim Mariano, Christ Church, 2005) Massachusetts, USA
- 9 - Les Gorges du Verdon** (Tonya Lander, Green, 2000) France

➔ To view comments from the judges, visit www.oxfordtoday.ox.ac.uk



Alumni news



Alumni 'speed network' at the first Professional Networking event, held in London

ROB JUDGES

Alumni careers

With a focus on expert advice and professional networking, the Oxford Alumni Office and Careers Service offers a range of careers, benefits, services and events exclusive to members of the Oxford community.

Our recent, inaugural Alumni Careers Day was aimed primarily at mid-career professionals and featured sessions led by alumni and University representatives. A series of sector-specific networking events are also available. To date, they have focused on media, education, business, healthcare, publishing and the not-for-profit sectors. If you have a suggestion for future subject areas, do let us know.

We are also looking for volunteers who are willing to mentor other alumni or students in their chosen career. If you have skills and knowledge to pass on, why not register as a volunteer for the Oxford Careers Network?

Or if you are able to offer an internship to a current student, the Careers Service can help you to find the right candidate. We would love to hear about your careers and

experiences more generally and will be planning a survey to that effect over the coming months.

www.alumni.ox.ac.uk/careers

Distinguished Friend of Oxford Award

We are delighted to announce that 14 new Distinguished Friends will formally receive their title at a ceremony and presentation during the Oxford Alumni Weekend. This award recognises long-term or outstanding volunteer service, which can take a variety of forms, including introducing Oxford to opinion-formers or donors.

www.alumni.ox.ac.uk/dfo

Design a Christmas card competition

In conjunction with the University of Oxford Shop, we are offering all Alumni Card-holders the chance to submit a design for a limited edition Alumni Christmas Card, to be sold exclusively by the shop and online at www.oushop.com. The deadline for submissions is 15 July 2011 and you can vote for your favourite entry between 25 July and 5 August 2011

at www.alumni.ox.ac.uk/oushop_competition

Travel photography competition

This year's theme is *Citius, Altius, Fortius: Swifter, Higher, Stronger*—the motto of the Olympics. We are looking forward to your visual interpretations of this theme, sporting or otherwise. The deadline for entries is 1 September 2011.

www.alumni.ox.ac.uk/travel_competition

Never graduated?

If your degree was not conferred in person at a ceremony, and if you did not receive your degree in absence, it is not too late! The University is holding additional ceremonies in 2011 and 2012, with the opportunity to visit your old college, participate in the pageantry of the ceremony in the Sheldonian Theatre and receive your certificate. www.alumni.ox.ac.uk/degree_ceremonies



Visit our website to meet the new Alumni Relations Director

iTunes U

Lectures, seminars and conferences can be accessed for free from iTunesU. Find out more at <http://itunesu.ox.ac.uk>. You can search and choose content by department, centre or conference. Recent hits include:

- *Ethics and politics* by Marianne Talbot
- *Detective Fictions: In Pursuit of Sovereignty in the Postcolony* by Jean Comaroff

Visitors to the Oxford Alumni Weekend may wish to listen to some of our speakers beforehand, including:

- *Oxford Internet Institute: Relationships and the Internet* by William Dutton and Bernie Hogan
- *Vaccine Research* by Prof. Adrian Hill

On the 21st century



Oxford Martin School: Public Lectures and Seminars brings together the best minds: Dr Ian Goldin (Director, Oxford Martin School, pictured above) on *Humanity at the Crossroads?*; Paul Collier (Professor of Economics, Director, Centre for the Study of African Economies) on *The Bottom Billion* and Professor Patricia Hirl Longstaff (James Martin Senior Visiting Fellow) on *Dealing with the New Normal*.

Student spotlight



Oxford Fashion Week

With outstanding designers and top models, Oxford is truly in style, reports **John Garth**

Everyone dressed their best for the finale of Oxford Fashion Week – not only the models, organisers and guests, but also the venue itself, the Examination Schools. The South School, where generations have sweated in subfusc, was transformed into a fashionista paradise, with an audience of 200 arrayed around a black-draped catwalk under a coffered ceiling where spotlights played. The languid, black-lipsticked models stepping out from under a carven arch into a storm of flashbulbs were eyed quizzically by Frederick William III of Prussia, Alexander I of Russia, and Charles XII of Sweden, portrayed in their own haute couture on the walls. Though the Saturday 5 March show ran 90 minutes late, no one seemed to object as the champagne flowed and guests hobnobbed to the accompaniment of a string quintet and a jazz sextet.

The designers included Elie Saab, Raakesh Agarwal, Ashley Isham, Fahad Hussayn, Viv Whelan, Omar Mansoor, Nicole Farhi, Belle Sauvage, Matthew Williamson and Russia's Valentin Yudashkin, showing in Britain for the first time. Extraordinary outfits formed from waves of purple or blue ruffles by Pierre Garroudi drew gasps and applause. Then the mood turned lush, the lipstick red, and the dresses, by Nina Jovanovic, romantic: a cascade of rose petals or fish scales strung beneath swashes of pearls; a pillar of scarlet fractured with sequins; a ruffled bustle topped by outrageous shoulders like Georgia O'Keeffe flowers. Dar Sara's classic Swarovski-studded evening



Model and key organiser, Irina Higgins of Cosmic Models – the sponsors of Oxford Fashion Week, which attracted guests from the fashion elite and world-class designers

and wedding dresses rounded off the show triumphantly.

Guests placed bids in a charity auction for items including a clutch bag by Alexander McQueen and a Dar Sara wedding dress. Funds raised from the show – including an expected £1,400 from the auction – will go to the Oxford Thinking Campaign. OFW executive producer Carl Anglim, stepping down after three years, said: "I've loved every minute of it. It's grown from an idea we knew nothing about, but we were committed to pushing our dream as far as it would go."

Show sponsor Cosmic Models had been invited by Irina Higgins, a DPhil researcher in computational neuroscience, who is not only one of the key organisers of OFW but also a Cosmic model in her own right. Bringing 10 models fresh from London Fashion Week, Cosmic's Luciana Ryder said: "It's an amazing cause to be a part of and we're collaborating with great people."

The organisers and models seemed equally caught up in the excitement. For Irina Higgins, the Dar Sara dresses formed the high point – "like liquid diamonds". For new Cosmic model Elvira, the catwalk experience "felt like I was in a different world – I can't wait to do it again".

The Couture Show was the culmination of a week of shows and associated events – 17 in all – and months of frenzied organisation by student volunteers. Macmillan Cancer Support also benefited. Earlier highlights of the week included the Concept Show, at the Regal in East Oxford, and the Lingerie Show at the Malmaison Hotel, Oxford Castle. A further event, the Style Show, was held at Oxford Town Hall on Saturday 19 March. ☺

To find out more about the events of Oxford Fashion Week and to see the photos visit:
www.oxfordfashionweek.co.uk

Oxonians at large

Alastair Lack meets a very 'effective' award winner, a charity pioneer and a spooky writer

Roger Mosey,
one face of
the Olympics



ACADEMY OF MOTION PICTURE ARTS AND SCIENCES, BBC

Climbing the BBC ladder to an Olympic-sized vision for 2012

The BBC's Director of the Games coverage promises liveliness and a bit of chaos at the biggest event yet

Roger Mosey

Wadham 1976

Roger Mosey's career in broadcasting is a textbook study of how to succeed in the competitive world of the BBC. Having cut his teeth in commercial radio during vacations from reading modern history and modern languages (German) at Wadham, he joined BBC local radio in 1980, before moving to Broadcasting House in London. There he worked for the Radio Four daily current affairs programmes *Today* and *PM*, ending up as editor of both.

Further editorial and management stints followed as Controller of Radio 5 Live, and Head of BBC Television news, both programmes winning a healthy clutch of media awards under his leadership. In 2005, he took over as Head of Sport, at a time when sport was becoming increasingly global. Roger found that his experience

of Westminster politics stood him in good stead when dealing with international sports governing bodies.

This political and sporting experience, along with a personal enthusiasm for sport, made him a natural for his present position as the BBC's Director of London 2012 Olympic Games coverage. He has responsibility for radio coverage of the Paralympics, the pre- and post-Olympic phases, the Cultural Olympiad and the 70-day journey of the torch.

Roger recalls the Beijing Olympics in 2008 as "monumental". He sees 2012 as an opportunity to reflect London's liveliness, cultural diversity and chaos.

He is confident that the BBC can deliver a memorable Games, and with his knowledge of past Olympics and his experience of politics and international sporting bodies, he senses that the BBC can bring the nation together and tell the world about new sporting heroes. ☺

www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/rogermosey



Drawing attention to a worthy cause

Robin Mednick

Somerville 1976

In 2005, Robin Mednick took a phone call in Toronto from a friend just back from Niger, West Africa. Robin heard about the poverty, and how 30 children shared one pencil. Her reaction was simple: "Let's do something." Until that moment Robin had had no connection with Niger or Africa. After university in Toronto and two years at Somerville, she became a lawyer and then a busy mother of four. Over time, voluntary work gave way to full-time positions. Then came the phone call. Five years on, and the charity, Pencils for Kids, has raised \$375,000 (Canadian), built three schools in Liboré, and much else. Robin's latest project is "creating farmers of the future, where school children run African market gardens as business". Robin is told that the community now has hope for the future.

Life at present in Niger is dangerous but Robin's mantra is: "Even if you have fear, just 'Do it afraid'". Mary Somerville would approve. ☺

www.pencilsforkids.com



The author who is a law unto herself

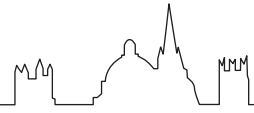
Michelle Paver

Lady Margaret Hall 1983

Born in what was then Nyasaland (Malawi), Michelle came to England in the 1960s and read Biochemistry at Oxford. Unusually, instead of conducting a laboratory project as part of her degree, she wrote a thesis. She gained a First, and became a solicitor.

But Michelle was always writing and during a year off from her job as partner in a London law firm, she was travelling, trying to finish a book, and re-reading a manuscript written while she was a student at Oxford. She began a highly successful string of novels, ranging from adult books to epic children's tales. And it was *Ghost Hunter* – part of her series *The Chronicles of Ancient Darkness*, which is set in pre-historic, hunter-gatherer times – that won the Guardian Children's Fiction Prize, called by the judges "a thrilling story of love, friendship and terrifying evil".

Michelle's latest work is *Dark Matter*, a ghost story about an expedition to the Arctic that goes badly wrong, and another sequence of five books is in the pipeline. Clearly, the law's loss has been literature's gain. ☺ www.michellepaver.com



Behind the AIDS stigma

Rebecca Hodes

Balliol 2004

To say that Rebecca Hodes, Deputy Director of the AIDS and Society Research Unit at the University of Cape Town, is engaged in vital work would be an understatement. Although, as she says, “the last few years have seen a sea-change in government responses to HIV in South Africa”, and one million people have initiated antiretroviral treatment, less than half of those who need treatment are getting it. There is, she adds, “a perception that the battle against HIV has been won, but this is baseless”. The challenges facing the health sector result partly from the apartheid era but there are other problems, from high rates of HIV and TB co-infection and other non-communicable diseases, to endemic violence against women and children.

Indeed, Rebecca’s research unit has a wide remit: focus areas include the stigma of AIDS, the social and economic factors driving HIV infection, global health and leadership. A specific example of this interface between qualitative and quantitative research is reflected in the fact that the unit director is an economist, Nicoli Nattrass (Magdalen, 1985) and Rebecca is a medical historian. Rebecca’s remit is also vast. She is working on several fronts: the adoption prospects for the children of HIV-positive parents (there are more than 1.5 million orphans in South Africa), improving public provision of antiretroviral treatment, developing tools for community healthcare workers to offset the shortage of doctors and nurses in poor areas and the forced sterilisation of HIV-positive women.

Future projects include long-term research into reproductive healthcare from the apartheid era to the present, and strengthening ties between universities and the public and private spheres.

The problems facing South Africa may seem a world away from the University of Oxford, but Rebecca remembers “the wonderful libraries and zesty social life, with plenty of carousing, in Balliol MCR”. Above all, “exposure to brilliant minds, with accompanying debate” – and no doubt many a disagreement. No bad training perhaps for the demanding work of healthcare in South Africa. ☺

www.cssr.uct.ac.za/asru

Oscar-winning effects

From Oxford student theatre to the most glamorous awards ceremony in the world

Paul Franklin

Ruskin School of Drawing and Fine Art
St John’s 1986

“How do you cope with getting on the stage? Think about not tripping over the steps. It’s a bit like a bungee jump.” These memories are those of Paul Franklin, who won an Oscar earlier this year for his special effects on the Christopher Nolan blockbuster, *Inception*. “You’re given 45 seconds for a speech. If you run over, the orchestra strikes up. After that you’re whisked off for press interviews and photos in the Green Room.” In the excitement of the moment, Paul suddenly realised he was standing between Stephen Spielberg and Sandra Bullock. It set the tone for the post-Oscar parties and the subsequent week.

It’s a long way from the days when Paul, a student at the Ruskin School of Drawing and Fine Art and St John’s, began creating graphics on University computers in “down time”, designing sets for student theatre and making

short films. An animated version of *Dante’s Inferno* led to spells in television advertising and Sony Computer Entertainment. In 1998 he co-founded a company called Double Negative VFX. He employed 10 staff. Now it has over 1,000 and a branch in Singapore.

Among other projects (including the *Harry Potter* films), Paul has worked closely for some seven years with the writer and film-maker Christopher Nolan, from *Batman Begins*, through *The Dark Knight* to *Inception*, one of the greatest box-office earners of all time. He is now working on a sequel to *The Dark Knight*. In modern film, there’s increasingly a blurring of the edges between acting and special effects. As Paul says: “The power of computers and the sophistication of software means that whether it’s acting or special effects, it’s all about the story. Technique is almost secondary.”

And the Oscar? Currently residing in Paul’s Los Angeles office, it’s destined for a long life on the mantelpiece of his London home. ☺



To view Paul’s online Oscar diary, visit www.oxfordtoday.ox.ac.uk



Paul Franklin celebrates his 2010 Oscar triumph

We welcome suggestions from alumni for these pages. Please send details to the Editor at oxfordtoday@admin.ox.ac.uk



FOR ART'S SAKE

Against a backdrop of severe cuts to public arts funding in Britain, **Matthew Sperling** considers the corresponding groundswell of Oxford protest

THE ROMANES LECTURE, delivered annually in the Sheldonian Theatre, has seen many distinguished instalments since Gladstone's inaugural effort in 1892, and this year's lecture, to be given by Professor Sir Andrew Motion (Univ, 1971) on 2 June, promises to be another memorable occasion. Motion concluded a decade's service as Poet Laureate in 2009, during which he established himself as a powerful public advocate for poetry and the arts. In between writing Laureate poems on topics as diverse as the invasion of Iraq, bullying, the Paddington rail crash, and the wedding of Charles and Camilla, Motion has been a tireless

broadcaster and educator – most recently teaming up with rapper Tinchy Stryder to give a lesson in self-expression to students on the Channel 4 programme *Jamie's Dream School* – and has taken on a number of public roles, including chairing the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) since 2009.

Motion's title for the Romanes lecture is 'The Bonfire of the Humanities', and his topic, the importance of the arts and humanities in social, economic and cultural life, could scarcely be more timely. In the wake of the global financial crisis, the coalition government has imposed savage cuts upon the funding of the arts and humanities across the board in education, culture and public life. Barely a year into Motion's tenure as Chair of the MLA, for instance, the Culture Secretary announced that the body itself is being abolished and its work incorporated, with a greatly reduced budget, into an already overstretched and underfunded Arts Council. So there is currently a great deal at stake regarding questions of how and why we value the arts and humanities, and how we ought to repay this value.

In his Booker Prize judge's speech late last year, Motion described cultural and artistic life as "the foundation and high ambition of our humanity", for the way it "makes us more nearly ourselves,

'Motion describes cultural and artistic life as the foundation of our humanity'



and sets us more steadily on the road to what we might become". When I caught up with him for *Oxford Today* he told me how his Romanes lecture will further his public case for the arts and humanities. Partly this will take the form of a "quite forthright" response to "what looks like a very bleak picture for universities, libraries and research councils" in the light of funding cuts enacted by what he considers to be "a very philistine government", but Motion is keen also to communicate a positive vision of the importance of poetry in culture, and this is connected to both his long-standing work in schools and university education, and to his first personal encounters with poetry:

"My own discovery of poetry was something with roots deep in my experience as a child. Not being much good at much else at school, I found that I couldn't be wrong in a poem in the sense that I could be wrong in maths, and then, when I read more poems, and started to write my own pretty soon after that, it contributed to a sense that perhaps I did have a brain after all, and it helped me find a way to address the strongest feelings in my life. I was first pushed to read poems by my school English teacher, and the big thing for me was that he made one feel that poems belong in life. I still very much believe this – poems are responses to life,

Professor Sir Andrew Motion
pictured outside his teaching
rooms in London

that I want to see take their place in life. So a part of my work is to make manifest the value of these things."

This manifestation has a directly practical aspect for Motion, and this drives his tireless work on committees and public bodies: "These debates tend to get drawn into abstractions, but I'm also interested in how to make them real and palpable. The MLA, which has now had its operations folded in to the Arts Council, is an arm's-length body, so it's not our job to spring to the barricades and protest, but rather to get on with the job, to work from inside the machine and to spend hours and hours doing the boring, invisible stuff which one hopes will do its bit towards making a better world. This isn't to say that I haven't, and don't, feel very angry about many aspects of the situation. In the case of the cutting of the Bookstart scheme, for instance, which I felt very strongly about, I got publically involved, and we managed to get the decision overturned; I think that writers, academics and everybody with an interest have a greater than ever responsibility now to be as articulate as possible about these things. But there's also the business of rolling up your sleeves and getting on with it, and getting these issues out into the wider world, and this is what I'm mainly concerned with."

Motion's voice is part of a growing wave of opposition among Oxford intellectuals. Professor of Poetry Geoffrey Hill (Keble, 1950) concluded his inaugural lecture in December with a stirring vision of how poetry and criticism at their strongest try to oppose "the gigantic scam of our times" – "the bankers' scam, the Blair-Brown scam, the coalition scam, the Big Society scam". In a meeting of Congregation called to discuss higher education funding in February, among several other important contributions, Merton Professor of English David Norbrook urged the need to stress unapologetically the value of the university's role in "making Britain a civilized place to live", by "fostering critical and independent-minded debate and scrutiny of the evidence", and to uphold this against any "imperfectly argued assumptions about market dynamism in education". Soon afterwards, the newly founded Oxford University Campaign for Higher Education (OUCHE) began its work, alongside its Cambridge counterpart (CACHE), with an open letter registering the "dismay and alarm" of the 681 signatories, from both universities, at the speed and recklessness with which funding changes were being forced through.

Oxford author Philip Pullman (Exeter, 1965) has been another key activist, focusing on the issue of public libraries. In January Pullman gave a speech to a meeting of library campaigners in Oxford Town Hall following the local council's decision to close 20 of the 43 public libraries in Oxfordshire; the eloquence of his defence of libraries and anger of his attack on their enemies quickly made it a viral hit on the internet. I first read it, for instance, having been emailed the link by my mother, an avid Pullman fan who worked for most of her career in the young people's sector of the public library service in Kent. I spoke to Pullman several weeks after the Town Hall address had found him in the media glare, and he declared himself

“very surprised” at the wide coverage it had received. “I’ve been banging on about things like this for a long time and no one’s taken any notice, so I thought the same thing would happen this time. Obviously the Zeitgeist and I were on the same wavelength for once.”

The influence that Pullman’s activism has on the future of library funding is still being played out; as of late March, the majority of the threatened libraries have rejected the chance to apply for money tokenistically set aside from the ‘Big Society’ fund to finance them as self-run enterprises, and a further review of the situation has been announced, with a new prospect arising of privately outsourcing the running of the threatened libraries to an American firm. On these developments, Pullman has firm views:

“My opinion of the ‘Big Society’ fund is that it’s a nauseating fiddle, like everything else with the ‘Big Society’ label. I profoundly dislike the business of ‘bidding’ for money that is ours in the first place. It’s a symptom of the nervous reluctance to govern that characterises a lot of local and national administrations in the past 30 years or so. We elect people to make decisions, not to farm them out to a lot of opinion polls and focus groups and bidding processes – it’s an attempt to escape responsibility for the consequences. I’d rather government made firm decisions I disliked than indulge in a lot of fake democracy over every question that arises. As for the prospect of private provision of libraries, if it happens it will prove yet again (as if we needed to be shown another time) that private will be worse than public. Cheaper, to start with, or superficially, but worse; and not as morally offensive as private prisons, or as meanly destructive of a clear good as the privatisation of the NHS, but offensive and meanly destructive all the same.”

While its occasion was a local one, Pullman’s Town Hall speech was also notable for the breadth of its critique. The Oxford library crisis, for him, is not only a question of any merely individual policy decisions by any particular councillor or administration, but follows directly from the “market fundamentalism” that has increasingly held sway in the last few decades of Anglo-American politics, with “the greedy ghost of market madness” hastening “to kill off every humane, life-enhancing, generous, imaginative and decent corner of our public life”. In conversation, Pullman elaborated to me his views on neoliberal marketisation, a tendency that “shows up very clearly the connection between the local and the national, or the personal and the political”, since “what affects our own village or school or family has clear origins in the cast of mind embodied in the Ayn Rand Institute” (the most prominent output of which is the deregulation and laissez-fairism of Alan Greenspan, the now-retired Federal Reserve Chairman who, in the eyes of some, bears a large responsibility



Oxford author Philip Pullman outside the Ashmolean Museum

for our current financial predicament). Against the juggernaut of “market fundamentalism”, Pullman emphasised “how clearly Karl Marx forecast the universally destructive nature of unfettered capitalism in *The Communist Manifesto*”, a text he describes as “such a masterpiece of European literature that everyone ought to read it”.

Both on the ground and in terms of the bigger picture, Oxford writers have been taking a leading part in the ongoing struggle for the future of the arts and humanities in public life. Andrew Motion’s Romanes lecture promises to be a contribution of real force and persuasiveness in this struggle. ☺

‘For him, the Oxford library crisis follows directly from market fundamentalism in Anglo-American politics’

Dr Matthew Sperling is a fellow in English Literature at Keble College, and poetry editor for Oxford Today. A video of Professor Sir Andrew Motion’s Romanes Lecture can be found at www.oxfordtoday.ox.ac.uk/romanes11

FASTEN YOUR SEATBELTS, THERE'S TURBULENCE AHEAD

This will be an extraordinary century, says Oxford benefactor and futurologist **Dr James Martin**, because humanity is outgrowing this small planet





LIKE THE TENSION building in a suspense novel, the dangers from future climate change are ratcheting up year after year. The world's media have become increasingly full of images of collapsing ice shelves, stranded polar bears, raging hurricanes, lands stricken by drought, fires sweeping across southern Australia and deserts spreading. The ice caps are melting in both the Arctic and Antarctic. But all this is only an overture to trouble on a much grander scale. The runaway transformation of the Earth's climate may become the worst crisis of human history.

Meanwhile, technology will bring increased wealth, improved healthcare and entertainment, great creativity and brilliant media-assisted education. People will have more leisure time and use it better. Environments of very different design will be wonderful places to live. The future is a tapestry of immense problems and great improvements in society. To comprehend and improve this future needs research and understanding of the highest order, an area in which Oxford University is pre-eminent.

The grim news is that humanity has been overspending the Earth's resources for decades, like a wealthy family running up extreme debts at a bank that it could never repay. Earth scientists know we are in trouble. Too much carbon in the atmosphere is causing weird weather and a slow rise in the temperature of the Earth which, if not stopped,

'The runaway transformation of the Earth's climate may become the worst crisis of human history'

will lead to devastating consequences. Correcting this will need a massive effort to replace carbon energy sources and make rainforests absorb as much carbon as possible.

Detailed computer calculations make it clear that dangerous climate change can be prevented only if action is taken quickly. Procrastination incurs a heavy penalty but the world is procrastinating. The longer it does so, the more difficult the problem will become. Problems of runaway change can be prevented if humanity acts together, with powerful leadership, but this seems unlikely to be the case.

Almost certainly, the average world temperature in the late 2030s will exceed 2° Celsius above the baseline that has existed since civilization began. If we don't act strongly to stop it, it will keep climbing to 4° or higher. When the average temperature is 4° higher, some parts of the Earth will be much higher. The climate will be in danger of sliding into a new state hostile to humans. This is studied with very detailed computer models that divide the atmosphere into small blocks and show the gases and heat that flow from each block to adjacent ones. Unfortunately politicians and most of the public ignore the predictions of the models, like the crew of a ship happily sailing into a hurricane.

The Earth has vast, ancient underground reservoirs of water called aquifers, which are essential for agriculture. Independent of climate change, we are

emptying many of the aquifers. The amount of water we are taking from them is over four hundred million tons a day more than is being replaced by rain. If that amount of water were carried in water trucks, it would need 25 million of them – a convoy 30 times the Earth's diameter – every day without being replenished. This cannot go on much longer.

If you sail across the oceans, you can go for weeks without seeing another vessel. It's incomprehensible that we've fished out 90% of the edible fish, and are building bigger fishing fleets. When I was a kid, the Earth had about 2 billion people, and humanity's ecological footprint was well within a range that the Earth could support. It was a land of plenty. However, our consumption of its resources increased until, by the mid-1980s, we not only exceeded a consumption rate that was sustainable but went far beyond it. By 2030, we'll need the equivalent of two Earths to keep up with our demands.

SOLUTIONS

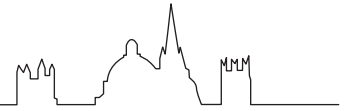
There is a rich diversity of solutions to these problems. However, generally today, there is immense resistance to implementing or even understanding them. Small underground nuclear power units called 'nuclear batteries' will be ultra-safe and maintenance-free. New types of photovoltaics will make electricity from sunlight cheaper than that from coal. Changes in the monsoons will cause extreme flooding, as in Pakistan, and the water will be funnelled into aquifers. It amazes me that water-stressed areas today don't capture their rainwater, which is easy to do. China may gain access to Lake Baikal, which contains about one-fifth of all the fresh water on Earth. There is also much research on improving food-growing productivity.

A particularly important concept is 'eco-affluence'. It is possible to immensely improve our quality of life without increasing greenhouse gases or using up an unsustainable share of the planet's resources. The term eco-affluence refers to a rich, enjoyable and sometimes complex way of life that does no ecological harm. The economy can grow in new ways without harmful consequences. Eco-affluence is one of the most important concepts for humankind's future.

Slow global warming will make some places more pleasant. By 2030, Scotland may have the climate that Cornwall had. Many people will be buying homes in Finland. People will want to move from where the weather is hostile to where the weather is welcoming. This will occur at a time of radical redesign of cities with stunning new architecture. Instead of being dominated by the car and petroleum industries, new cities will be dominated by social interaction and beautiful environments. These may be called climate-change cities. Patagonia, perhaps the most beautiful place on Earth, will be covered in wildflowers and have climate-change cities. There will be a booming economy in the era of eco-affluence, nano-robotics and accelerating machine intelligence.

We tend to deal with severe problems only after a catastrophe forces us to. A catastrophe-first pattern is observed in many different areas. Public indifference changes to shock or terror when a catastrophe





happens. The catastrophe-first pattern is not a good way to run the planet because the possible catastrophes will become much larger. To avoid a catastrophe-first pattern, politicians and the public must listen to scientists. Sooner or later, there will be large-scale panic about climate destruction. By then, it may be too late to lessen the greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. Catastrophes in our future will not be caused by malicious intent but by an endless babble of misinformation, the determination of executives to focus on stock prices, and politicians seeing only as far as the next election.

OUR STOLEN FUTURE

A major conference in New York in March 2008 called 'Global Warming is not a Crisis' opened with the main speaker saying, "The science is settled. Climate change is not caused by human activity." The conference concluded that because climate change is caused by natural forces there is nothing that humans can do to stop it. There are many climate deniers, some of them in high places. There is remarkable opposition in the US government to taking action about global warming. The public wants to avoid any form of carbon tax.

We have reached a time when the understanding of science is vital for our existence. A major concern today is that powerful voices with no knowledge of science often make themselves heard much louder than scientists. Many scientists avoid the public stage. Most politicians haven't a clue about science.

This is a time on Earth when we desperately need to get our act together, but it is an age of dangerous misinformation. Highly skilled PR organisations earn a fortune by persuading the public of anything that will increase the profits of the corporations that hire them. Strong and urgent actions are needed to slow down climate destabilisation, but clean energy would lower the profits of the coal industry. Such PR ought to be called 'PM' – Public Misinformation. PM copywriters are highly paid.

LONG-RANGE

Humanity's behaviour today will have consequences a long time in the future. For example, climate change will cause many farms to close at a time when the population is reaching 9 billion and many developing countries are changing their diet from rice to meat. Newly affluent Chinese will want to eat like Americans. There will not be enough food-growing resources to cope with such a situation. A variety of catastrophes will come from the long-range consequences of our activities, possibly including gigafamine, cyber-terrorism and global pandemics. There are many ways we could change course, but today we seem unlikely to do so because a long-range map of consequences is understood by only a few people.

It is interesting to ask whether board members of corporations that pay for misleading PR about the climate know that they are hoodwinking the public. They are highly intelligent people who should be aware of the findings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Control (IPCC), which states that top climate scientists are certain that emissions resulting from



Whither Humanity? Dr James Martin is pictured in the seafaring wing of London's Science Museum

human activities are causing climate change. How many board members vote to increase the future value of their stock options, although it endangers their children's future? Does a top US senator really believe it when he says that global warming is a hoax, and that all thousand top scientists in the IPCC are liars, and that they all tell the same, meticulously detailed lie?

CRUNCH

If we continue as now seems likely, a crunch is coming – in fact three crunches – our global footprint greatly exceeding what the Earth can support, climate destabilisation becoming severe, and fresh water becoming insufficient to feed the Earth's large population. These crunches will not, by themselves, destroy humanity but they will cause a Darwinian situation; when the going gets tough there will be survival of the fittest. By mid-century, the Earth could be like a lifeboat that's too small to save everyone.

To be politically correct, organisations don't use the term 'Darwinian' or talk about 'survival of the fittest', but I am increasingly finding that at elite dinner parties there is already discussion of who the survivors will be.

China has enormous fighting spirit and will soon be the world's largest economy. In 2030 it will have 1.4 billion people. The average footprint of a Chinese person is a small fraction of an average American. The Chinese government does more detailed future planning than perhaps any other government and is determined that China will be one of the survivors. China has been buying the steel and resources it will need in the future. To the largest extent possible it has already cornered the market in rare Earth metals needed for high technology.

The USA combined with Canada will be a survivor, because it is economically powerful and resourceful, and with Canada it has a large amount of land, much of which will benefit from global warming – the breadbasket of the future. Europe, in my mind, is a question mark. Japan will struggle. It is a small country, short of farmland, and will have a seriously ageing



ALL IMAGES: JOBY SESSIONS

population. Russia may muddle through with a massive consumption of vodka. It has a similar population size to Japan but its land area is 45 times larger. Much of its land will benefit from global warming and it has a large amount of fresh water.

A PERFECT STORM

Later in this century a set of trends will coincide, like a perfect storm in the movie of that title, leading to a new era. For a long time technology will have raced like an out-of-control express train, past the situation called the Singularity. At the time of writing, the Chinese have the fastest computer; it executes 2.5 thousand trillion operations per second. By 2040, supercomputers will perform a trillion trillion operations per second. Narrowly focused machine intelligence will become millions of times faster than human intelligence. Quantum computers will become powerful and robust. Some applications running on them would take millions of years on conventional supercomputers. Society will be burnt out by diverse catastrophes and extreme technology.

Extreme reaction to mid-century traumas will bring a determination to make major changes. Much of society will want lifestyles of higher quality and often spirituality. Human longevity will increase and many young people with creative lives will expect to live to 120. Media-assisted education will spread to every nook and cranny of the planet. As robots become highly intelligent there will be a great increase in leisure time. The power of consumer marketing will make techniques for human enhancement widely accepted. There'll be glossy websites of 24th-chromosome gene packs and we will expand people's cognitive skills and enrich their emotional awareness.

Part of humanity will survive the 21st-century catastrophes and be on a highway past the time when there was extreme poverty and destitute nations, past the many debates about genetic engineering and

Biography

James Martin (Kemble, 1952) was born in Ashby-de-la-Zouch, England. His undergraduate degree was in physics. He joined IBM in 1959, and after leaving IBM became a pre-eminent spokesman on the subject of computing. He fundamentally changed the way systems developers work by making the processes of systems design and code generation rigorous and automating them. He donated \$150 million towards the establishment of the Oxford Martin School. Appropriately, Martin's fortune came from education. He has written more than 100 textbooks and had a very influential career as a public educator. Martin's *The Wired Society* (1977) was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize, while *The Meaning of the Twenty-First Century* (2006) was turned into a film. Martin has honorary degrees from all six continents.

transhumanism, past the times when large-scale war was a viable option, into an era in which we consider how to avoid risks to our existence. It will be a time when conventional work is done by machines, and humans spend their time on things that are uniquely human. Higher levels of happiness will come from higher levels of creativity. Michelangelo's words set the tone for his era: the greater danger for most of us lies, not in setting our aim too high and falling short, but in setting our aim too low and achieving our mark. The cathedral building of the 12th century or the grand temple complexes at Angkor set their aim as high as possible. It will apply to our future.

An extraordinary type of thinking about our future is to reflect what civilizations are now becoming possible. What sort of lives could our grandchildren have? Homo sapiens, the extraordinary creature that took a billion years to evolve, is at a time when it is going to build its finest works and automate evolution itself. The world of our grandchildren could be magnificent. Whatever will civilizations be like in a thousand years' time – a mere eye-blink in the history of evolution? 🌐

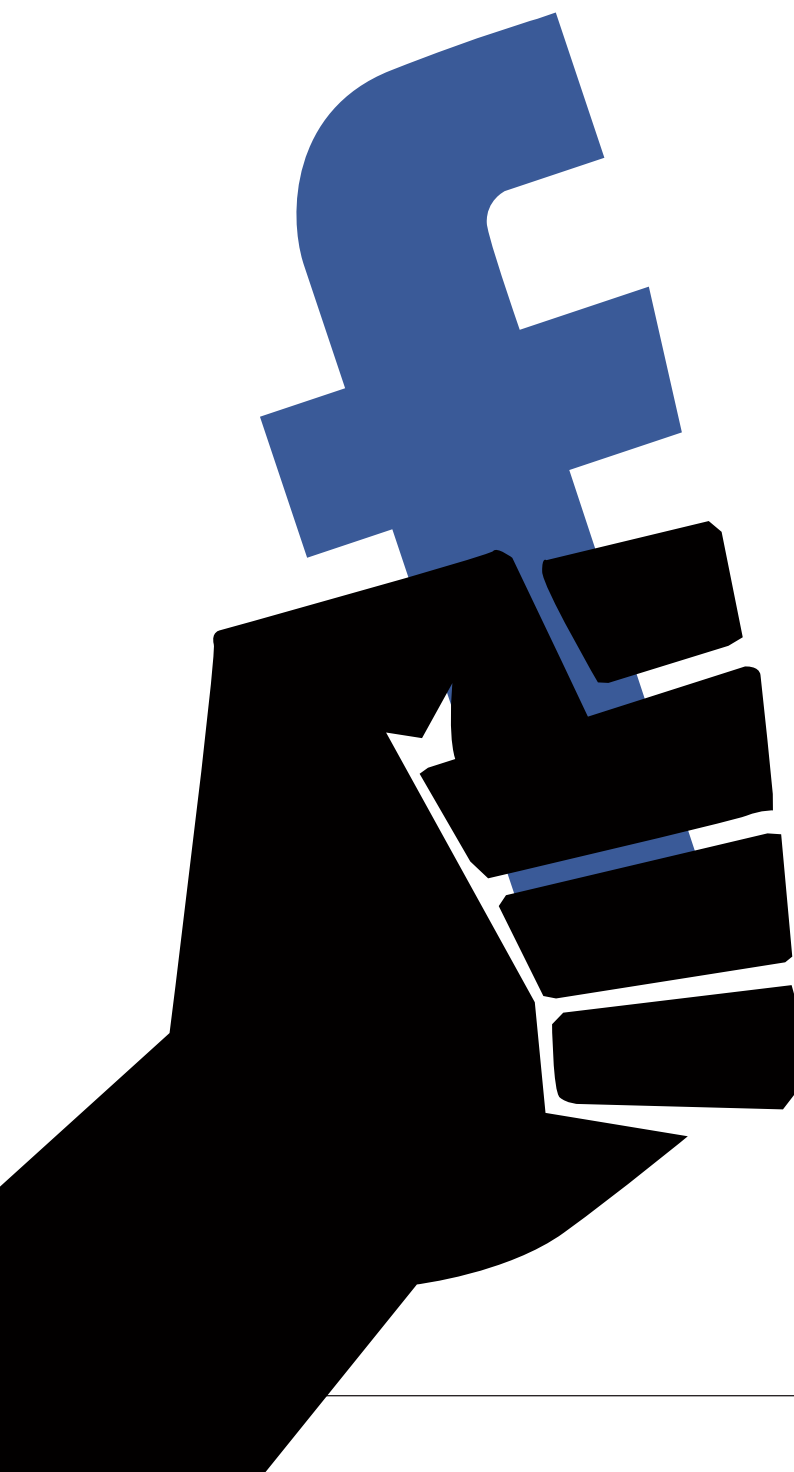
The Oxford Martin School was founded as the James Martin 21st Century School at the University of Oxford in 2005 through the vision and generosity of Dr James Martin. It is a unique interdisciplinary research initiative tackling global future challenges, in accordance with Dr Martin's vision for "a new era in academia, intended to greatly improve humanity's future". The mission of the Oxford Martin School is to foster innovative thinking, interdisciplinary scholarship and collaborative activity to address the most pressing risks and realise important opportunities in the 21st century. Today, the school has over 30 institutes and projects, more about which can be found at www.oxfordmartin.ox.ac.uk



To listen to an interview with Dr James Martin, visit www.oxfordtoday.ox.ac.uk

FACEBOOK REVOLUTIONS?

Facebook, blogs, Twitter, mobile phones... social media are bringing us a new forum for protest, says Oxford Internet Institute's **Victoria Nash**

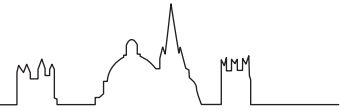


BACK IN OCTOBER 2010, social psychology writer Malcolm Gladwell stated in *The New Yorker* that "The Revolution will not be Tweeted". He argued that the internet and social media are good only for increasing participation by fundamentally lazy individuals. He's got a point. Which of us hasn't joined a Facebook group or 'liked' a page when prompted to do so by a friend, only to feel smug that we can be civic-minded at such little cost?

Yet recent events in North Africa and the Middle East have confirmed that Gladwell is wrong. Some of us may use Facebook or Twitter to present the better public face of our flimsy social conscience, but revolutionaries use them too. In 2011, young Egyptians, Tunisians and Bahrainis used social media to organise and document protests, highlight abuses of power and communicate spectacular events to stunned westerners. A great year, then, for Facebook's creator Mark Zuckerberg.

Anyone who's seen the film *The Social Network* will be aware of Facebook's origins in the party-fuelled dorm rooms of Harvard University and must wonder how an apparently frivolous application can play such a significant political role. It seems a long way from groups devoted to who's "hot or not" to hosting pages such as "We are all Khaled Said", the page set up in memory of a young Egyptian brutally beaten and killed by state police. Yet this page has over one million followers in the original Arabic version and was instrumental in providing a focus for the revolutionary activities taking place in the Middle East. Why are social media suddenly so indispensable in the pursuit of democracy and freedom?

Perhaps the most obvious point is that protests and revolutions have always made use of communication tools, particularly those that are hard to suppress or control. 'Samizdat', laboriously hand-reproduced political pamphlets, played a vital role in spreading dissident protest across the Soviet bloc, while cassette tape recordings played a significant part in building Islamist support in the 1979 Iran Revolution. The printed word has been a catalyst for innumerable revolutions. Social media plied across mobile, web-enabled devices are simply the chosen form of communication for many young people today, and they are also remarkably resistant to state censorship. Facebook now has more than 500 million users, with nearly five million in Egypt alone, 75 per cent of whom are aged between 15 and 29. In the light of this, we should be surprised if Facebook wasn't being used for political activism. The same applies to blogs, mobile phones and the micro-blogging service, Twitter.



RON HAY/VII/CORBIS

It's also true that many new social media tools have inbuilt features which make them easy to appropriate for political ends. The group and personal profile pages of social network sites such as Facebook offer a new space where people can share dissenting views and exchange information when planning demonstrations; a modern reworking of the traditional 'public sphere'. Blogs, such as tortureinegypt.net, have proved effective in documenting injustice and brutalisation over long periods of time, and have provided a lens through which to focus and direct public anger. Other tools, such as Twitter, enable the very fast dissemination of news.

Blogs have proved effective in documenting injustice over long periods of time

As Oxford Internet Institute research has found, when used in conjunction with 'old-fashioned' forms of media, such as newspapers, they form an almost unbeatable partnership. When, for example, the Egyptian authorities shut down Al Jazeera and television transmission of the demonstrations on the 30th January 2011, journalists were still able to receive and send live mobile phone pictures, blog posts and Twitter feeds to colleagues outside the country, and to ensure that reporting was not suppressed.

It is, of course, also true that the same features that are so helpful to activists are also open to manipulation by governments, authoritarian or otherwise. Filtering research such as the OpenNet Initiative reveals that many regimes use extensive online censorship of political speech to suppress opposition, while many

Young women hold Facebook signs as thousands of Egyptian anti-government protestors gather on 6 February in Cairo's Tahrir Square for the 'Day of the Martyrs', honouring those killed in the clashes

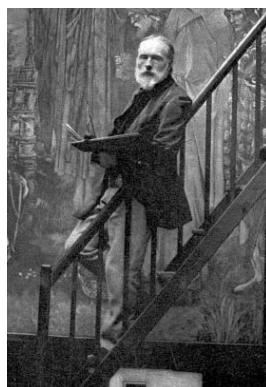
governments, including those of China and the US, have recognised the importance of having a propagandist presence online. Western companies make a good deal of money selling software and network systems to make such activities possible.

It's no surprise that technologies are used by bad guys as well as good ones. And it's also true that it could be dangerous to over-emphasise the democratic potential of social media if this deflects attention away from deeper engagement with underlying political problems (such as the West's cosy relationship with easy-to-manage dictators) or blinds us to the ethical responsibilities of high-profile tech companies who cooperate in censorship or repression. We must avoid such pitfalls, but it's wrong to argue, as social researcher and blogger Evgeny Morozov does, that we can't believe in the freedom-enhancing potential of social media. New communication tools shake things up because it's hard for a threatened regime to control them. With a variety of circumvention tools, the internet is even more difficult to control. Why else did the Egyptian government shut down the internet as the revolution unfolded?

Reflecting on recent events in the Middle East and North Africa, it's undeniable that the origins of this conflict lie in deep-seated civil unrest. It's equally clear that a wide variety of media were central in supporting the protests but social media played a unique and crucial role. Anyone who disagrees may want to reconsider how trivial their own online activities are in contrast with those who convened protests at risk of arrest or stood in front of water canons, mobile phones at hand. To paraphrase Gladwell's final sarcastic line: "Viva la Facebook revolución". ☺

BURNE-JONES' PURSUIT OF LOVE

Pre-Raphaelite painter Edward Burne-Jones (Exeter, 1853) was romantic to the point of modernism, argues Fiona MacCarthy



Sir Edward Burne-Jones painting *The Star of Bethlehem* in his studio, 1890

EDWARD BURNE-JONES FITS THE definition of the ultimate Pre-Raphaelite. He was the undoubted leader of the second generation of Pre-Raphaelite artists who followed on from Rossetti, Millais and Holman Hunt. But after five years of research for his biography I've come to regard him more and more as a precursor of the modern, an artist of unsettling sexual and psychological exploration.

I am not alone in seeing Burne-Jones as a great visionary painter whose influence seeped through to affect the development of twentieth-century European art. An important exhibition at Tate Britain in 1997 – *The Age of Rossetti, Burne-Jones and Watts* – showed convincingly how closely he related to continental Symbolist ideas and decorative styles. But a close look at his life can take you a stage further in revealing just how far Burne-Jones' art was a reflection of his own intense and frequently tormented emotional state.

He arrived in Oxford from Birmingham in 1853, aiming to be celibate. Both he and William Morris, his closest friend at Exeter, were originally intended for the church. The young Burne-Jones was an ardent follower of theologian John Henry Newman. Ideals of monastic communities attracted him. But Oxford at that period was a bitter disappointment. Burne-Jones and Morris gave up on religion and refocused their ambitions on a brotherhood of art. It appeared that Burne-Jones soon abandoned celibacy as a practical ideal. Even in those early days there were "heartaches

Even in the early days there was heartache as his susceptibility to women first erupted

and love troubles" as Burne-Jones' susceptibility to women first erupted. He and Swinburne would soon be defining Heaven as "a rose-garden full of stunners". A stunner was an ideal Pre-Raphaelite beauty, frizzy haired, a bit mysterious, a Victorian version of the medieval dame lointaine.

For Burne-Jones, art was life. The features of the women that he loved became imprinted on his artist's imagination, so that a sequence of his paintings can tell us a whole emotional history. Sometimes the features of Burne-Jones' desired women strike one as strangely interchangeable. In 1856, once he had moved to London, Burne-Jones became engaged to the fifteen-year-old Georgiana Macdonald, daughter ➤

Full of stunners? *The Golden Stairs* (1876–1880)

of a Wesleyan minister. He had known the family since they had lived in Birmingham and went to school with Georgiana's brother. Throughout what became a frustratingly long engagement, since Burne-Jones had no means of supporting a wife, he was drawing and painting her. They were not married until 1861. Often, tellingly, he makes her his model for the Virgin. Georgie's decorous, sweet features can, for instance, be identified in the central panel of the Burne-Jones triptych in the chapel at Lady Margaret Hall.

It was part of the whole ethos of Pre-Raphaelite art to draw and paint from people near at hand, part of the intimate domestic circle, in preference to using professional models. Burne-Jones himself was particularly fond of using Georgiana's sisters as his models. Agnes, Alice and his favourite Louisa can be identified in his pen-and-ink drawings of this early London period. There was a certain clinginess in his attitude to women, possibly related to the loss of his own mother, who died when he was just a few days old. Drawing and painting them was how he laid his claim. Burne-Jones was devastated and indignant as, one by one, Georgie's sisters announced themselves engaged. There was nothing unsuitable about the men they married. Far from it: Alice's husband was the sculptor

He had a lifelong tendency to see himself abandoned and bereft

and art school director John Lockwood Kipling and their son Rudyard became the famous writer; Agnes married Edward Poynter, painter and leading figure of the arts establishment; Louisa married the wealthy ironmaster and MP Alfred Baldwin and their son Stanley finally became prime minister. But these defections left Burne-Jones inconsolable. He had a lifelong tendency to see himself as abandoned and bereft.

In the late 1860s a new face begins to appear in Burne-Jones' pictures: the more exotic and sexually alluring Maria Zambaco. She was a young Greek woman, born Maria Terpsithea Cassavetti. Her mother was an Ionides, a member of one of the leading Greek merchant families in London, a clan so cohesive and interlinked by marriage they were often described as 'the Greek colony'. Maria had impetuously married a Greek doctor, Demetrius Zambaco, a specialist in venereal diseases whose practice was in Paris. Zambaco was accused within the Cassavetti family of being involved in child pornography.

For whatever reason, the marriage failed. Maria had now returned to London, a wealthy, wilful woman with her own artistic aspirations. Burne-Jones gave her lessons in his studio at his house in West Kensington, The Grange. Maria soon became for Burne-Jones what first Elizabeth Siddall and then Janey Morris became for Rossetti: the visual obsession, the model and the muse. This was his first overwhelmingly sexual experience. Georgie, though conventionally pretty, was no siren. When Rossetti wrote his limerick on "Georgy, whose life is one profligate orgy" he was clearly being ironic. The Burne-Joneses had in any case ceased

Phyllis and Demophoon (1870). The heads of both figures resemble Burne-Jones' lover Maria Zambaco



BIRMINGHAM MUSEUMS AND ART GALLERY/THE BRIDGEMAN ART LIBRARY

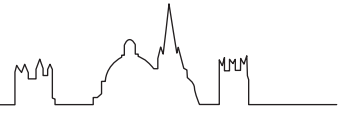
Caricature by Burne-Jones of his friend William Morris reading poetry to him (1861)



THE STAPLETON COLLECTION/BRIDGEMAN

sexual relations to avoid having more children in addition to their small son Philip and infant daughter Margaret. A third child had been stillborn and Georgie was not strong. Maria was already well known as a pursuer, with an uninhibited physicality unusual in women in London at that time. She was a striking figure with "almost phosphorescent" white skin and come-hither glorious red hair. Burne-Jones believed himself to be shy, gauche and unattractive. His self-cartoons portray him as abjectly undesirable. Targeted by Maria, he did not stand a chance.

He dispensed with most other models now, in favour of Maria Zambaco's delicate, distinctly Grecian features, her large expressive eyes, well-sculpted nose and neatly pointed chin. From the artist's point of view she had the virtue of mobility. He told Rossetti that Maria "had a wonderful head, neither profile was like the other quite – and the full face was different again". She appears in many guises in Burne-Jones' paintings. There she is in his series *Pygmalion and The Image*, the statue created to be worshipped by the artist; there she is as his enchantress in the *The Wine of Circe*; his goddess in *Venus Concordia* and *Venus Discordia*; his temptress in *The Beguiling of Merlin*, the pursuit of the ancient



magician by the sexually predatory Nimuë. If he saw her as Nimuë, then he himself was Merlin. He was conscious of his own succumbing to enchantment: “I was being turned into a hawthorn tree in the forest of Broceliande.” In his final revision of the painting, Nimuë has become a Gorgon, snakes entwined in her enticing Pre-Raphaelite hair.

The affair could not end well. “Poor old Ned’s affairs have come to a smash altogether,” wrote Rossetti, the part sympathetic, part sardonic commentator on Burne-Jones’ fraught emotional life. Maria was putting pressure on Burne-Jones to run away with her and live on a Greek island, the island known as Syra described in Homer’s *Odyssey*. They could reclaim her classical heritage together. But Burne-Jones had a streak of bourgeois caution. There were turgid scenes of drama in 1869, with Maria pursuing him along the narrow lane leading north from Kensington High Street, proposing a suicide pact. When Burne-Jones refused to take the poison she had brought, she threatened to drown herself in Regent’s Canal. They were rolling about together on the parapet when, in a scene that could have come straight from a Wilkie Collins novel, the metropolitan police arrived.

The story was not over. The Zambaco affair erupted into public scandal in 1870, when Burne-Jones’ painting *Phyllis and Demophoon* was shown in the Old Watercolour Society’s annual exhibition at its Pall Mall Galleries. The picture, like so many of his paintings, is of a love chase, an episode from Ovid’s *Heroides* in which Phyllis, daughter of the King of Thrace, apparently betrayed in love by Theseus’ son Demophoon, kills herself and is turned by the gods into an almond tree. Burne-Jones illustrates the moment when Demophoon returns to be reclaimed by Phyllis, who clasps him around, enticingly, while still part of her own tree. The scandal arose not just because the heads of both the female and male figures bear the unmistakable features of Zambaco. Still more controversial was the nudity of Demophoon. When the harassed Society president suggested that his genitals could be temporarily chalked over, Burne-Jones indignantly removed the painting and resigned.

In 1872 Maria unexpectedly moved back to Paris. There were innuendos about another lover. She was later to throw herself at Rodin, still in search of a substitute ‘cher maître’. New research indicates the degree to which Burne-Jones continued to pursue her. He made visits to Paris. He and Maria may even have been in Italy together. In the 1880s she was reportedly renting a London studio next door to his. In a previously unpublished letter of 1888, now in a Cassavetti family collection, Burne-Jones addresses Maria as his “Dear and ill-used friend”. He says, “You must believe a bit that I never forget you.” And indeed how could he forget the woman who had moved his art onto a new level of transfixing and alarming erotic consciousness?

Through the years of public scandal Georgie had behaved with dignity and stoicism. She said stoutly, “There is love enough between Edward and I to last out a long life.” There needed to be. After Zambaco he was never not in love. The story of his complicated sexual



Portrait of Maria Zambaco (1870) by Burne-Jones

history has been hampered by the lack of accessible documentation. There is still no published collection of his letters. In researching his biography, I’ve been the more dependent on the mass of his amorous correspondence still in private collections and the fixations revealed in his own art.

First in the 1880s, Burne-Jones became obsessed with a number of beautiful and self-possessed young women from the artistic and liberal elite: Frances Graham, daughter of his patron William Graham; Mary, William Gladstone’s daughter; Margot and Laura Tennant; Mary Stuart Wortley. These are the girls assembled on Burne-Jones’ aesthetic movement masterpiece *The Golden Stairs*. In the following decade his emotional focus was his daughter Margaret, the unawakened princess in his *Sleeping Beauty* paintings, whom he loved with near-incestuous devotion. But Margaret, like the other girls, got married – to his enormous chagrin.

Late in life Burne-Jones found himself embroiled in parallel adorations for an old love, Frances Graham, now Frances Horner, and new love, Helen Mary Gaskell. Both were sophisticated, spiritual women in their forties at the centre of the intellectual clique ‘the Souls’. But these were married women. There were limits. Both affairs were ultimately unsatisfactory. His late painting *The Wizard*, for which Frances was a model, is painfully autobiographical, suggesting an old man’s sexual frustrations. “I suppose I have learnt my lesson at last,” he wrote to Mary Gaskell three years before he died. “The best in me has been love and it brought me the most sorrow.”

Love was certainly the stimulus for the finest examples of Burne-Jones’ art: Nimuë pursuing and tantalising Merlin; Phyllis clasping Demophoon in that desperate embrace; Pygmalion kneeling daunted at the foot of his own work, the living, breathing woman the sculptor has created; the mermaid dragging a lover to the unknown depths of a cruel ocean. These are images of passion but in the end bleak pictures of the incompatibility of men and women.

It is this bleakness of vision that relates Burne-Jones to a twentieth-century art of psycho-sexual exploration. His influence extended to Freudian Vienna, Egon Schiele and the ornately erotic dream paintings of Gustav Klimt. You can find the echoes of Burne-Jones’ search for love, beauty and sexual fulfilment in the work of the Swiss symbolist painter Ferdinand Hodler. There is evidence of the strong impression made by Burne-Jones on the young Pablo Picasso and the early twentieth-century Catalan painters. His preoccupation with sex was to be echoed in the work of Eric Gill and Stanley Spencer. Of all British twentieth-century artists, it is Spencer, with his unrelenting candour and the strangeness of his vision, who relates most closely to Burne-Jones. ☺

The Beguiling of Merlin (1872–77)



Fiona MacCarthy’s new biography *The Last Pre-Raphaelite: Edward Burne-Jones and the Victorian Imagination* will be published by Faber and Faber on 8 September



To claim one of 10 free copies of Fiona MacCarthy’s new book, visit www.oxfordtoday.ox.ac.uk/ebj



WODEHOUSE AND THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Using the new Oxford English Dictionary Online, **Robert McCrum** uncovers the whimsical words and delightful language of PG Wodehouse – from cuppa, to ritzy and zing

PELHAM GRENVILLE WODEHOUSE, born in 1881, came of age at the dawn of mass culture. He was an Englishman of that generation, shaped by the Education Act of 1870, for whom the written word was an intoxicating plaything – and a means of self-improvement. Also, as the son of a colonial civil servant, he was a junior member of an English establishment shaped by public schools like Dulwich, his alma mater. Wodehouse's inimitable style, its language and range of allusion, which is also the expression of his comic genius, profoundly reflects these two influences, the popular and the traditional.

As a boy, Wodehouse received a classical education at Dulwich. His instinctive command of the prose sentence, combined with a perfect ear for the music of English, gave him the confidence to trade in school slang (oil; archbish; barge; biff; corking), which would eventually morph into the lingo of his 1940 story collection *Eggs, Beans and Crumpets*.

His instinctive command of the prose sentence gave him the confidence to trade in school slang

soup

strainers

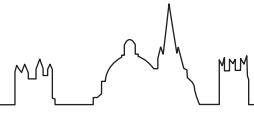
ritzy

zing

The Mayfair of the clubs was in the future. Dulwich College is rooted in the suburbs of south London, a genteel purlieu of sorrowful aspiration, a place of servants, landladies and clerks. It's Dulwich ('Valley Fields' in the Wodehouse canon) that connects the Wodehouse of the English shires to a mass audience of clerks, insurance salesmen and minor civil servants, for whom chassis becomes slang for body, and giving someone the elbow, meaning to reject, possibly derives from the experience of taking a commuter train to the City. Such suburban clerks would also refer to moustaches as soup strainers or jocularly describe a colleague's beard as a fungus. At their most uninhibited, they might address one another, as Ukridge does in some of Wodehouse's earliest stories, as "old horse".

After Dulwich, Wodehouse had two unhappy years working in a bank. Although he disdained the City, he owed rather more to his fellow clerks than he acknowledged, appropriating the Pooterish Edwardian slang of give me the pip (irritate); restore the tissues (take alcoholic refreshment); off his onion (unbalanced); old oil (flattery); pure applesauce (fanciful nonsense), and pip pip (goodbye).

This was the Edwardian world whose slang – cove, blighter and snifter – would pepper the conversation of



Bertie Wooster and his fellow Drones. In this indolent milieu, the prince of the affluent young Edwardian was the knut, descended from the Beau, the Buck and the Swell, an amiable cove you could laugh at but hardly despise, given to absurd expressions like oojah-cum-spiff and Tinkerty-tonk. Rupert Psmith (“the P is silent as in psalm”) is the quintessential knut with a range of vocabulary (like his author’s) that is matched by an instinctive love of quotation from the classics (“solvitur ambulando”) and from the kind of English poetry learned at public school. Psmith is never lost for words, his own, or other people’s.

Wodehouse, like all the greatest English writers, was always a snapper-up of unconsidered trifles. Two youthful trips to New York before the outbreak of the Great War had a decisive effect on the emergence of his mature style. Throughout his heyday (approximately 1915 to 1939), Wodehouse could always count on selling his work twice over, first in magazine, and then in book, form on both sides of the Atlantic. Zippiness, hotsy-totsy, ritzy, dude, lame-brain, syncopated, zing, and hooched all bear witness to Wodehouse’s love of the US vernacular.

In retrospect, his creative zenith (the years of the first Jeeves and Blandings stories) was the 1920s, one of the great alcoholic decades of the twentieth century. Unique in the canon of English literature, almost none of Wodehouse’s characters is indifferent to the temptations of a quiet snort. Wodehouse’s Drones

Almost none of Wodehouse’s characters is indifferent to the temptations of a quiet snort

will make for the bar like buffalo for a watering hole. Their lexicon for inebriated includes: awash; boiled; fried; lathered; illuminated; oiled; ossified; pie-eyed; polluted; primed; stinko; squiffy; tanked and woozled. Every one of these words, and many other phrases, betrays their author’s delight in the vernacular.

Wodehouse himself, of course, was always completely in command of his artistic faculties. He was also lucky. His astonishing popularity came at a singular moment in British social history. For the first time, the nation was almost universally literate. Wodehouse’s polished and seemingly effortless combination of the suburban and the classical, matching popular storytelling with brilliantly allusive prose, was perfectly suited to a mass audience and the elite Oxbridge readership within it. Newspaper critics, like Gerald Gould in *The Observer*, expressed a widespread opinion: “In the most serious and exact sense of the word [PGW] is a great artist. He has founded a school, a tradition. He has made a language... He has explained a generation.”

Shortly after these words appeared, Wodehouse completed his masterpiece, *The Code of the Woosters*, a comic tour de force that contains some of his most celebrated felicities:

“He spoke with a certain what-is-it in his voice, and I could see that, if not actually disgruntled, he was far from being grunted.”

woozy

squiffy

pip

pip

blighter

dude

hotsy

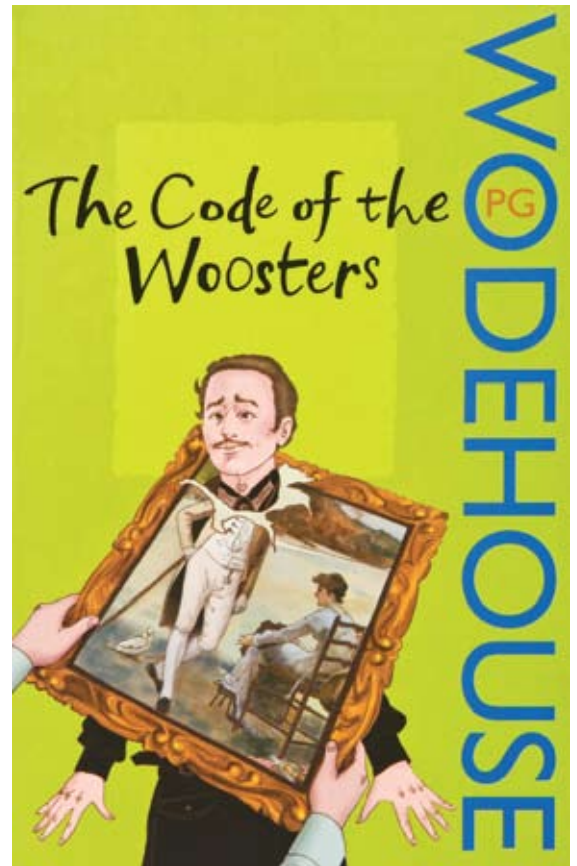
totsy

drones

restore

the

tissues



Or: “It is no use telling me that there are bad aunts and good aunts. At the core, they are all alike. Sooner or later, out pops the cloven hoof.”

Or: “You see before you, Jeeves, the toad beneath the harrow.”

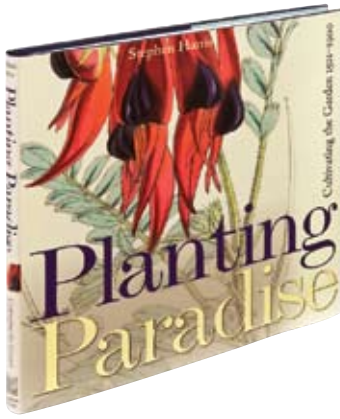
The Code of the Woosters is the supreme example of Wodehouse’s marriage of high farce with the inverted poetry of his mature comic style. Today, he is more popular than on the day he died, and reference to his characters appear somewhere in the English-speaking world almost every day. The OED Online, for example, contains more than 1,750 quotations from crispish to zippiness. In lightness and lunacy, life could become bearable, and the unexamined life, left to its own devices, could go like a breeze – especially if crowded with incident, orchestrated by butlers and valets, and dedicated to helping old pals. It was, finally, Wodehouse’s genius to execute his stories in a language that danced on the page, marrying the English style of the academy with the slang of the suburbs. ☺

The new Oxford English Dictionary Online is available – at home, at any time – via UK public libraries and many others worldwide. An online version of this article, with links to Wodehouse’s words, is available in the ‘Aspects of English’ section of the Oxford English Dictionary Online: www.oed.com

Robert McCrum is an associate editor of The Observer. His latest book, Globish. How the English Language became the World’s Language, has just been published by Penguin

Arts & Ideas

Book reviews



Planting Paradise: Cultivating the Garden 1501–1900

By Stephen Harris
Bodleian Library £29.99

“Plants in Oxford’s Botanical Garden have flourished for centuries on academic manure”, Stephen Harris calmly announces as he details ways of acclimatising plants from foreign parts to the English climate. But you can banish the vision of ingenious eco-sewers running from college latrines to the garden’s compost heaps. It is a long time since “ye Universitie Scavenger” delivered 4000 loads of “mucke and dunge” during the making of the Oxford Physic Garden between 1621 and 1626. Under Jacob Bobart the younger, this was to become the first botanical garden in Britain, divided, as it still is today, into four great beds, originally intended to contain plants from the four known continents.

Harris is Druce Curator of the Oxford University Herbaria, and he has a special interest in the evolutionary consequences of human-mediated plant movement. Bravely, he sets out on a sweeping through plant history, peppering his pages with glorious illustrations from the treasures of

botanical illustration held in Oxford libraries.

But be warned. *Planting Paradise* is not an account of how gardens have been arranged over four centuries as its subtitle suggests. It focuses on the discovery of exotic plants, some awesome curiosities, others economically priceless, and their transplantation and cultivation in botanical gardens worldwide; in short, horticultural imperialism. Harris begins in 1501 when the invention of printing led to books in which botanists reported their own observations rather than relying on classical authorities. He stops in 1900, when genetics began to dramatically change our understanding of plant diversity.

Harris covers an ambitious range of subjects, some fully, some cursorily. What most interests him are the plants that changed lives: rubber, tea, coffee, breadfruit (Captain Bligh’s cargo on the *Bounty*). But he takes time to consider plant connections with religion (the passionflower’s crown of thorns), the Doctrine of Signatures (walnuts resemble the human skull, and were “very profitable for the Brain”), magic and astrology.

Harris has a nice dry turn of phrase and a sharp eye for the telling quote. He is fond of tall stories, notably an Oxford myth: *senecio squalidus*, or Oxford ragwort, was spread from the Oxford Botanical Garden’s specimen by “prelate dispersal” (untidy old parsons taking a memento of Oxford with them to their new livings). This one I know is wrong. It was clinker chips under the national network of railway lines that provided the ideal habitat for a plant that originally thrived on Sicilian volcanic ash. ☺

60 seconds with...

Will Hawthorne

James Martin fellow, Institute on Plants for the 21st Century



What is the main focus of your work at the moment?

Our research helps others manage and conserve vegetation in rare plant hotspots worldwide. I collate data that enables us to localise hotspots of rare plants on all scales to identify both global and local trends. I also provide training for Rapid Botanic Survey (RBS), the technique used to identify and document these hotspots at the finest scales.

Why is rapid assessment of these areas important?

Speed is important if a location is to be developed for mining, for example. Our RBS technique allows us to identify and localise 400 species per day, so we can quickly determine if an area is a hotspot. Ultimately, we aim to raise awareness of the locations, names and properties of these plants to provide a scientific basis for their conservation.

How is your work helping the world's rainforests?

The dearth of scientific botanists makes sustainable forest management hard to achieve. It’s hard to make a case for forest protection without good baseline data and managers. Part of our work is to train local botanists. We also carry out environmental impact assessments for large companies compelled by carbon trading regimes to mitigate their carbon footprint.

How do you balance the needs of local people and rare plants?

Plant biodiversity cannot be lost without serious consequences. Many local people depend on the rainforest. We record which plants are locally valued, to balance our knowledge of globally rare species, and advise officials on how to avoid loss of useful plants.

What happens to your data?

We are developing an online ‘Plant Observatory’, allowing browsers to see global hotspots and photographs of rare species. A star system classifies the global rarity of species, a key factor for measuring hotspots.

What keeps you motivated?

Finding a new species, or one I don’t recognise. When patterns emerge from the ‘random jungle’ of species, and you can start to make sense of the ecosystem and contribute to better management.

Why should we all be passionate about plant conservation?

Quite apart from keeping forests standing for the sake of the climate, we must try to prevent the bursting dam of biodiversity from total collapse. We can’t predict which plants are critical for biotechnological advances or to keeping other such species alive so we must try to conserve all. Diversity is key – to help those in the future to optimise their world for human well-being.



To listen to an interview with Will Hawthorne, visit www.oxfordtoday.ox.ac.uk

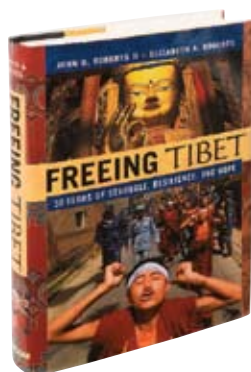
Oxford Alumni bookshop

Blackwell offers a 10 per cent discount to all Alumni Cardholders on book purchases



For this issue's Distractions (Crossword, etc.) visit www.oxfordtoday.ox.ac.uk

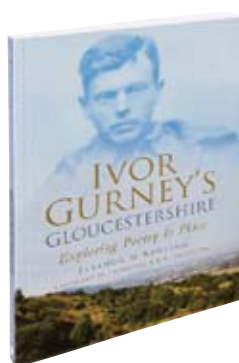
We welcome review suggestions from authors and publishers. Please send brief details to the editor at oxford.today@admin.ox.ac.uk



Freeing Tibet

By John B Roberts II and Elizabeth A Roberts, American Management Association, 9780814409831, £16.00

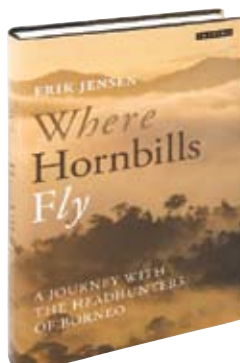
Cold War history of Tibet, covering CIA covert ops and the broader struggle against China under Tenzin Gyatso, Dalai Lama. ☺



Ivor Gurney's Gloucestershire

By Eleanor M Rawling, The History Press, 9780752453538, £14.99

Beautifully illustrated 'geography' of Great War poet and musician Ivor Gurney's deep belonging to the county of Gloucestershire. Includes some walks! ☺



Where Hornbills Fly

By Erik Jensen, I. B. Tauris, 9781848855007, £20.00

Riveting, wonderfully written account of Worcester alumnus Jensen's seven years spent living with the Iban tribe in Sarawak, Borneo, in the 1960s. ☺



An Accidental Masterpiece

By Christine Ferdinand, Oxford, Magdalen College, 9780953643516, £25.00

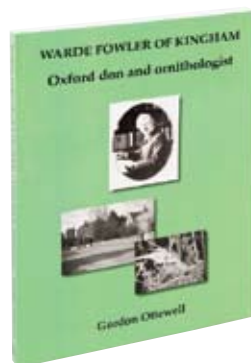
Architectural, social and cultural history of one of Oxford's most beautiful buildings, Holdsworth's 18th-century New Building at Magdalen College. ☺



A Discovery of Witches

By Deborah Harkness, Headline, 9780755374021, £14.99

This 600-page magical epic begins in one of Bodley's deserted reading rooms at the end of the long vac. Historian Diana Butler discovers an alchemical manuscript (based on a real missing book, *Ashmole 782*, which has not been seen since 1858) and lifts the lid on a supernatural, destructive world. Descended from a long line of witches, Diana confronts her past while daemons and vampires conspire in Oxford. Her carefully ordered existence disintegrates as she sets out on a journey with secretive vampire geneticist Matthew Clairmont to uncover the secrets behind the manuscript. A spellbinding sequence of events ensues as the mysterious pair dabble in ancient and modern fantasy and reality, embracing each other amid a search for truth. This début novel from Deborah Harkness (former Fulbright fellow who rowed at Keble) recently featured in the *New York Times* Best Seller List for fiction. ☺ www.deborahharkness.com



Warde Fowler of Kingham

By Gordon Ottewell, Barn Owl Books, 9780951058695, £9.99

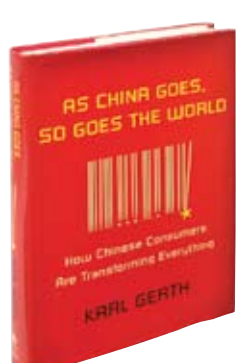
Lovely biography of 'Oxford's Gilbert White', Victorian don (Lincoln College) and ornithologist William Warde Fowler, who wrote a series of popular texts on birdwatching. ☺



Pearl

Translated by Jane Draycott, Carcanet Press, 9781906188016, £9.95

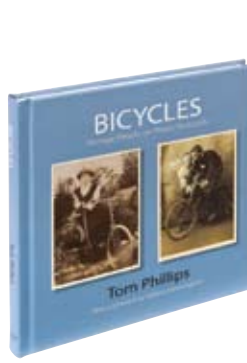
Superb new translation of the 14th-century dream poem, of loss and consolation, that retains the intensity and beauty of the original across six centuries. A literary jewel. ☺



As China Goes, So Goes the World

By Karl Gerth, Hill and Wang, 9780809034291, £18.99

An eye-opening, foreboding account of Chinese consumerism and its impact, by the Merton College fellow and teacher of modern Chinese history. ☺



Bicycles

By Tom Phillips, Bodleian Library, 9781851243686, £15.00

Fascinating postcards of cyclists from 1900 to 1950, selected from the Bodleian's recently acquired, 50,000-strong archive. A brilliant social history of the first great cycling craze. ☺

Sounding in Cowley

Cambridge audio brand opens in Oxford

A curio, this tale. Take Meridian, a world-beating, Cambridge-based luxury audio equipment maker with boutiques in places like Moscow and New Delhi. It has no UK shop, so where do you think it would choose to open its first, bearing in mind that its reference speakers cost £35,000 a pair? Cambridge, obviously? Bond Street, perhaps? No, you've guessed correctly: Oxford. And even then not the High Street, not Walton Street, not even Summertown, but a place of metal bashing and stone chipping – Horspath Industrial Estate, adjacent to the mighty BMW Mini plant in furthest Cowley. Meridian co-founder Bob Stuart explains that customers for top-end hi-fi today demand multi-room, networked solutions requiring complex IT engineering and installation. This is where partner company Lewis Building Technology comes in, and their HQ in Horspath. Opened in March, the Meridian boutique brings a pinnacle of British pre-eminence in psycho-acoustic engineering and manufacturing to one of the less likely outposts of Oxford. ☺



Bob Stuart, co-founder and CTO of Meridian Audio, with Justin Rhodes, Managing Director of Lewis Building Technology

EXCLUSIVE

Oxford Today Wine Offer



10% of sales will directly support the OUS Student Travel Awards

Sample these wines at the Oxford Alumni Reception at Vintners Hall on 21 July. Details available online at www.alumni.ox.ac.uk

This offer serves up exceptional wines from renowned producer Joseph Drouhin. Exclusive to *Oxford Today* they represent enormous value compared to the high street. In addition, 10% of sales will directly support the OUS Student Travel Awards.

Founded by Joseph Drouhin in 1880 and still based in the same historic premises in the heart of Beaune, the company remains fiercely independent, run by the fourth generation of the family. The outstanding vineyard holding, comprising 73 hectares in the Côte d'Or, the Côte Chalonnaise and Chablis, is now run on organic and biodynamic principles.

First of the three whites is an Aligote 2010; a blend of grapes

from the Chalonnaise and the Hautes Côtes de Nuits and Beaune (effectively the vineyard on the top of the slopes – great for maintaining acidity in a warm year). The wine is fresh and bright with good greengage acidity and perfect for summer drinking. Moving then to the Laforet Blanc 2009, the Drouhin “trademark” white burgundy and a crisp bright Chardonnay blended from a selection of sources in the Côte d'Or, Hautes Côtes and the Côte Chalonnaise. The wine has the acidity and freshness typical of classic burgundy, so often lacking in New World examples. Finally, the 2009 Montagny, which offers proper white burgundy style at an affordable price. To complete

the offer, a couple of reds – firstly, a delicious Chiroubles from the 2009 vintage, the best Beaujolais vintage in the last three decades.

Then, to remind you of the joy of Pinot Noir, the Drouhin “trademark” red Burgundy from the same outstanding vintage: pretty, rich, fragrant, with hints of crushed raspberry and spice and a class far exceeding its appellation. Serve the wine cool (as Drouhin would) to make the most of the freshness.

James Simpson MW

Varsity wine memoirs sought!

Pol Roger Champagne solicits reminiscences of the Varsity wine tasting competition. The resulting history will be published in 2013, the 60th anniversary of the event. Jennifer Segal, js@jsnewmedia.com

Order Form *Oxford Today Wine Offer*

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And please cc: linda@bennettsfinewines.com

Prices include VAT and delivery on the British mainland. Readers based outside the UK can inquire about shipping rates directly with Bennetts Fine Wines. Payment should be made either by cheque with the order, payable to Bennetts Fine Wines Ltd, or by debit or credit card, details of which may be telephoned or faxed, or e-mailed. This offer, which is subject to availability, closes on 15 October 2011. This offer is administered by Bennetts Fine Wines Ltd and neither the University nor the publisher accept any liability arising from the offer.



Cayuse Livestock Co., by the Crazy Mountains, Montana (1987) by John C Smart
Recent gift of William Broadbent to St Edmund Hall



Poetry

Wild Boar of New York

Remembering how Aristotle felt
metal-bound and hard to the throat,

the swart boar flirts the stoop.
Snaffling for trash, his ridgeback wig

stands stiff as a disguise.
He bides his time.

Haunted by the cuff of his feet
in sweet grass,

the burst flute of Aphrodite's calls
as he put her young god to the gore.

Sarah Hesketh



Sarah Hesketh (Merton, 2001) was born in 1983 and grew up in Pendle, East Lancashire. Her debut collection, *Napoleon's Travelling Bookshelf* (2010), from which this poem comes, is published by *Penned in the Margins* and was described by Bernard O'Donoghue as "original and utterly convincing". She currently works as Assistant Director at the writers' charity English PEN.

The Event

On the fifth day we sailed our frozen island out
into the shipping lanes. We counted all the evil things
and cast them in an ice-hole. They were only numbers.

On the fourth day we opened high-yield savings accounts.
The refugee camps were fast becoming commuter towns
encircling the crater. Jets of steam were seen from the tor.

On the third day we left our cars in short stay.
The air was pine-fresh. Pebbles nuzzled at our shoes.
We began to doubt the alignment of the trackway.

On the second day we shopped. You carried your foot
like a dead weight. Some youths got on TV
pretending to be trainee customer service assistants.

On the first day the fridge defrosted itself.
Wearing Halloween masks we made love and
you said something really evil about a mutual friend.

On the day before the first day we fell into geometry
like children. The sky was a chemical peel.
We slept alone and restlessly through the shipping news.

Tom Chivers



Tom Chivers (*St Anne's*, 2001) was born in 1983 in South London. His books include *How To Build A City* (Salt Publishing, 2009) and *The Terrors* (Nine Arches Press, 2009) and, as editor, *Stress Fractures: Essays on Poetry and the anthologies Generation Txt and City State: New London Poetry* (*Penned in the Margins*, 2010, 2006 & 2009). He is Director of independent publisher *Penned in the Margins* and co-Director of London Word Festival.



Events

Museums & galleries

Ashmolean Museum

Until 29 August

Heracles to Alexander the Great: Treasures from the Royal Capital of Macedon, a Hellenic Kingdom in the Age of Democracy

With more than 500 treasures recently found in the royal burial tombs and the palace of Aegae, the ancient capital of Macedon. On display for the first time outside Greece.

Bodleian Library

Until 4 September

Manifold Greatness: Oxford and the Making of the King James Bible

Marking the 400th anniversary of the publication of the King James Bible, the most frequently printed book in the English language.

30 September–23 December

Finding Treasure: The Best of the Bodleian

With some of the library's most iconic manuscripts and books. Members of the public can give their thoughts on which of the library's treasures should be put on permanent display in the Bodleian's new Weston Library, which will open in 2015.

Christ Church Picture Gallery

Until 4 September

An Artist Looks at Old Masters

Artist Jeff Clarke selects more than 30 Old Master drawings from the gallery's collection to explore the principles of draughtsmanship.

27 August–27 November

En Brunaille – Painted Drawings

This exhibition will show a group of painted sketches executed in

a hue of brown oil paints – en brunaille. These works were often used as presentation pieces for clients. Includes works by Anthony van Dyck.

29 September–15 January 2012

Giulio Romano

As Raphael's collaborator and pupil, Giulio completed his master's projects after Raphael's death in 1520 and developed his own fanciful designs following Raphael's ideas and principles.

Museum of the History of Science

Until 16 October

Eccentricity

Unexpected objects from the museum's collection, including a Japanese mechanical fly-trap.

Pitt Rivers

Until 31 July

Ghost Forest: A Year in Oxford

The last chance to see Angela Palmer's striking exhibition featuring 10 immense rainforest tree stumps from Ghana, which show the impact of deforestation.

18 July–27 January 2013

Made for Trade

Indian silk textiles, a brick made of tea, lustrous glass beads from Venice... from local markets to global networks this exhibition offers insights into the world of trade through the museum's remarkable collections.

19 July–8 Jan 2012

People Apart: Cape Town Survey 1952

A recently discovered archive of photographic images by Bryan Heseltine taken in the townships of Cape Town during the early years of apartheid. While the photographs are evocative images of township life, the ambiguous contexts in which the images were exhibited at the time suggest other ways of interpreting his work.



A Midsummer Night's Dream as part of the Summer Shakespeare Tour

University Museum of Natural History

Until 31 August

Isabel Rawsthorne (1912–1992) 'Migrations' – Painting and Drawings

The first exhibition of luminous landscapes – the final statement of a lifetime studying birds.

Student theatre

16–20 August

OU DS and Thelma Holt Summer Shakespeare Tour

A Midsummer Night's Dream, re-imagined in the ceremonial and festive world of 1940s British royalty. Theseus' high-society celebration is blown apart by the excitement of the fairy court. Worcester College Garden, 19.30 www.oxfordplayhouse.com

Music

Oxford Philomusica

9, 15, 22 July

Summer Baroque: The Magic Flute Harmony and Invention Virtuoso Violins

Sheldonian Theatre, 20.00

Piano Festival

30, 31 July, 1, 2, 4, 6 August, 20.00

Elisabeth Eshwé Piano
Jacqueline du Pré Music Building
Leslie Howard Piano Recital
University Church of St Mary The Virgin
Shai Wosner Piano Recital
Holywell Music Room

Menahem Pressler and Oxford Philomusica

Sheldonian Theatre
Stephen Hough and Oxford Philomusica
Sheldonian Theatre
Participants Recital
Jacqueline du Pré Music Building
Stephen Kovacevich Piano Recital
Sheldonian Theatre

Alumni events

21 July

Summer reception and wine tasting at Vintners' Hall
Celebrate summer with other Oxonians at this prestigious London venue.

27 July–7 August

Meet the Vice-Chancellor in Australia and New Zealand
The Vice-Chancellor will be holding receptions in Australia and New Zealand.

16–18 September

Oxford Alumni Weekend: Meeting Minds: 21st Century Challenges

Three days of talks, lectures, and tours of, Cardiff's treasures.

12 November

Cardiff Study Day at the National Museum of Wales
This year's alumni study day will focus on art, with lectures on, and tours of, Cardiff's treasures.

For a full listing of alumni events and to book, contact: events@alumni.ox.ac.uk, or visit www.alumni.ox.ac.uk/events

Obituaries

Lord Windlesham

28 January 1932–21 December 2010

David James George Hennessy, CVO, PC, 3rd Baron Windlesham and from 1999 a life peer as Baron Hennessy; Principal of Brasenose 1989–2002; died on 21 December 2010, aged 78. His three careers – media, politics and academia – were a unique mix. After years as a documentary producer and managing director at Grampian and ATV, he was jointly responsible in 1989 for investigating the controversial Thames Television programme *Death on the Rock*: “the most rigorous examination of a single current affairs programme in the history of British television”. In Oxford he was Chairman of the Oxford Society, among other honours. In 1965 he married journalist Prudence Glyn. He is survived by their daughter and son.

Bertram Mandelbrote

22 October 1923–25 November 2010

Bertram Maurice Mandelbrote, FRCP, FRCPsych, Clinical Lecturer in Psychiatry at Oxford and pioneer in the therapeutic community, died on 25 November 2010, aged 86. He trained in medicine and won a Rhodes scholarship to Merton College. Research in the UK and Canada led him to a career in psychiatric hospitals. He returned to Oxford as physician superintendent at Littlemore Hospital in 1959, and from 1961 until retirement he served as Clinical Lecturer in Psychiatry at the University. He helped establish the Ley Clinic for drug addicts. He is survived by his wife Kathleen and their two sons.

Julian Roberts

18 May 1930–20 October 2010

Richard Julian Roberts, former Keeper of Printed Books and Deputy Librarian at the Bodleian, died on 20 October 2010, aged 80. After 16 years as Assistant Keeper of Printed Books at the British Museum, he worked at the Bodleian from 1974 until retirement

in 1997. He was instrumental in establishing an online catalogue in the 1980s, and in the acquisition of several major collections. He was a fellow of Wolfson, and emeritus fellow from 1997. He is survived by his wife Anne and their son and daughter.

Brian Beynon Lloyd

23 September 1920–28 June 2010

Brian Beynon Lloyd, CBE, MA, DSc, emeritus fellow and former Vice-Principal of Magdalen, and first director of Oxford Polytechnic, died on 28 June 2010, aged 89. During the war he joined Hugh Sinclair's Oxford Nutrition Team, and went on to study the effects of famine. He became a fellow of Magdalen in 1948, and an emeritus fellow from 1970. After seven years as governor at the Oxford College of Technology, he earned the role of its first director when it became Oxford Polytechnic; he remained in that post until retirement in 1979, setting up Britain's first modular degree courses. He is survived by his wife Reinhild, their seven children and 13 grandchildren.

Brian Simpson

17 August 1931–10 January 2011

AW Brian Simpson, former fellow and tutor at Lincoln College, died on 10 January 2011, aged 79. He read law at Queen's, achieving a top First. From 1955 to 1973 he was a fellow at Lincoln College, establishing himself as an inspirational teacher and, with *Introduction to the History of the Land Law* (1961), as a leading historian of common law. While at Oxford, he served as dean of the faculty of law at the University of Ghana. His career led to the universities of Chicago and Michigan. He was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 1983. His works include *Human Rights and the End of Empire* (2001), plus a forthcoming volume. He is survived by two children from his first marriage to Kathleen Seston, and by his second wife, Caroline, and their three children.



ASHMOLEAN MUSEUM

Mary Tregear

11 February 1924–17 December 2010

Mary Tregear, curator of Chinese art at the Ashmolean for 30 years, died on 17 December 2010, aged 86. She was born in Wuchang in central China. Civil unrest drove the family back to England, where Mary contracted tuberculosis and suffered permanent disability of the hip. After studying art and teaching at a girls' school, in 1947 she went back to Wuchang to visit her parents, but ended up staying for three years before becoming curator at Hong Kong University's Fung Ping Shan Museum. She joined the Ashmolean as Assistant Keeper for the Chinese collection in 1961, and from 1987 until her retirement in 1991 was Keeper of Eastern Art. She developed the museum's collection of modern Chinese paintings, catalogued its early Chinese greenwares (1976), and in 1982 published a major book on the ceramics of the Song dynasty (960–1279). A fellow of St Cross College, she gave lectures, tutorials and graduate supervision in Chinese art for the Faculty of Oriental Studies. She was president of the Oriental Ceramic Society and a fellow of the British Academy. She is survived by a sister, Jean, and a brother, Richard.

Anthony Butler

30 January 1945–13 November 2010

Tony Butler, former Director of the Oxford University Careers Service and emeritus fellow of New College, died on 13 November 2010, aged 65. He read modern history at University College, then criminology at Cambridge and Columbia University, New York. A 27-year career in Whitehall culminated in six years as Director of Personnel and Finance for the Prison Service. From 1996 he was Director of the Oxford University Careers Service. He was treasurer then president of the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services and co-edited a history of AGCAS, *Reflections on Change 1967–2007*. His wife Anne and their children Catherine and James, survive him.



To read the full versions of these obituaries, visit www.oxfordtoday.ox.ac.uk

My Oxford

Stephanie Cook – Lincoln College 1994

The Olympic modern pentathlon gold medallist tells **John Garth** how a poster in the porter's lodge at her college put her on track for Sydney 2000

Why did you apply to Oxford [after your first degree at Cambridge] and what did you study?

After completing my pre-clinical years at Cambridge, I was ready for a change and decided to apply to Lincoln College for three years of clinical medicine (BM, BCh), learning through hands-on work in hospitals.

How did you become involved in modern pentathlon?

I'd played hockey and done athletics at school and also ridden with the Pony Club. At Cambridge I was a lightweight rower and I continued athletics, but it wasn't until Oxford that I tried modern pentathlon – shooting, fencing, swimming, riding and running. I saw a poster for OUMPA, the modern pentathlon club, in the porter's lodge at Lincoln. I'd always fancied it, mainly because of the horses. I went along and thoroughly enjoyed it.

Who did you train with?

The other OUMPA members, though because I was better runner I tended to do that with the Cross Country and Athletics Clubs. I also joined Fencing Club sessions under Tomek Walicki.

How did your sporting career go at Oxford?

In my first year I tore the medial collateral ligament in my knee and had to spend three months rehabbing. I'd been training with the cross-country team when the river had overflowed; we were skirting the water, and I stepped forward into the actual river. But I still competed in the cross-country Varsity match three times, winning it in 1996; and in both

modern pentathlon and athletics Varsity matches in 1996 and 1997. My first international competition was when I was still a student – the 1997 World Cup competition in Hungary. What happened at Oxford and subsequently was beyond my wildest dreams. I did sport simply because I enjoyed it. The thought of winning an Olympic gold medal had never crossed my mind.

How did you balance sports training with academic studies?

It involved a lot of early mornings, and late nights whizzing down Headington Hill from the John Radcliffe Hospital to get to training sessions, but I did not let sport affect my studies.

Did you find time for any other extracurricular activities?

I had quite enough to do with five different sports! But sport became my social life – there was the weekly cross-country meet at the Lamb and Flag, for example. Because Oxford teaches such a cross-section of subjects, through sport I could meet people reading many varied subjects.

Did you enjoy Oxford?

I loved it. My parents were born in Oxford and my grandparents had continued to live there, so I had always visited. The University was a different world again – I'm very lucky to have gone there.

What did you take away?

Fantastic memories. They were some of the best years of my life and gave me the skills that I then took forward in both my sporting and professional careers. At Oxford I became a doctor



ROB JUDGES



Cook in her university days

and a sportswoman – plus I met my husband Daniel. He's a vet and was at Cambridge, but we met through sport.

You keep coming back...

I'm now completing training as a GP in Sussex, and I'm on the Athletes' Committee of LOCOG (the London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games). After I qualified in medicine I worked for six months in Oxford at the John Radcliffe and the Churchill. I was made an honorary fellow of Lincoln, and supported the college in its development campaign. I studied a part-time MSc in evidence-based health care at Kellogg College, which I completed in 2008. I'm still very involved in OUMPA and recently helped out at the Varsity match.

How do you think of Oxford now?

When you're there as a student you're so immersed in your life that you don't fully appreciate it. It's only going back that you realise what an incredibly special experience it was. Oxford is somewhere where I learnt some things, made some lifelong friends and had a great time. ☺



To view interviews with previous subjects of this column, visit www.oxfordtoday.ox.ac.uk/oxonians/my_oxford