

EXON

THE EXETER COLLEGE MAGAZINE ISSUE 23 AUTUMN 2020
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Exonians rally together even as COVID-19 forces them apart, finds JCR President **Will Dobbs**

All for one and one for all! Camaraderie in the NHS has never been stronger, writes **Dr Aamir Saifuddin**

Online Chapel services are attracting a congregation of thousands, reports **Reverend Andrew Allen**

Droplets of the sun: **Hamza Farrukh** on eradicating water poverty and enriching lives

Kate Werran uncovers bullet holes and old wounds in Second World War Cornwall



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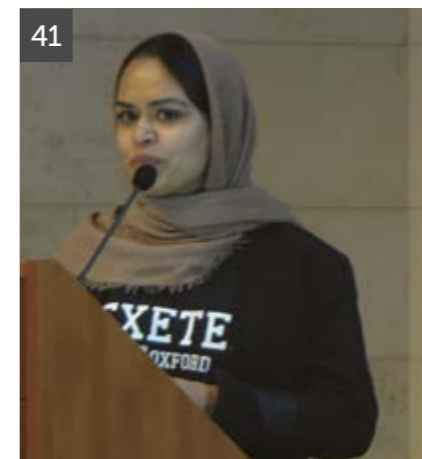
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Editorial

The COVID-19 pandemic will undoubtedly have affected every reader of this magazine, one way or another, so it was tempting to dedicate this issue of *Exon* to exploring those effects. But my intention has been to focus on a single theme of the crisis that has surfaced again and again around the world: community.

Whether it is public demonstrations of support for keyworkers or offers to pick up groceries and prescriptions for vulnerable neighbours, communities have grown stronger during the pandemic and repeatedly demonstrated their worth. And for a college that has long understood the importance of community, and been rightly celebrated for the strength and reach of its own, what better theme for *Exon*? After all, *Exon* is a magazine written by, about and for the Exeter community.

This edition of *Exon* includes wide-ranging articles, from the son of Rector Wheare, Tom, recalling his experiences growing up within Exeter's walls to a graduate of the Williams at Exeter Programme, Hamza Farrukh, describing his mission to bring millions of cups of safe drinking water to rural communities in Sudan and Pakistan. Exeter's chaplain, Andrew Allen, considers the comfort that people of different faiths – and no faith – have drawn from religious services, at a time when there has been no option but for those services to take place online. Alumna Kate Werran transports us back to Second World War Cornwall, to a moment when racial inequality and tension in the US Army led to a violent mutiny that shook the local community and tested Anglo-American relations. And alumnus Dr Aamir Saifuddin applauds the sense of community in the NHS and weighs up whether the weekly 'claps for keyworkers' highlighted the Health Service's value or masked urgent issues such as underfunding and shortages of equipment.

I hope you enjoy the magazine and find it reinforces your ties with the Exeter community.

Matthew Baldwin, Communications Officer



Rector's review

Whether it's through celebrating the 40th anniversary of the arrival of women, setting a College record for the number of Firsts, or the concern shown by students, Fellows and staff for one another as all adapted to unprecedented circumstances in the midst of a pandemic, Exeter's community spirit remains resilient, says **Rector Professor Sir Rick Trainor**

As the theme of this edition of *Exon* is community, and as the latter is central to Exeter life, my review of academic year 2019/20 will focus on the concept as it applies to the College.

What does community mean? The dictionary supplies a plethora of answers, some of which – 'a monastic body', for example! – are clearly inapplicable. Nor, despite the suspicions of certain UK journalists about the country's universities, is there relevance for 'a body of persons . . . under socialistic or similar organisation!' More pertinent are mentions of 'common rights' and 'a body of persons leading a common life'. The College shares a dedication to academic pursuits – both teaching and research – and to certain leisure activities traditionally associated with them! A key aspect of Exeter is something that none of these definitions captures. I refer to the way in which at this college there is a strong sense of identity including an ethos of mutual support, that goes beyond the specified responsibilities of Fellows, lecturers, staff, undergraduates, postgraduates, or alumni.

In any academic year there is ample proof of the breadth and depth of communal activities at Exeter. For a start, there are the elaborate welcomes for new undergraduates and postgraduates, including a Freshers' Dinner for each group. Likewise there are the annual festival celebrations – each observed with gusto in academic year 2019/20 – Diwali, Thanksgiving, Burns Night and Chinese New Year (to say nothing of our record-breaking number of Christmas dinners and carol concerts!). I think also of Boat Club dinners, the annual scholars' dinner, graduate high tables, and parents' dinners – each of which proved very successful during the academic year recently ended.

To these must be added the large number of sporting teams and clubs at Exeter, our student charity ExVac, our strong contribution to the annual Turl Street Arts Festival, a large number of 'access' events (including the best-ever attendance at the annual offer holders' day, buttressed by a record turnout of student volunteers) and the performances of our splendid choir. There are also Rector's Seminars, the wonderfully lively subject family dinners and well-attended alumni events – including those specially for recent alumni – both in the UK and abroad. We should also remember the

many sterling contributions of Exeter students to University teams, clubs, charities and cultural activities such as drama and music.

For 2019/20 we should note particularly the celebration, in November, of arguably the greatest ever enhancement to community at Exeter: the 40th anniversary of the arrival of women as Rectors, Fellows, postgraduates and undergraduates. It was particularly fitting that Rector Cairncross played a major role in the symposium on this theme. Equally timely was the February dinner, attended by Sir David and other members of the Butler family, after a lecture held in memory of Rector Butler.

The pandemic, of course, has taken a heavy toll on many aspects of community at Exeter. Having to send our students home (with a few exceptions for mainly overseas students who couldn't safely make the trip) early in the Easter vacation denied a whole year of undergraduate Finalists their Schools dinners, leavers' parents' lunch and – for the moment – even graduation. Similar fates befell our dozens of final year postgraduate students. All lost the College Ball and Eights Week. And a whole series of alumni events – gaudies, receptions and visits alike – had to be postponed both in the UK and abroad. Also, for some of those students who received their A-level results over the summer, there was a period of uncertainty and confusion, as the processes for awarding A-levels and the guidance issued to universities regarding student admissions for 2020 were revised by the regulator Ofqual. I am pleased



The year began with a matriculation ceremony under sunny skies



Exeter's ice hockey team came fourth in Cuppers



Students spoke to alumni around the world during the January telethon



Romance and philanthropy blossomed on Valentine's Day as ExVac sold red roses

that Exeter College was able, in consultation and collaboration with the University, its departments and faculties, and other colleges, to confirm places for all UK offer-holders – and to do so before the Government's U-turn on its controversial 'algorithm' methodology. This will be the most diverse undergraduate intake the College will have ever had in terms of socioeconomic indicators of disadvantage.

In a great many respects the crisis posed by the pandemic has intensified the spirit of community that characterises the whole Exeter Family. Many alumni have made special contributions to alleviate student hardship associated with COVID-19. Fellows, in many cases shouldering greatly increased responsibilities at home, endured multiple hours of Microsoft Teams each day in order to keep the College's governance ticking over while sustaining the liveliness as well as the coverage of tutorial teaching. Many Exeter staff members adjusted to life on furlough; those still at work went out of their way, for example, to help students, notably with regard to the supply of library materials and the collection of belongings left behind on College premises when the lockdown hit.

Students also rallied round. There were very few grumbles – or at least grumbles that reached my ears! – concerning the huge disruption to their social and extracurricular as well as academic activities. Indeed, both student common rooms showed a remarkable degree of imagination in Trinity Term by devising online communal activities, including silent study periods punctuated by breakout sessions. For the JCR this creativity attracted favourable attention even in Oxford's student press! At the same time, Chaplain Andrew Allen, the organ scholars and the choir produced a splendid series of live and recorded services that attracted a wide audience from past and current Fellows and students alike.

The College has contributed, also, to solving the wider community's COVID-related problems. Exeter has been sending weekly contributions to a local food bank. Also, healthcare professionals and scientists among our students, Fellows and alumni have produced large amounts of relevant care and research. The latter was epitomised by the talk that Professor Cath Green, senior research fellow and a member of Oxford's vaccine development team, gave online to Exeter's major benefactors in June. Likewise, in the same month the online alumni talk on 'Impact' by Sir Ronald Cohen (1964, PPE) demonstrated that there need not be a contradiction between successful entrepreneurship and contributions to the common good.

These admirable preoccupations have not entailed the sidelining of other important issues.



Exeter College Chapel Choir took time out to bond on the football field

Before the pandemic hit, Exeter had made considerable progress in implementing its strategic plan (notably in terms of an ethical investment policy), in advancing proposals to update its statutes, in progressing aspirations to restore and renovate the College Library, and in devising new plans to enhance outreach and access.

Each of these areas has continued to advance since March. For example, the new environmental sustainability group has continued to monitor and propose relevant innovations. Also, following a successful pilot in 2019, this September the College will stage its first full 'bridging' session for incoming Exeter undergraduates to help prepare them for the academic demands of Oxford. In addition, a full draft of the proposed revised statutes will be ready for a special meeting of the Governing Body in September. Likewise, plans for the Library project have received informal encouragement from the authorities overseeing planning and listed building consent. Similarly, the College has been devising a fundraising framework to help underpin the future development of Exeter. Moreover, the College responded with constructive, practical steps – such as promoting library acquisitions dealing with racial equality, and planning seminars for next academic year exploring such issues – to the Black Lives Matter campaign. Thus Exeter's sense of community, while continuing to emphasise the pursuit of academic excellence, proved itself both broad and flexible.

This spirit of community came through in responding to adversity of a different kind when Exeter received with shock the news of the sudden death of the College's Finance and Estates Bursar, Peter Warner, on 22 June. Peter had made a very positive personal as well as professional contribution to the College during his 10 short months in post. He was a consummate 'lateral thinker' but also someone with a keen sense of the importance of the traditions and the communal life of a college. Not many Oxford bursars are popular with students, but Peter was because he identified with their perspectives and concerns.

The Exeter Family lost many other members during 2019/20, of course. Two other examples illustrate the whole. In the spring we mourned, in quick succession,

the deaths of two honorary fellows: Sir James Gowans, a research fellow at Exeter in the 1950s who went on to make important biomedical discoveries and head the Medical Research Council, and Sir John Laws (1963, Literae Humaniores), a highly distinguished Appeal Court judge who commanded respect for his erudite constitutional writings as well as for his judicial decisions.

Meanwhile the College community renewed itself through the achievements of both current and past Fellows and students. Among many possible examples: Oreet Ashery (Fine Art) won a Turner Bursary; Professor Ervin Fodor (Virology) was elected to the Academy of Medical Sciences; Marie-Claire Cordonier Segger (2003, Law) received a Weeramantry International Justice Award; and Jonathan Hall (1992, Physics and Philosophy) secured appointment to the Bank of England's Financial Policy Committee. Also, although results are still incomplete at the time of writing, Exeter's Finalists (who had to cope with disruptions to their studies on a scale unparalleled since the Second World War) have set a College record for the number of Firsts.

As the College prepares to welcome students back in person for Michaelmas Term the spirit of community remains alive and well. Fellows are showing great concern for students who may be uncomfortable with in-person teaching under current circumstances. Through the leaders of the JCR and MCR, who have joined the College's pandemic coordination group for the summer, students are showing a similar concern for Fellows and Lecturers. On all sides there is great patience with the manifold modifications that need to be made for a socially distanced academic year to work. And there are plans to welcome back the 2020 Finalists during a reunion weekend in 2021.

In the midst of a persisting pandemic the outlook for 2020/21 is inherently uncertain. Yet the resilience of Exeter's sense of community during the recent academic year gives us real hope for the immediate future as well as for life well beyond COVID-19. Let us all hope that, during 2020/21, we are able to welcome back to Exeter not only current students but also the alumni members of our community, not least for postponed gaudies!

It definitely relieved some of the anxiety of starting university



On the Plus side

Ella Wilczyk (2019, Biochemistry) shares her positive experiences of a pilot scheme to help new students prepare for university life

At the end of September 2019, Exeter piloted a scheme called Exeter Plus, where new students were invited to College before the start of Michaelmas Term to take part in a programme designed to bridge the gap between A-levels and university. Places for the programme were offered on the basis of contextual data on UCAS forms, indicating which offer holders came from areas which previously had low progression rates into third-level education, or suffered from a high degree of socio-economic deprivation. The aim of the course was to successfully write an essay and present it to the rest of the group at the end of the week in a tutorial-style setting.

It was nerve racking, having to get the train to Oxford and not quite knowing what to expect. We had arranged to meet at the station, and I remember being the first one there, trying to spot other nervous students in the crowd. We walked to College and had a chance to settle into our rooms before having lunch in Hall and starting the week off with an introductory presentation. Over the course of the week we had a mixture of 'taught' sessions and

independent work, including a mock tutorial and a meeting with the College's Royal Literary Fund Fellow to discuss our essays. The programme was set up to be similar to a typical week during term, including our first real experience of Hall food, as well as our first meeting with the Rector, which was an interesting discussion of the history of the College over dinner.

We also had a taste of the more social aspects of Oxford life: eating together and hanging out in each other's rooms. As there were very few students in College at that time, we stuck together, experiencing our first of many late-night library sessions. We became close as a group, and I am pleased to say that I met some of my best friends during that week.

Overall, Exeter Plus was an educational and eye-opening experience of College life, and as someone who hadn't written an essay in years and had struggled to speak articulately in front of people, I found that it definitely boosted my confidence and relieved some of the anxiety of starting university.

JCR in lockdown!



JCR president **Will Dobbs** (2017, Literae Humaniores) reflects on how Exeter College rallied together during Trinity Term, when COVID-19 was keeping its members apart

'I hope this email finds you well in these unprecedented times.'

If there was a sentence that could define Trinity Term 2020, then this would be it. We have now reached the end of what must have been the most bizarre term in a generation. Students have been spending their days watching virtual lectures, sitting in virtual tutorials, working in a virtual library.

Unprecedented, sure; but this was unexpected too! At the end of Hilary Term many anticipated that we would be back in College after the vacation. But as March turned into April and it became abundantly clear that the lockdown was to be no temporary glitch, we realised that the hinterland of Port Meadow and punting that is Trinity Term was not to be. The Fellows' Garden was on furlough. Far more serious events had overtaken any undergraduate's desire to lounge on the slabs of Front Quad eating a fish finger panini. But that hardly mitigated any of our apprehension at the prospect of writing essays, problem sheets or, even more terrifyingly, final exams, from our homes.

As 0th week approached, many of us were asking ourselves the same questions. What if my WiFi crashes in the middle of a tutorial? Or in an exam? How am I going to find anything on the reading lists? When am I next going to see my friends? And, perhaps most pertinently, how on earth am I going to churn out a term's worth of work from the confines of my bedroom?

But despite these uncertainties we can now say that we have emerged from the other side, and the JCR is no lesser for it. In fact, as one fellow student put it, 'Exeter has never felt more like a community'. After an initial period of collective shock and, at least in my case, denial, the JCR came together to try and make virtual Trinity that bit more bearable.

Our undergraduate Facebook group became filled with entries to weekly competitions: poems, artworks, cakes, and even TikToks – all Exeter-themed, of course. We have squeezed every last drop of value out of our Zoom account, which has had a call open all day every day as a

virtual library. When not being used as a makeshift workspace, it also held circuits, welfare teas, quizzes, and even hustings. The first quiz gathered over 150 attendees on a single Zoom call (and broke my computer). We even got a taste of Exeter's abundant musical talent, thanks to two editions of the Live(stream) Music Night, broadcast from makeshift bedroom studios across the country. Even my parents were hooked!

There is a slightly jarring irony in the cliché that in adversity a community can come together; obviously we would all rather be enjoying our college as intended, minus the barrier of a computer screen, without the now-mandatory prefix of 'virtual' or 'socially distanced'. But I don't think I'm alone in thinking that our virtual JCR made lockdown that bit more bearable. It certainly helped keep me sane – my role as JCR President would really be a lot less enjoyable without the enthusiasm and inventiveness of the members of the JCR!

A Doll's House in 30 minutes



Manipulation, independence and female emancipation take centre stage as Ibsen's seminal work is shrunk down to doll-like proportions – and wins 'Best Director' – at Drama Cuppers. **Costanza Levy** (2019, Philosophy and Modern Languages) reports

Drama Cuppers is an opportunity for freshers to put on a play in the Burton Taylor Studio in Michaelmas Term. The cast can be no more than eight, the play cannot exceed 30 minutes, and students have just three weeks to put the show together. This year, the Exeter freshers chose to produce an adaptation of Ibsen's seminal work, *A Doll's House*.

A Doll's House depicts the breakdown of the marriage between Nora and her husband Helmer in 19th-century Norway. Our first challenge was condensing the script into 30 minutes whilst retaining the central themes of the play that we wanted to explore: manipulation, independence and female emancipation. We chose to retain most of the first and last scenes of the play, which highlight the shift in the power dynamics between Nora and Helmer, and condense the middle of the play by eliminating some characters and plot details to move the narrative along more quickly.

A collaborative approach to rehearsals was central to the success of the production. Four actors played Nora and two played Helmer, so it was key that we explored

the characters' intentions and developed their motifs as a group. We started by devising physical theatre sequences that would bring out the themes of the play, using Frantic Assembly's 'Chair Duets' exercise, as well as games inspired by puppetry as a starting point. What we created evolved to become movement sequences and gestures that would be used throughout the show to evoke the changing relationship between the protagonists.

Fifty Exonians came to support us on show night and Oxford University Drama Society shortlisted the play for the Cuppers final, where it won 'Best Director'. This award is a tribute to the collaborative approach and enthusiasm of the group during the rehearsal process. Interest in drama at Exeter this year has extended beyond freshers: Alice Wilson (2017, Literae Humaniores) wrote *A Few Forms of Fury*, which impressed at the Burton Taylor Studio in February, and featured Exonians working behind the scenes on set and lighting. The production explored themes of immortality and vengeance and was well received by students and the wider public.



As three colleges joined forces to produce a rich programme of music, readings, salsa, beatboxing, tipsy Shakespeare and eerie instrument experimentation, Turl Street Arts Festival President **Miqueas Lopez Woodward** (2018, Philosophy and Modern Languages) reflects on the sense of belonging that also comes from engaging in Oxford's creative activities

When each year reaches the mid-point of Hilary Term – a time considered College- and University-wide as the rock bottom of the year – the annual Turl Street Arts Festival (TSAF) returns for a period of around 10 days, offering a boost of morale, or at the very least, a bit of fun.

Back in September 2019, I was extremely excited to learn that I had been made President. Organisation began soon afterwards, as we assembled an executive committee: three of us from each of the Turl Street colleges. We got together a central committee of Head Arts Officers encompassing Music, Visual Arts, Drama, Dance, and Literature, as well as Graphics and Marketing and Communications, all from a range of different years and subjects across the colleges. In turn, they each had their own subcommittee, which put together a range of events to take place over 5th week of Hilary Term.

The TSAF Orchestra kicked off the opening ceremony with Price's Symphony No. 3 in C minor, and a diverse range of performances took place across the evening: Jesus College's a cappella vocal group Serenata, the Turl Street Festival Choir, and others, interspersed with poetry readings. Over the next 10 days, we held 22 events. From salsa and beatbox workshops, play-writing afternoons,

'instrumen-trials' (where people could walk in and try out a range of instruments, arguably the most exciting of which was a Theremin), and 'shit-faced Shakespeare improv night', to talks and seminars such as 'can art curate society?' and 'parody, pastiche, and piss-take', the festival lured in students who had never given a single thought to the idea of being involved in the arts. Despite the best attempts of the weather to sabotage the Brasenose Lane street fair, the rescheduled event went ahead to great success. On the last day of the event, 80 students from Exeter, Jesus and Lincoln colleges were crammed into Exeter Chapel to sing Stainer's Crucifixion after only a handful of rehearsals, leaving little room for a congregation.

It is telling that, outside of the festival, the only time I really spend time with students from other colleges is during orchestra rehearsals and socialising with Exeter College Chapel Choir. While my main reason for being here at Oxford is my course of study, it is the arts that have given me a real sense of belonging. TSAF introduced me to a world of people I never would have met otherwise, a world of people living just over the road.

Making opera truly contemporary

Fighting tyrannical governments, receiving inappropriate texts from the boss, and a selection of verbatim quotations from Donald Trump – Oxford Contemporary Opera Festival co-founder **Zerlina Vulliamy** (2017, Music) says three works created by students this year show opera is not the out-of-touch art form that some presume

It seems almost otherworldly to remember a time when we were able to perform in large groups of people on stage in front of audiences. Any former sense of community has become completely disconnected in these strange, isolating times, which makes reflections on the past ever more powerful. I have been looking back on some of the amazing things that I have been a part of during my time at Oxford – in particular, the productions of the Oxford Contemporary Opera Society. Founded in 2018 by me with two friends, our aim was to promote modern opera and provide a platform for students to create opera. After the sell-out production of *Marilyn Forever* in May 2019, our next project was based on new operas written and directed by students, an achievement not attempted before in Oxford.

The Oxford Contemporary Opera Festival, held in November, was the first all-encompassing opera festival to

take place in Oxford. It demonstrated the amazing talent of the student community, including composers, directors, and performers. The idea was to create and perform a range of different operas, all with modern and accessible narratives and themes pertinent to society today. There were three operas on the bill, each one about 20 minutes and all written and performed by students. In between each opera, the audience was invited to congregate in the auditorium and enjoy an exhibition of art and poetry, all commissioned especially and based on the operas' themes.

The Outsider is based on *L'Etranger* by Albert Camus, except the writers (Hani Elias and Marnie Shutter) changed the original story to reflect issues relevant to modern society. The story revolves around the trial for murder of Moselle de Beauvoir (Anna Townsend). To her defence come her lover Marie Sartre (Lorelei Piper) and her fierce



Left: Zhao Ng (Wadham College) as Tyranny in *Bou6*. Right: Paradis Farahati (Lady Margaret Hall) as Sandrine Boucher in *The Outsider*. Opposite: Tamsin Sandford-Smith (The Queen's College) as Susanna in *Susanna*

friend Sandrine Boucher (Paradis Farahati), facing off against the ghastly authoritarian Judge. The Judge is, significantly, the single male figure of the piece, armed with verbatim Donald Trump quotations that are used vindictively against the female characters. The Judge was played by the conductor of the piece, Chris O'Leary, who controlled and manipulated the dramatic and musical action from a balcony above the stage.

My own opera, *Susanna*, was inspired by the timeless classic, *The Marriage of Figaro*. Mozart's opera, with libretto by Lorenzo da Ponte, was considered revolutionary in the 18th century due to its mature and complex portrayal of social dynamics between servants and aristocrats. The eponymous character of Susanna was based on Mozart's Susanna, a wily and charismatic servant who receives unwanted attention from the Count. The 'modern' Susanna is ambitious and driven, working in an office, while Figaro (the main character in Mozart's opera) has been transported to the role of the comedic love-interest-cum-office-romance. When Susanna begins receiving inappropriate texts from a mysterious number (later revealed to be their boss), she starts to doubt herself and her actions. While she ultimately concludes that the situation was not her fault, this opera was my attempt at updating a classic into a modern setting, highlighting an issue that many women experience on a daily basis.

Bou6, by Israel Lai and Miuccia Chan, was inspired by a slogan on a banner erected at the heart of the Legislative Council of Hong Kong: 'there is no riot, only tyranny'. Freedom fighters had broken into the building to deliver the message that the people were not being represented.

When Susanna begins receiving inappropriate texts from a mysterious number, she starts to doubt herself and her actions

The opera is about more than the crisis in Hong Kong – it is a dialogue with all the tyrannical structures that exist in our society. Each character represents a group of people or concept: Tyranny (Zhao Ng), Riot (Maxime Cugnon de Sévricourt), Condemners (Oliver Black) and the Departed (Anna Townsend). The story re-contextualises ideas of government, anarchy and truth. Ultimately what happens in the opera is left to the imagination of the audience. *Bou6* is the Jyutping romanisation for a character that means violent, used as a slogan for the words for both riot and tyranny.

The Outsider, *Susanna* and *Bou6* are very different in their musical styles and narrative themes, but complement each other very well. A festival like this shows opera not to be the tired, elitist and out-of-touch art form that many presume it to be. As *The Cherwell* put it, 'All three operas were sophisticated musical reflections on contemporary issues, and strong promotions of opera as a socially relevant and emotionally powerful art form.'

Find out more at www.oxfordcontemporaryopera.com





Debut-year darts success

Exeter College Darts Club are game on for next season after strong performances throughout the year, reports **Sam Ritblat** (2019, Engineering)

Twelve months ago, Exeter didn't have a darts team. Just three terms later, we've made it to the final of the termly intercollegiate competitions in both Michaelmas and Hilary and been represented in the final of the Trinity Term socially distanced darts singles tournament by one of our players. Unfortunately, narrow losses in all three competitions have given us something of a reputation for being runners-up, for the time being at least. Have no fear that Exeter College Darts Club will be back stronger than ever in October.

It has been a true pleasure to play darts for my college, and I'm sure that everyone who has represented ECDC would agree. Captains Nick Whitley and Jack Hughes put huge

amounts of effort into putting out a team each week, with people from all backgrounds and darting abilities representing us at various points. By my count 23 people represented Exeter throughout the year: a fantastic group of men and women from freshers to fourth years, from people who'd never touched a dart before to those who play every day. The bottom line is that we are there to have fun. Our success is a testament to this mentality.

This article would be incomplete without mention of our fantastic support team: the people who would make the pilgrimage to Cirkus week in, week out to watch and cheer us on (we know you'd probably rather be working, so we appreciate the effort

even more!). It has been great to see people come together through sport like this.

On that note, we were contacted by a former Exon darts captain of the nineties, who was thrilled to see that we had made it to the final in Michaelmas and wanted to congratulate us. It brought a huge sense of pride to know that we are playing for a club with such heritage, with alumni who are invested in our success. This feeling of community is so unique to a college environment, and I think something from which we all benefit greatly.

It has been a wonderful year for ECDC and it looks like we are going from strength to strength. I can't wait for next year. Floreat Exon!



Sisters at war?

Exeter just makes it out on top in Cambridge as sister college Emmanuel hosts our annual sports contest, reports **Poppy Tollemache** (2019, English)

Exeter versus Emmanuel sports day: the battle of the colleges! Was this to be a casual, light-hearted day trip, or the perfect opportunity to, once and for all, confirm the widely held belief that Oxford really is better than Cambridge? Exeter's eager athletes prepared themselves for both eventualities.

Heavily armoured in sports gear, Exeter followed their leader Sam Ritblat, first year Engineering student and College darts champion, to the awaiting coaches. Excitement grew as teams were arranged and a refreshment schedule discussed. For many, this was their first experience of Cambridge; the group was lucky enough to get a tour of Emmanuel College's beautiful grounds, as well as a quick trip to Subway. Already the day was shaping up well.

We dispersed to find our Cambridge counterparts, who were eagerly waiting at various sports grounds around the city. As each team arrived, they received a friendly welcome from Emma's representatives. While a slight competitiveness was necessary, there was certainly no aggressive rivalry evident between the two institutions: an eye-opening trip for those who believed Cambridge to be the enemy. Everyone was able to get involved, whether they were a national

Lacrosse champion or had only just realised the sport is played with sticks. At the end of the day there were varying degrees of success and defeat, with Exeter just making it out on top. Hooray! An honourable mention must be given to Sophie Wakefield in Netball, Dan Gallagher in Football and Emma Ventura in Lacrosse, who were pivotal in Exeter's triumph.

The win, however, couldn't prevent the blushes of some of the Exonian group, notably those members of the Rugby team who forgot to bring a clean change of clothes to the showers and had to run half-dressed across the quad. The laugh this gave onlookers only served to strengthen the bond between the two colleges. The day was made complete by an evening out with our hosts.

The College owes huge thanks to Sam for all his hard work in organising this day and ensuring such a smooth and successful transition between events, no mean feat considering the wide dispersal of sports grounds. The trip was undoubtedly an overwhelming success and our new friends proved, despite the rumours, that it is in fact possible to have a fun night out in Cambridge.

A home from home



From Burns Night to Diwali, Exonians are always eager to celebrate and make students from every corner of the world feel at home, writes **Mhairi Tait** (2018, Philosophy and Modern Languages)

Despite hosting only a handful of Scottish staff and students, Exeter puts on an incredible Burns Night celebration every January – and this year was no exception.

I must admit, I was initially hesitant to attend a Burns Supper here in Oxford. I had a lingering concern that the traditions I had grown up with could be parodied, or worse, formalised in such a way that Robert Burns, the infamous merrymaker, wouldn't have approved of. Luckily this hesitation didn't last long, or I would have missed my chance at a ticket. This year, like many before, they sold out in a matter of hours.

As I heard the rousing call of the bagpipes echo in the front quad, I understood why the Burns Night formal has such an excellent reputation. Hall, as always, was decorated beautifully. The haggis, a

fine example of this great chieftain o' the puddin' race, was brought out on a silver dish and met by an impassioned performance of the Address from a fellow Scottish student. There was a real joy in seeing my home culture in the spotlight: it prompted discussion with friends about Scottish literature, language, and music. I revelled in the fact that, relative to context, I was an expert amid the brilliant chaos of the post-dinner ceilidh.

Of course, the Burns Night formal is just one of many wonderful, and invariably over-subscribed, cultural events held in Exeter's Hall. As Burns Night was for me, the celebrations honouring Thanksgiving, Diwali, and Chinese New Year are a much-appreciated taste of home for many among the Exeter community, as well as an occasion to engage with, and enjoy, foreign traditions for others.

It can be easy to forget just how diverse we are as a community at Exeter. The intensity of the Oxford experience has the power to unify us, highlighting our collective passions and introducing us to shared challenges. At times it may seem that, no matter where you are from, once you enter the Oxford bubble, you are swept into the Exon tribe, drawn into the rituals of Eights and carnations, and swiftly versed in the language of '*sub fusc*', both kinds of 'blues', and of course, the dreaded 'collections'.

However, the celebration of international cultural events, such as Burns Night, provides an important opportunity to acknowledge the value of our diversity and build on the rich, welcoming community we have here at Exeter.



We've all heard that no two individuals are alike. During the COVID-19 pandemic, this heterogeneity within the human population is more apparent than ever. During an infection, one could compare the immune system to an orchestra, regulating and activating cells in synchrony to confront the agonist at hand. This fragile balance can easily be disrupted should there be dysregulation within immune cells, leading to a collapse of the system's intended purpose. SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, appears to wreak havoc in the immune system of some individuals, while presenting as mild or asymptomatic in others. One of our topics of interest is understanding what the causes are behind this variation.

There are billions of white blood cells in the body and trying to parse out the effects the virus has on different cell types has posed a significant challenge in the field. In a similar manner, understanding the demographics of the average individual reveals far from the full picture of an entire population. Single-cell RNA sequencing (scRNA-seq) is an increasingly popular method used to address this challenge. The method enables us to study the gene expression of individual cells at an unprecedented resolution. By isolating white blood cells in droplets or nanowell, we can 'barcode' them akin to grocery stores labeling each item for the scanner, and subsequently

Pandemic polyphony

DPhil candidate **Nicholas Lim** (2019, Paediatrics) reveals how he is adapting his research into HIV to understand better why people respond so differently to SARS-CoV-2, with the aim ultimately to help inform therapeutic designs that will best suit different individuals

sequence the genes expressed by each cell.

My DPhil aims to use scRNA-seq and other related approaches to elucidate sex-differences in early life immunity and how it affects HIV infection. Due to the similarity in methodology, I found an opportunity to contribute to the research on SARS-CoV-2. By comparing patients of different age, sex, and disease severity, we would like to identify unique pathways and genes within these groups that potentially contribute to variation in the immune response to SARS-CoV2. We will further develop this study by comparing these patients to those that have been infected with influenza virus, another respiratory pathogen, in hopes that it will reveal unique factors contributed by the virus biology.

By employing scRNA-seq on SARS-CoV-2, we ultimately want to deconvolute the complex communication occurring in the body during infection. With the capability to distinguish variation within different cellular subsets and that of individuals, we are powered to construct correlated networks of differentially expressed genes and infer the relative development of cells within patients of various groups. Uncovering such attributes associated with disease progression has informed, and will continue to inform, decisions made in future therapies that aim to eliminate the COVID-19.

Goodbye to The Rose



At the start of the academic year, Exeter welcomed a new cohort of students from Williams College, Massachusetts. Sadly, like so many other students, their time in Oxford was cut short by the pandemic. Here three of this year's students reflect on the things they miss

Goodbye to The Rose

When I left Oxford I had to say goodbye to a café: The Rose. I met the shop on a rainy afternoon, and spent the year becoming myself within the faintly pink walls. I shared flower-red gossip with friends across the small tables. I fell in unconfessed love with a boy as light shined through the windows, catching the dew of feelings I'd spend months running away from. I cried into the soft petals of a scone alone, the owner offering me a small nod of empathy. When I said goodbye to The Rose, I whispered a soft goodbye to the place that held so many parts of me. A waitress gave me a small wave in return; I imagine the entirety of The Rose bloomed to see me off.

by **Bret Hairston** (2019, Williams)

A thread of many joys

I met my first friend at Oxford at Skogen Kitchen through a mutual friend of ours at Williams; over eggs and tea, we quickly discovered that we had a great deal in common. My time at Oxford feels like a blur, but also a thread of many joys, both small and large, strung together by food and laughter. This may sound cliché, but the moment where you collectively decide with your friends to temporarily abandon your homework and run to Tesco or Co-op to grab ice cream, crisps, and pizza is a magical one.

by **Audrey Koh** (2019, Williams)

Dawn chorus

Every morning, I wake up to the same sounds. It is not just the music I've compiled on a Spotify playlist for morning time. It is the music of the Summertown bus that pulls in too close to the curb, the sound of a man's headphones onboard. It is the decompression of air as the bus doors open, the thud of feet on Ship Street, the intermingling sound of chatter as I walk to the Turl, as I open the door to the Missing Bean, as I hear my name – Dominic or Dom – shouted back at me from a friend I've run into. Perhaps I miss mornings most because mornings at Oxford were filled with possibilities.

by **Dominic Madera** (2019, Williams)

Illustration: The Rose, by Crystal Ma (2019, Williams), drawn with Bret's words in mind



Making memories in Massachusetts

Rachel Muir (2018, History) reports on a trip to America's leading liberal arts college, Williams College, Massachusetts, where both the weather and the welcome were warmer than expected

When we woke up to a (thin) blanket of snow on the first morning in Massachusetts, little did we know that within a week it would be up to 17 degrees. Although I had gone expecting blizzard conditions, this mild weather was not the most unexpected thing about our trip to Williams College, Massachusetts.

Firstly, we were all a bit shocked about how quiet the town was, especially when we arrived the day before everyone was due back for Winter Study. Compared to the tourist bustle of Oxford, it felt like a step back in time, especially visiting the single-screen, independent cinema to watch *Little Women* on our first night. Despite Williamstown being small and quiet, we found plenty to do and were amazed by the huge art scene in this small town in rural Massachusetts. We took a 15-minute walk (which our hosts found surprising!) down to the Clark Art Institute on our first full day there and found an array of pieces by the likes of Degas, Renoir and Turner. The following weekend we took a trip to the neighbouring town of North Adams to explore the biggest contemporary art museum in the US, MASS MoCA.

We also embraced the physical activities Williams College has to offer, making the most of their gym and Olympic-size swimming pool, and taking part in a sunrise hike up one of the many mountains

surrounding the town. Entering into the spirit of an American college education, we also attended ice hockey and basketball games, which were very entertaining.

However, the thing that shocked me the most about Williams College was how nice all the people were, from the professors to the students, including the 2018/19 WEPO (Williams at Exeter Programme in Oxford) students who we got to catch up with. Both in class and out, the Williams students tried to include us wherever they could, inviting us to house parties and even driving us to Bennington, Vermont in our quest to tick another state off our list. In the journalism course I took the format was much more collaborative than at Oxford, which gave me a great opportunity to get to know the students in my class. Although I missed out on a trip to New York, I did get the fantastic opportunity to meet travel photographer Ben Brody who came to give a talk to the class.

On our final day we got the opportunity to spend a few hours exploring Boston which, for a history student studying the American Revolution this year, was very exciting. Overall, our trip to Williams College was undoubtedly one to remember and we are very grateful to that community for having us and for being so welcoming.

Break point in South Africa

For **Hayyu Imanda** (2018, Cyber Security) a dream trip to play tennis in Cape Town turned into a nightmare when the COVID-19 crisis left her stranded and alone, thousands of miles from home

'Though this story might not sound like one, it was an entirely positive experience. There is an incredible amount of kindness in this world.'

That is the view of Hayyu Imanda, an Exeter DPhil candidate, and she's well placed to judge. Her trip to South Africa in March, to represent Oxford in the Lawn Tennis Club's annual tour, left her stranded and alone, 6,000 miles from home.

'This year's Blues tour was planned for 10 days in Cape Town,' Hayyu explains. 'Our excitement fell when we arrived in our transit airport. The South African president had just declared a national state of disaster and a travel ban for nationals from high risk countries, including the UK.'

Unlikely to be admitted to South Africa, Hayyu's British teammates returned to the UK on the first available flight. But for her – an Indonesian citizen – the picture was less clear. Hayyu spoke to airline staff and was told if she chose to fly back to the UK she would incur considerable cost, as she wasn't officially prohibited from entering South Africa. But if she flew to Cape Town and was refused entry, the

airline would fly her back to London at no cost to her.

'With a split-second decision, I hugged my friends goodbye – the last I would give anyone for months – and boarded the plane to Cape Town. On arrival, the border officer welcomed me with the widest, friendliest smile. "Now what," I asked myself.

'I had to wait for my return flight anyway, so I decided to explore, socially distanced. I witnessed the appalling remnants of apartheid, drove to the south-westernmost point of the continent, hiked up mountains, and saw giraffes, whales, seals and even penguins. It might sound like an incredible time. The fact was I was by myself, in a foreign country with no-one I knew, in the middle of a pandemic.'

When Hayyu's return flight was cancelled, she immediately booked a flight to Indonesia. A six-hour delay didn't worry her: 'I'm sure they'll connect me on the next flight from the transit airport,' she calmly reassured her mother. But the next thing she knew, the airline announced it was grounding its planes, and Hayyu was stuck. 'All possibilities of flying out

evaporated – my tears started, and in desperation I messaged the Consul for Consular Affairs at the Indonesian Consulate, who told me South Africa would enter a national lockdown in three days' time. Hotels were unhappy about my travel history, and I had nowhere to go.'

To Hayyu's immense relief, help was at hand. 'I was driven to the residence of the Consul General to Indonesia in Cape Town. They had a room for me ready, and the Consul General informed me I could stay until able to leave. They knew nothing of me, apart from me being a student on a tourist visa. In fact, the only thing they cared about was that I was an Indonesian citizen. In the Consul General's words: "This residence belongs to the country, not me. Here, you are a guest of Indonesia, but so am I. You have every right to be here.'"

Hayyu was given access to all of the residence's facilities. She worked on her DPhil, enjoyed gripping conversations with the Consul General and his wife at mealtimes, and witnessed some of the challenges the diplomat faced: 'Indonesian seafarers were flown on



Left: The Consul General's residence, nestled below Table Mountain. Top: Enjoying braai at the residence. Bottom: The start of the long journey home

a Japanese repatriation flight and, with coordination with the Japanese government, allowed to board a flight home. Tragically, one seafarer lost his life at sea and a funeral at a Muslim cemetery in Cape Town had to be arranged without any family present. Other stranded travellers had to stay indefinitely with family members.'

Cared for though she was, when the chance of a repatriation flight to

Indonesia arose Hayyu leapt at it: 'I said goodbye to the people I shared the past six weeks with, sad to leave what felt like my family in Cape Town, but very happy to be reunited with mine at home. I couldn't do anything but thank them, and I'm not sure I'll ever be able to repay their kindness.'

The journey home included an 18-hour bus journey with police escort, the first ever flight from Johannesburg

to Denpasar, a reception from the Indonesian military and Ministry of Health, with all the necessary virus screening, and a final flight to Jakarta. Hayyu met fellow Indonesians, all with their own stories to tell: seafarers, business people and travellers delighted to go home; a woman devastated to say goodbye to her South African husband, unable to join her until non-residents were permitted in Indonesia once again. Their aeroplane returned to Johannesburg carrying stranded South Africans from Jakarta and Bali, and everyone – including the crew of volunteers – was quarantined for two weeks.

'On landing, I shed a few tears of relief. It was finally over. I completed my 14-day self-isolation in my family home, thankfully with no issues, spent Eid with my family, and flew back to Oxford two months later.

'What was supposed to be a 10-day trip to Cape Town turned into three-and-a-half months away, with many new experiences, lessons learned, and lifelong friendships. I was completely dependent on others, yet I received nothing but kindness and warmth. I am eternally grateful.'

Interview by Matt Baldwin,
Communications Officer

The journey home included an 18-hour bus journey with police escort, the first ever flight from Johannesburg to Denpasar, and a reception from the Indonesian military and Ministry of Health



READ LIKE A BUTTERFLY, WRITE LIKE A BEE



Honorary Fellow Sir Philip Pullman (1965, English) took his audience on a journey to real and imaginary worlds during a talk in November, reports **Libby Nicholls** (2018, English)

When Sir Rick Trainor opened Sir Philip Pullman's (1965, English) seminar, 'Read like a butterfly, write like a bee', he pointed out that 'even if he doesn't need an introduction, I think he deserves one.' Indeed, Pullman's successful career speaks for itself, and has contributed much to Exeter's literary reputation, situated amidst greats such as Alan Bennett (1954, Modern History) and J.R.R. Tolkien (1911, Classics and English). It is safe to say that the Exeter Honorary Fellow's works – notably the *His Dark Materials* trilogy and subsequent trilogy *The Book of Dust* (the final instalment of which Pullman is working on currently) – have encouraged many prospective students over the years to apply to the college that was the inspiration for Lyra's Jordan.

The popularity of this Rector's Seminar is testament to Pullman's acclaim; tickets disappeared quickly, with many bustling at the door on the day trying to get in – I myself was lucky enough to attend the talk only when a friend could no longer make it, and kindly offered me her space. And I'm glad I did manage to hear Pullman's inspiring discussion on his experience of 'reading like a butterfly'.

Despite admitting that 'the kind of reading the course seemed to expect was not butterfly reading', Pullman's time at Oxford as an undergraduate nevertheless proved to be an important influence on his writing. I was particularly struck by his ability to quote lengthy passages of intricate poetry, ranging from Milton's *Paradise Lost* to T.S. Eliot's *The Journey of the Magi*; it is unsurprising that his own prose maintains inherent qualities of poeticism and fantasy.

Sir Philip went on to give insight into his career and growth as an author: 'writing like a bee'. He revealed that the stories for some of his novels first began as plays, written for performance at the school at which he taught. One such example is *The Ruby in the Smoke*, which he described as 'the first book where I found my voice.' Perhaps one of the most poignant things to issue from Pullman's talk was his clear love for stories, of which he said: 'it's something I have never tired of.' And his stories have certainly proved compelling. So much so, that many of his works have been adapted several times. *His Dark Materials*, for example, has been given life as a stage play, a radio dramatisation, a

major cinematic production, and now as an acclaimed BBC/HBO television series starring Daphne Keen, James McAvoy and Ruth Wilson, which premiered last November and has a second series airing this autumn. Pullman offered a very diplomatic answer when asked about his thoughts on New College being used for most of the scenes depicting Jordan in the television adaptation, rather than Exeter. Although he argued it was out of his control, being the producer's decision, I like to think he is secretly just as annoyed about New being used for Jordan as we students at Exeter are.

In this uncertain, and perhaps isolated, time of the COVID-19 pandemic, I feel it's vital that we remind ourselves of the importance of stories, and their ability to connect people and worlds. Philip Pullman exemplified this perfectly in his talk for the Rector's Seminar Series, and it is wonderful to see that his curiosity in reading has been such an inspiration to him, and has fed his fantastic career as an author. Though 'reading like a butterfly' might appear to be an individual act, especially at the moment, I have found it actually does much to bring the community together.

It's vital that we remind ourselves of the importance of stories, and their ability to connect people and worlds



Empty pews, full hearts

*'All shall be well, and all manner of
things shall be well.'*

As the COVID crisis put a stop to Exeter's thrice-weekly Chapel services, the Chaplain of Exeter College, the **Reverend Andrew Allen**, is heartened by a new sense of energy and community that has been nurtured as the Choir, prayers and readings went online

Julian of Norwich spent the last 30 or so years of her life in a cell – a small collection of rooms attached to the church of St Julian in Norwich. Her real name is unknown. She lived in the second half of the 14th century at a time when plague and pestilence and other threats to life were common. She spent much of her life reflecting on a vision ['a shewing'] she experienced of both the joy and sorrows that flowed from the passion of Christ, yet with an overwhelming sense of hope, summarised in her famous words, 'all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well.'

These are words which resonate during this COVID pandemic, because all certainly is not well. I am writing this in July, when the global death count is approximately 700,000 people; when economies are collapsing, when every aspect of our lives, from how we do our food shopping, get medical attention, or visit friends has to be surveyed, analysed and adapted to ever changing governmental guidelines.

We often deal with problems by sharing them: sharing with friends, with family, with the communities we find ourselves in and have built up. Part of my pastoral training at theological college was the importance of the proverbial 'having a cup of tea' as a way in to unpacking issues. Yet the COVID crisis has prevented us from doing that. Or at least, it did initially. In early March I'd never heard of Zoom or Microsoft Teams, nor, I'm sure, had many of *Exon's* readers. As the Easter Vacation developed, and it became clear that Trinity Term was going to be online, it became apparent that as many parts of College life as possible needed to be adapted for this medium.

Having been convinced by several students to officiate(?) or conduct online services, I have been astounded by how they've been received. Not only by those listening, but the eagerness of people to contribute, either by singing, reading, writing prayers, or by editing, mixing, and producing. Our Choir have been tremendous: each week they were sent the organ recording, a vocal recording, and some notes on the music they had to record. Much of the sparkle or polish given to the Choir's performances comes from their response to the conductor, usually no more than eight feet away from them. Yet through their perseverance, and the ever-growing technical skills of Christopher Holman, the junior organ scholar, music was produced. There was, to my ear, something poignant and deeply moving about these performances; some of the texts are ancient, some settings very modern, all written in response to different situations, and performed and produced in very strange circumstances. Yet, that some form of normality was being continued – albeit online, and not the thrice weekly services – helped to nourish and comfort those who listened. Past and present singers united, as we drew on

the Choir's extensive recording archives to provide a variety of music for the different themes and moods of the services.

Spending time in isolation has stripped out many of the activities that fill our diaries; this space, coupled with the threats to life that the pandemic represents, has perhaps caused us to think more about our lives, the ways we usually live, and how we might change them in the light of the experiences of this year. But often to do this we need to draw on external stimuli, and explore where the internal and external meet. This could be called spirituality, which is always one of my hopes that chapel services can nurture. When you've had a rough day and spend 45 minutes in the warm and candlelit chapel, listening to the Psalms, seeing the Choir do their thing, or just being away from work can provide some help. And although this has not been possible during the last term, a new sense of community has grown, yet rooted in the familiar. So, we have been able to reflect on the death of George Floyd and Black Lives Matter, as well as exploring ideas of support, challenge, and hope, as we would, were we gathered in the Gilbert Scott Chapel.

By broadcasting the services, not only were we able to reach a wider audience (could they be called congregation?), but also provide, on several levels, ways of responding to Julian's call: 'All shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well'. The American-Hungarian Jewish queer theorist Judith Butler has written much about how humans process change, fear, and challenges. When faced with uncertainty we seek to find comfort in places of familiarity – even if those places are not always filled with good association. Her point is that familiarity is preferred over uncertainty. So, perhaps, our online chapel services provided for many a sense of familiarity – memories of College, especially evoked through the stunning photos of the College which illustrated the videos. Perhaps fond memories of climbing the tower for a glimpse of Oxford awaking in a late spring morning is one of the reasons why choral mattins for Ascension Day has almost 2,500 views on the Choir's Facebook page (www.facebook.com/ExeterChoirOxford). Or, for the many people with little or no connection to the College, the music, the liturgy, the energy of people actively creating in an otherwise bleak and dismal time.

We will continue to face many challenges and opportunities in our lives, some related to the pandemic, many not. But there is a sense that there has been something of a need for a spiritual response to the situations in which we find ourselves. And, as a priest, with supportive colleagues, excellent choir and student helpers, these are also exciting times, as we continue to explore what's important in our lives, and how the communities we belong to – including ones where faith plays a role – can be beneficial.



Rector Kenneth Wheare's portrait, by William Edward Narraway, hangs in Hall

A family affair

From stoking the College boiler to eavesdropping on Alan Bennett's JCR sermons and Elizabeth Taylor's make-up demonstrations, Tom Wheare – son of Sir Kenneth Wheare, who was Rector from 1956 to 1972 – shares fond memories of growing up at Exeter

When my father became Rector in 1956 he brought with him five children. Patrick, his eldest, was already an undergraduate at Lincoln, but the rest of us were school age or less, with Henry, the youngest, aged only four. I was at the Dragon and Katie and Philippa were at Oxford High, so there was a daily exodus through the Back Quad as we made our way North to Bardwell Road and beyond. Rector Barber's family had left home before he retired, so the arrival of four children was something of a shock to the College system.

Living in Exeter meant that we were pretty much the only children 'on the block'. The Heads of Trinity, Balliol, Jesus and Lincoln all had grown-up families and nobody much else lived right in the centre of Oxford. This splendid

isolation was particularly marked at Christmas when the College was shut for several days and we had the complete run of the place. My mother, always more daring than we were, would urge us to explore the roofs and my father would enlist our 'assistance' in keeping the coke-fuelled college boiler alive during the absence of its regular keeper.

Mr Cantwell, one of the scouts, was always very kind to us, and the Porters regarded us with a Dixon of Dock Green air, benevolent but wary, since they had enough problems with the larks of the undergraduates, nearly all post-National Service men, without having children running around the place. The 'College servants' illustrated an interesting social phenomenon. To the undergraduates they were 'Jack';

to the dons they were 'Cantwell'; but to us they were 'Mr Cantwell'. They were, nevertheless, probably the nearest forms of life to us, since the dons were a rarefied menagerie and the 'men', as Dad called them, were glamorous, confident and self-assured. When the era of the National Servicemen was past, the undergraduate population visibly changed, and Dad now called them the 'boys'.

The dons were, as I say, a different species. Dacre Balsdon, in addition to being the most conspicuous in and around the College, was also the one most affected by our arrival since he lived above the Lodgings and was inescapably aware of our ups and downs. Henry was, at times, quite difficult and there were



The Wheare family

fairly frequent rows. These would sometimes cause Dacre to lower a basket of sweets down from his balcony into our garden in the hopes of ameliorating the situation. Henry was also given to tricycling round the quads, regularly dropping into the Still Room to commission tea and sandwiches from Marge, until finally the Bursar suggested he should sign chitties on his personal battels. My own contribution to domestic unease was to frequent the organ loft in Chapel, where I would play my limited repertoire of hymns and simple pieces over and over again. My sisters were much less inclined to breach the peace, and so, although like Lyra they knew their way round the College roofs, they did not spit plum stones over the parapets onto those below.

To our childish eyes, Dacre rather resembled Mr Toad and one could easily see how Lewis Carroll could have used the senior members of Christ Church as the characters in

When Fellows ventured to complain about any of my mother's irregularities, Dad would say to them, 'she's a grown woman, talk to her yourself'. They never did.

the stories he told to Alice. Dacre's striking tones could be heard echoing round the back quad as he set off to play squash and he looked like a very exhausted Toad as he perspired his way back through the Broad Street wicket gate and set off up Palmer's Tower to his rooms.

This sense of living in a world of make-believe was confirmed by the summer plays that were regularly performed in the Fellows' Garden. I vividly remember *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* and I actually took part in a production of *Oedipus Rex*, translated and directed by Professor Trypanis, in the Taylorian Institute.

He wrote an accompanying satyr play which starred an undergraduate called Blewitt in an outrageously camp performance as the Sphinx. These were, needless to say, in the days of the 'men' not the 'boys', as were Alan Bennett's Sunday evening sermons in the JCR. It was possible to creep along to the end of our garden and eavesdrop on his parody of the sermon preached in Chapel earlier that evening, perhaps by the Chaplain, the lugubrious Eric Kemp, another don who would have held his own in the world of classic children's literature. Nevill Coghill, who rather resembled an old donkey, was also a Fellow when

This ramshackle unofficial charity, which housed among others a future Irish Bishop and the pop group Status Quo, raised enough money to build Taylor House in Headington



Alan Bennett (extreme left) performing his monologues in the JCR in 1957

we arrived, and he brought Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor to a party in the Lodgings. My mother only invited undergraduates, bitterly disappointing several Fellows' wives, who might perhaps have benefitted from the diminutive Miss Taylor standing on one of the sofas demonstrating how she put on her eye make-up. Another visitor who put the furniture through its paces was Archbishop Fisher, a small and vigorous man who sat down into an armchair with immense reverse thrust.

The 'men' got the best out of my parents. Dad found it a welcome return

to his years as a resident don at Univ, where he was when I was born, and my mother's informal style of entertaining suited them well. The highpoint of this was the series of hot dog and beer parties in our drawing room which would always develop into a sing-song with the Organ Scholar at the piano and, on one memorable occasion, Dudley Moore as guest artist. These parties were noisy and would spill out into the back quad, which did not please everybody. When Fellows ventured to complain about this or any of my mother's other irregularities, Dad would say to them, 'she's a grown woman, talk to her yourself'.

Nevill Coghill interviews Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor in Oxford



They never did. The parties were written up in the *New Yorker*, but they stopped, like so many other things, when the 'men' became 'boys'.

It was a wonderful thing to grow up in Exeter and it was probably

the 'College servants' who made the greatest impression on us. Mr Taylor, for instance, the Clerk of Works, was a man of patrician demeanour who looked like a Duke down from his Derbyshire estates to review the progress of the family college. He was a leading light in the Cheshire Homes which inspired the housing-cum-squatting group my mother organised in empty University property. The impact on the Back Quad was considerable – jumble sales, piles of old furniture and regular solicitations of assistance from any unwary passer-by 'just' to give a hand moving wardrobes, armchairs and sofas into the back of our Austin Maxi. This ramshackle unofficial charity, which housed among others a future Irish Bishop and the pop group Status Quo, raised enough money to build Taylor House in Headington, from which severely disabled students could attend the University or the Polytechnic.

The Porters and all the domestic staff, such as Mr Hobbes the SCR butler, a wizard on 'the spoons', and the various Masseys in the Buttery, all showed great kindness to the resident *ragazzi*. When Katie got married in the College in 1969, marking the end of her very happy Exeter childhood, it genuinely was a family affair.



Droplets of the sun

From privilege to purpose: City trader-cum-social entrepreneur **Hamza Farrukh** (2013, Williams) wrote his first grant application for a solar-based water filter system one evening at the Bodleian after an afternoon of cricket. Now his charity has provided an estimated 20 million cups of safe water to communities in Pakistan and South Sudan, won global recognition and has big plans to grow its impact

Daniel is the youngest of three siblings and lives on The Episcopal Church compound in Yei City, South Sudan. Hardly three, Daniel busied himself with his fire truck and flashed his infectious smile every few minutes as I interviewed his mother about the water crisis in Yei. The youngest country in the world found independence after 22 years of civil war – the scars of years past are exacerbated by the lack of resources as almost 45% of the population in the independent South Sudan lack access to safe water. I am thankful to Water Is Basic (a borehole drilling organisation in South Sudan) and its leaders the Archbishop Elias Taban and Steve Roese, as well as the hospitable people of South Sudan, for the opportunity to hear these stories.

Daniel is too young to understand the big bad world around him, but very soon, like generations before him, he will have to exchange his fire truck for a five-gallon jerry; he will substitute hours in the classroom for the merciless morning sun while fetching water for his mother and siblings.

In many ways, Daniel's story is all too familiar for me, having grown up in the 14th most water-scarce nation in the world, Pakistan. Eighteen million people in Pakistan lack access to safe water and my ancestral village of Jurr in Punjab is one example. I founded Bondh E Shams ('droplets of the sun') in the hope of resolving my own community's battle with safe water. I wrote my first grant application for a solar-based water filter system one evening at the Bodleian after an afternoon of cricket at Oxford Club. We have come a long way since and have reached 14 off-grid villages in

I refuse to wait for the tired wheels of global, intra-governmental water management response to take effect

Pakistan and two in South Sudan, including Daniel's family; we have provided an estimated 20 million cups of safe water to water-scarce communities and hope to reach thousands more.

Our primary tool in this fight for safe water is a transportable, solar-powered water filtration unit that can be installed in under seven minutes on any existing water source. We call it the OASIS Box (Off-grid Aqua Solar Integration System), and it houses a combination of advanced water filters, renewable solar power, and an IKEA-style installation design that makes the unit vastly scalable. The system includes data sensors that measure daily water production for radically transparent donor reporting. Nine more are under production this summer to provide 50,000 more people with clean water; the OASIS Box is pending patent approval in the United States.

Hamza's TEDx talk on solving the world's water crisis has been viewed almost 100,000 times



I still consider our work a relatively new enterprise, yet to accomplish widespread adoption; however, my team has shown exceptional promise and has attracted global praise, including a Points of Light Award in 2020 from 10 Downing Street, first place at the Goldman Sachs Impact Fund (winning \$150,000 in grant funding), the Diana Award 2019, in memory of the late Princess of Wales, and several write-ups by notable publications. I was also listed in the Forbes 30Under30 cohort and gave a TEDx Talk last March, which has since been viewed almost 100,000 times.

Perhaps what brings me even deeper contentment is that apart from the engineers on our OASIS manufacturing plant, my management team consists exclusively of volunteers who balance their day jobs in the City with impact work with Bondh E Shams. I, myself, spend 10 to 12 hours each day on Europe's largest trading floor at Goldman Sachs in London. By evening, I play the role of the Founder and CEO of Bondh E Shams. I often get asked why a corporate

employee would spend most of his coveted 'free' hours volunteering, and conversely why the founder of a successful non-profit should toil behind the monstrosity that is Excel? The answer is simple: because the need for safe water in communities like mine or Daniel's is urgent and I refuse to wait for the tired wheels of global, intra-governmental water management response to take effect; we are paying the price with our present and future and need coordinated, scalable and swift action. With the advent of social media and easier peer-to-peer coordination, I think those of us in positions of relative financial or educational privilege could do more to join the movement of impact makers around the world and fill the vacuum left by inadequate governmental response and climate deniers. To that extent, I welcome any in the Williams, Exeter or Oxford community to join me at Bondh E Shams. Please feel free to contact me directly through LinkedIn or reach out to my team through our website. I look forward to, without hyperbole, saving lives together.

I often get asked why a corporate employee would spend most of his coveted 'free' hours volunteering, and conversely why the founder of a successful non-profit should toil behind the monstrosity that is Excel?



A community that deserves more than our applause

Petrifying to start with, COVID-19 changed attitudes, broke down silos and fostered pride and kinship in the NHS, but also highlighted crucial issues that need to be resolved, says **Dr Aamir Saifuddin** (2005, Physiological Sciences)

The COVID-19 pandemic was always going to have a huge effect on community and camaraderie in the NHS. There was a real risk that the unknown and the sheer workload would dissolve any bonds, with tired colleagues passing each other in corridors at the beginning or ends of their respective shifts, quietly reflecting on the horrors they had witnessed or were about to experience, with little time to properly process either. Even though many contingency plans were being developed in the background, the reality of clinical work during COVID was entirely unpredictable. I wrote on the Exeter

College website in April about how petrifying the stories from Italy and Spain had been, with everyone scared that we'd be putting people on life support machines in the corridor and clinicians would simply be scrambled to the parts of hospital most in need as things became busier.

Despite this, a real sense of community started to evolve throughout King's College Hospital in London, where I was working during the pandemic. With plans of staff redeployment across the Trust, there was a feeling that everyone was being called on to 'do their bit'. In my COVID simulation session,



Each week people across the country made public demonstrations of support for keyworkers

It was emotional to see everyone rallying round... no one was going to be left to deal with this awful turn of events by themselves

an unlikely partnership formed between an orthopaedic surgeon and a sexual health nurse who had been tasked with reviving a dying mannequin, with dermatologists and recently qualified junior doctors offering advice from the sidelines. One nurse explained how she had only joined King's a week ago and was regretting her decision – she had been recruited as a fracture nurse and was suddenly being thrust into environments where she may need to help resuscitate someone, whilst exposing herself to a deadly virus. After her scenario, she gained a huge round of applause and was welcomed heartily into the King's family. It was emotional to see everyone rallying round and to appreciate how no one was going to be left to deal with this awful turn of events by themselves.

This moment summed up perfectly the change in attitude triggered by COVID. Hospitals can be quite territorial and

hierarchical places, and silos often form within different specialty or clinician groups. However, the redeployment saw some of the most junior doctors helping nurses in Intensive Care, consultants helping on proning teams (turning patients onto their fronts to help their breathing), liver research specialists using their expertise to run COVID trials, endoscopy and paediatric nurses working on adult COVID wards, and specialty doctors, like me, joining the general medical team to run COVID wards, admit and treat sick patients in A+E overnight and lead cardiac arrest situations. So-called 'interim FY1s' – medical students who had passed Finals only weeks before – were asked to bolster the workforce and, in my opinion, represented some of the bravest protagonists in this drama. It was a pleasure to supervise them and humbling that they feel a sense of NHS pride and kinship so early in their careers.

The silos were broken down and the sense of community was palpable. Wellbeing hubs were created where all staff could convene away from the wards (with social distancing) and share their unique experiences. And the well-known 'medical banter' remained ever-present and even increased during this time, perhaps as a coping mechanism for what was happening.

The togetherness was maybe most evident during public displays of gratitude, such as when a senior nurse was leaving the hospital after suffering from COVID for many months and hundreds of colleagues gathered to



Aamir Saifuddin (left, also pictured inset) and two endoscopy nurses wear personal protective equipment

An unlikely partnership formed between an orthopaedic surgeon and a sexual health nurse tasked with reviving a dying mannequin, with dermatologists offering advice from the sidelines



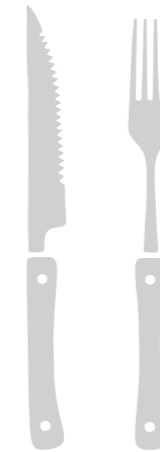
share well-wishes. The Thursday *Claps for Keyworkers* were also heart-warming and my family looked forward to it each week to show their appreciation for the sacrifices made by NHS staff and other keyworkers, who put themselves in potential danger whilst trying to keep the country safe. My nearly 90-year-old aunt, a retired GP, would leave her front door and sit in a chair on her patio only once a week to bang a pan with a wooden spoon to show her support, and my sister would ensure passing bus drivers and police officers received applause.

I think it was great how the country came together like this. However, another view, held by many NHS workers in particular, is that a few minutes of applause each week simply clouds other crucial issues: chronic healthcare underfunding, deficiencies in personal protective equipment, and a lack of appropriate financial compensation for those risking their and their households' lives to help others. This is particularly

relevant for our less well-paid nursing and carer colleagues. They have the most direct and prolonged patient contact and work longer shifts, leaving them more prone to infection, but they have much less prominence when it comes to lobbying for extra pay. I, like many, have found *Claps for Keyworkers* a unifying and powerful feature of the pandemic. But I do agree that this relatively superficial action should have more significant influence. It should demonstrate how much the public values the NHS and compel politicians to make material changes that can resolve issues and make it easier for staff to provide invaluable high-quality care whilst demand and, therefore, workload, continues to soar, notwithstanding the unique pressures of a pandemic.

It is this sense of community that makes the NHS an incredible organisation to work within. I am extremely proud to be part of it.

Furloughed Foodies



As the COVID-19 crisis escalated, Floris ten Nijenhuis (2011, Modern Languages) knew he had to act. **Hannah Morris** (2019, English) spoke to him to discover how he provided medical teams with thousands of home-cooked, healthy meals to sustain them in the fight against the disease

You're on the front line in the fight against COVID. Working shifts at all hours, the hospital canteen is often closed, or you are barred from it altogether in case you are unknowingly contagious. You're working flat out on six hours' sleep, lacking energy and presented with vending machines full of sugary snacks. You long for a hearty meal. Furloughed Foodies has the solution.

Furloughed Foodies is an initiative that sprang up at the beginning of lockdown. Following a conversation with his friend Max Brodermann, an A+E doctor working in London during the crisis, alumnus Floris ten Nijenhuis recognised the need of NHS staff working 12-hour shifts, facing significant risks, with limited access to nutritious meals.

Skilled in the kitchen and eager to make an immediate difference, Floris began cooking and delivering meals. The medical staff he met looked exhausted. Some had contracted COVID-19 and were back at work the moment they recovered, though barely fit.

Floris quickly realised his method was neither scalable nor efficient enough to meet the need. At the same time, he knew there were hundreds of furloughed staff who were looking for a positive way to spend their lockdown. So he stopped cooking and took up admin in order to expand his initiative. A week after making an Instagram account, 200 people had volunteered to help, and this soon grew to 800. Furloughed staff became chefs and chauffeurs, making up 60% of the

volunteers. The cooks prepared 30 healthy homemade meals at a time, before drivers collected the food and delivered it to hospitals. Over 25,000 meals were consumed.

Floris and his team of volunteers maintained a community-led approach to their work so they could prioritise feeding as many people as possible with immediate effect. The project was consistently run with only a week's worth of money in the bank. Volunteer reimbursement for food and petrol was understandingly accepted late, as helping the NHS was key. Floris's philosophy helped drive the operation's success: 'You have to trust people,' he says. 'Every volunteer should be named co-founder.'

Delivery, Floris says, was the best part. Although it could be stressful, everything feels worthwhile in the instant of a smile. Stuck at home, listless and unsure how to pass the time, some people might ask 'Why would I spend an hour driving to a hospital and an hour driving back?' Floris saw people return with the biggest grins across their faces, having received a phone call on the way back: 'This food is delicious!' Their response, invariably: 'When can I volunteer again?'

Furloughed Foodies is on hold for the moment, now that hospitals are quieter and better equipped for the challenge. But his recent experiences have shown Floris how quickly you can make a huge impact when people pull together, and Furloughed Foodies is ready to jump back into operation should the need arise.

‘We ain’t no slaves, this is England’



US troops enjoying an entertainment show at Bodmin Barracks are clearly segregated

Five years before the arrival of the Windrush, British communities witnessed, and stood up to, the blatant racism inflicted upon African American soldiers by their own compatriots. It’s a story that **Kate Werran** (1991, *Modern History*) has turned into a book, but which she first encountered as a child holidaying in Cornwall 40 years ago, when she put her fingers in decades-old bullet holes...

Who would have thought that a child tracing their fingers over forgotten bullet holes scored into Cornish bricks and mortar might eventually lead to new notions of ‘community’ in war-time Britain? Certainly not me, but I felt for myself the evidence one hazy Kodak moment in the early 1980s and began teetering along on an exploratory path I have only just completed with the publication of my findings – *An American Uprising in Second World War England: Mutiny in the Duchy*. The marks were left in September 1943 when a company of armed African American soldiers marched three abreast to Launceston’s war memorial to confront the white military policemen who came to represent everything egregious and unfair about their horrific experience of the American army to date. For nearly 80 years these stone scratches were the sole reminder of a shocking all-American firefight between black and white GIs that symbolised the hidden racial inequality, tension and violence that came with the segregated Jim Crow army to the United Kingdom. My journey, and therefore my book, has made me re-evaluate three ‘communities’ in 1943 – the American Army, the British home front and the one formed when parts of both entities came together.

The mutiny’s subsequent trial became headline news in October 1943, caused Churchill himself ‘grave anxiety’ and cost at least one of the US journalists who wrote about it his job. My view of the first community – the American Army – started to change the moment a never before accessed transcript of the court martial arrived on my doorstep. It soon became clear that the mutiny was a demonstration

against the general lot of the African American soldier in the US Army – about one in 10 men in 1943 – fighting for a freedom they were themselves denied back home. The bigotry and discrimination these Launceston ‘mutineers’ faced shone through the redacted document: the blanket denial of rest and recreation in camp or town for any black recruit; the coercion used to extract ‘confessions’, and the ability to convict despite the flimsiest of evidence and because of the shoddiest defence. It was no coincidence that starting in Los Angeles, race riots exploded coast to coast in America during the long, hot summer of 1943. Inevitably, civic tension caused by the inequality in housing and jobs that was blown wide open by the Second World War, reinforced inherent racism in the US military and came over in the boatloads of servicemen pouring into the UK. Beneath the shiny veneer of the ‘occupying’ American army pounded a racial tension that was never far from the surface.

**Plucky young bus
conductresses from
Plymouth to London
stood up to white
American officers who
attempted to eject
black GIs from their seats**



Left: The 29th Division – later targeted by African American soldiers – marches through Launceston. Right: Joe Lewis (top) and Bob Hope (bottom) entertain troops at Bodmin Barracks



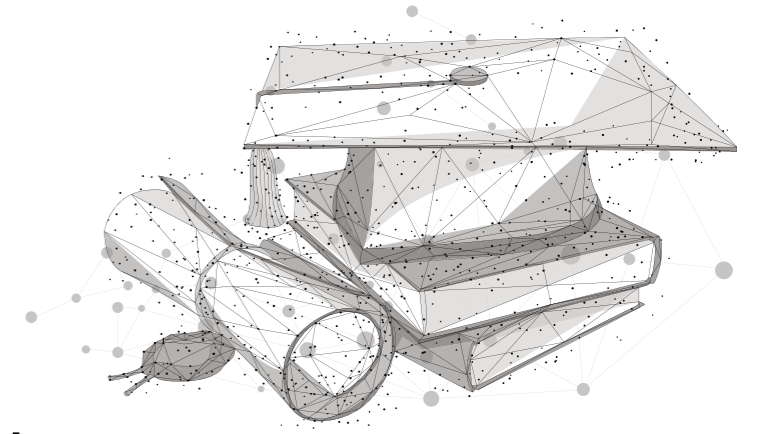
Beneath the shiny veneer of the ‘occupying’ American army pounded a racial tension that was never far from the surface

The Home Front, including its 15,000-strong Black British community, was the second notion of ‘community’ my research challenged. Unsurprisingly, racism also existed in this monocultural society as demonstrated by National Archives documents, ranging from the Somerset vicar’s wife who created a complicated rulebook for shunning black GIs to War Cabinet discussions in 1941 invoking absurd excuses to prevent the imminent arrival of African American soldiers. What surprised me, however, was the basic everyday British rejection of the US Army’s ‘colour bar’ charted in censored letters, secret Ministry of Information reports devoted to this very issue, Mass Observation reports and diaries, newspaper editorials and outraged letters protesting and decrying the fact to the Home and Colonial Offices. Furthermore, as American racial violence began to flare on village greens and city cobblestones in 1943, there was no doubt where British sympathy lay. From a gunfight in Bamber Bridge in Lancashire to Launceston, British civilians and servicemen backed African Americans. Plucky young bus conductresses from Plymouth to London stood up to white American officers who attempted to eject black GIs from their seats; British servicemen bought them

drinks when white GIs tried to get them barred – or worse; Essex women refused to dance at all when black soldiers were forcibly excluded and opinion pieces in newspapers begged for their clemency in trials such as that of the mutineers. As one black sergeant told a white MP trying to contain a potentially violent situation in Corsham, Wiltshire that June: ‘We ain’t no slaves, this is England!’ It was a feeling and sympathy the authorities wanted to suppress. The Launceston mutiny trial judge first tried to block the reporting of race in the court martial and when this failed simply censored the verdict leaving those old enough to remember the story still guessing.

So my third new notion of community is the everyday Britain of 1943 that stood against the blatant racism suffered by one 10th of its main ally’s ranks. That it happened five years before the Windrush’s arrival where the welcome was infamously less open-armed makes it remarkable; that it has been pieced together after a lifetime of pondering makes it remarkably fulfilling. That it could be a lesson for today, compelling us all to stand together again for a racial equality so long overdue is perhaps the most remarkable and exciting prospect of all and the future community to which we can all aspire.

Celebrating 40 years of co-education



Amelia Crosse, Exeter’s Alumni Relations and Events Officer, hears about overcoming gender inequality and student experiences through the years at a day of lively discussions and panel sessions

On Saturday 9 November nearly 100 alumni, Fellows and current students gathered at the FitzHugh Auditorium in Cohen Quad to celebrate the 40th anniversary of co-education at Exeter College.

Guests heard and contributed to a variety of discussions and lively panel sessions assessing how co-education came about, how it influenced College life and how Exeter College has continued to develop and prosper since. Hearing the contrasting experiences of alumnae through the decades was certainly food for thought, especially for our current students.

Christina Blacklaws (1985, Jurisprudence) gave a wonderful talk on the work that she has done as president of the Law Society of England and Wales to highlight the issues surrounding gender inequality in law (issues that are all too common in other lines of work as well), and what can be done to overcome them.

Graduate students Ellen Brewster and Razia Chowdhry ended the day by revealing some of the research they are currently undertaking, and their experiences as Exeter students.

The day was a fascinating insight into College life in 1979, and just how far we have come since.



Razia Chowdhry was among the current Exeter students to speak at the event. She talked about her research, which explores using synthetic cells to produce therapeutics, and about her experiences as an Exeter student.



Among the guest speakers was Christina Blacklaws, who served as the 174th president of the Law Society of England and Wales. Here she is pictured with a photo of her Torpids rowing crew from 1986. This and other photos showing the history of women at Exeter College were on display throughout the day.

Best laid plans and silver linings

Yvonne Rainey, Director of Development and Alumni Relations, reflects on an unusual first year in which alumni support remains strong despite the pandemic



It is safe to say my first official year as Director of Development and Alumni Relations did not go quite according to plan! However, despite the (many) frustrations of lockdown, it forced us to find new and creative ways of engaging with our alumni and helped us to realise that we can still maintain that college community feeling even when everyone is at home and communicating entirely online. We are all now experts in Microsoft Teams and Zoom!

This academic year we welcomed three new members of the Development Office team, Hannah Christie (Alumni Fund Officer), Adale Bennett (Philanthropy Manager) and Olivia Kennedy (Development Administrator) who barely had a chance to settle in before lockdown. The cancellation or postponement of a large number of alumni events was a huge disappointment for us, but we did our best to provide a virtual event experience where we could, as well as introducing some new online events such as our talk with Professor Cath Green on the Oxford vaccine project and Sir Ronald Cohen's talk on social impact.

In common with other colleges, we quickly realised that online events were very popular – partly because we had a captive audience (!) and also because we were able to attract alumni and friends who would not normally be able to attend a physical event in College. We will continue to run our events programme online for the foreseeable future and even into the longer term we will maintain a mix of online and in person events.

We naturally wondered what the effect would be on our fundraising but we were all surprised and encouraged that the vast majority of our donors have continued to give and, in some cases, increased their giving to support current

students during the pandemic. We have seen a downturn in major giving as donors wait to see the economic impact of the virus, but this is to be expected. Looking back at the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis, there was a sharp downturn in giving to the College but donations doubled again the following year. Outside of higher education we have seen some extraordinary acts of generosity as members of the public raise huge sums of money for charities. I am optimistic that if we can meet the challenge of communicating even better with our alumni, employing all the channels available to us, we will see increasing levels of engagement, especially among our younger alumni.

We are very fortunate to have the support of so many of our alumni community and friends who share our mission to provide the very best educational experience regardless of background and ethnic origin. Our recent experience dealing with the A-level results issue demonstrated beyond doubt the strength of alumni feeling in this area. The tutorial style of teaching in a small community setting allows us to provide a level of educational and pastoral care unmatched outside this system. Friendships are forged for life and for many students the opportunity to study at Oxford and Exeter was and continues to be literally life-changing.

Although I have not met as many alumni and donors as I would have liked in my first year, I am hugely grateful to all those who have given and continue to give of their time and advice as well as money. I look forward to the challenge ahead as we embark on some ambitious projects such as the transformation of the College Library, the preservation of the tutorial system, supporting our access and outreach work and enhancing the student experience.

'We regret [insert event name here] is no longer taking place as planned...' What now?



Senior research fellow Professor Cath Green, a key member of the Oxford team aiming to produce an effective COVID-19 vaccine, gave Exeter's first live webinar

When COVID-19 put on hold Exeter's programme of alumni events in Oxford and around the world, **Amelia Crosse**, Alumni Relations and Events Officer, quickly found Exonians eager to take part in virtual events and webinars, and this online community is here to stay

My role as events officer has changed drastically in the last few months. Gone were the days of booking people in to Gaudies, dinners and garden parties. Instead, the first week or so of lockdown was spent organising refunds for events no longer taking place. It was a disheartening time. Then we paused, and considered what we could do remotely to keep our alumni engaged and, hopefully, entertained.

The first online 'event' was a Gaudy – a dedicated web page with a photographic tour of College and matriculation photos, an Evensong service and a special menu created by Exeter's head chef, which we encouraged people to attempt at home. Black tie was obviously optional. The Boat Club dinner similarly went online, with the ECBCA Chair Matt Holyoak giving a highly entertaining 'after dinner' speech.

Senior research fellow Professor Cath Green, a key member of the Oxford team aiming to produce an effective vaccine against COVID-19, gave our first live webinar. It was a tour de force – in terms of expertise, intellectual range, insight, importance and humour – attracting alumni

from as far afield as Washington, DC.

Nearly 150 people tuned in to hear Sir Ronald Cohen (1964, PPE, Honorary Fellow), author of the recently published *Impact: Reshaping Capitalism to Drive Real Change* (Ebury Press, 2020). He discussed the Impact Revolution, and the roles we can play in order to create a world focused not only on minimising harm, but on doing measurable good.

Many lessons have been learned over the last few months, besides grappling with new technology and transforming my dining room into the Development and Alumni Relations Office. We learned that we could entertain alumni without being in the same room, or indeed country. That amidst the home schooling, work and family life our alumni still wanted to take time to listen and engage with what our Fellows and eminent alumni are working on. I will be happy to say goodbye to a lot of elements of lockdown, but online events are part of our 'new normal', and we plan for them to stay, even when we can eventually invite you back to College.

A flash of inspiration at 35,000 feet

A forgotten novel on a plane journey led to **Farha Quadri** (2008, Modern Languages) being named 'Flash Fiction Winner' in the London Independent Story Prize. Her winning entry – and the story behind it – are shared below...



An introduction from the author

I started writing as a teenager and continued writing during the years at Exeter where my degree really cemented a love for literature. However, it's only in the past year that I've gone back to writing regularly. In doing so I've discovered that I feel the most myself in the moments when I write. Competitions offer a deadline for 'finishing' a piece of writing that seems impossible to finish, and I entered the London Independent Story Prize (LISP) for Flash Fiction on a whim. In this case the entry had to be 300 words or less, which was challenging because you have little time to grab the reader's attention and leave an impact. But the brevity of the form also gives you the chance to experiment with ideas that could evolve into a short story or even a novel.

I started 'Mum Knows Best' while on a plane journey. I had left the book that I was reading in my suitcase so felt compelled to use my spare time to write something, anything. I went back to this scrap of a story when I saw the LISP competition deadline and then edited it over a weekend. I address topics that matter to me – chiefly family and societal expectations for women. The question of racial inferiority also surfaces and this is more important than ever to highlight in the context of George Floyd's death. I am currently working on my first novel through Faber's competitive 'Writing a Novel' course, where I hope to expand upon some of the themes of my flash fiction.

Mum Knows Best

'There are ways of doing things – you have to say "I live on my own because I work long days and the commute to my parents' place is two hours." You have to say that. That's why you should call me before meeting anyone.' said Mum.

I listened. How should I sit? How should I walk? What should I order in the restaurant? Will he mind that I've dated before? He shouldn't. I knew he would. You would not choose the wilted salad leaves from the buffet. I saw myself in that moment – a cut of steak, tender to the touch that if exposed to heat too long would end up worthless and tired. I was tired. That was the truth. Turning thirty had its advantages at work. I felt respected and listened to. No longer bottom of the food chain. At home, the loneliness rattled in its emptiness.

'Look Laila, this is the problem. You can't just say what you want with this guy. People listen and then people talk.'

I knew people talked but why was I the talking point? I curled up smaller, sliding protective film over my dry, scaly brown skin. Filming it over would make it white. Whiteness meant not being judged.

'How was it?' asked Mum in that hopeful voice I hadn't heard for a while. 'Did he seem nice?'

I thought back to the restaurant last night. His sharp features penetrating the parts of me not on show. Fingers grazed down to the small of my back trying to feel any bit of me that was accessible. A sideways glance devoured the waitress too. It was fleeting but I noticed. My life choices warranted this. A wilted salad leaf. I spoke mute.

'Yes, he was nice. I think I'll see him again.'



Everyday transgressors

Twelve episodes of Alan Bennett's *Talking Heads* were filmed and broadcast in the UK during lockdown, including two brand new stories. **Ryan Sweeney** (2018, English) discovers that they reveal Bennett to be as witty, dry and shocking as ever

The monologues that comprise *Talking Heads* (2020) are snapshots of lives lived under difficult circumstances. These are tales of obsession, violence, compulsion, and the human heart at the centre of those tendencies. The BBC, once again, introduces us to the world as understood by Alan Bennett, Exeter College alumnus and Honorary Fellow.

When I volunteered to write this article, I was given the brief: *Talking Heads* and 'community'. Immediately, one may be drawn to the idea of Bennett as a member of our shared Exeter community. Others may be drawn to his role as a public figure, an inimitable personality, a playwright, an LGBTQ+ icon, and a pioneer of post-war British comedy. My own instincts are inclined to ponder my relationship to Bennett and his work. I have the fortune to share a birthplace and a place amongst the Exonians with him, and I would be lying to say I'm not fond of the synchronicity. With this in mind, the first question I asked of *Talking Heads* was to whom did these stories belong? As a native of Armley, Leeds and a student of Exeter College, was I going to find

a kind of secret language only I, Bennett, and a select few were privy to? No, it seems, as this is Leeds as Bennett imagines it. It is Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha County, a place where universal stories can be explored through the mirage of regionality.

With each unfolding monologue it became clear to me that these are not regional 'kitchen sink' pieces. Nor are they any kind of grand literary experiment. They are complex insights into the fringe desires and actions of archetypes commonly expected to be pillars of the community. The characters Bennett writes about are the characters we see in our everyday lives: the nosey neighbour, the mother, the community gardener, the volunteer worker, the aspiring actress. With these characters established, Bennett explores transgressive acts and what drives these characters to commit them (or how they react to the actions of others). You would be forgiven for viewing many of these monologues as hanging on the strength of their twists and reveals, that they are simple tales of domestic shock. However, I don't think that is entirely fair.



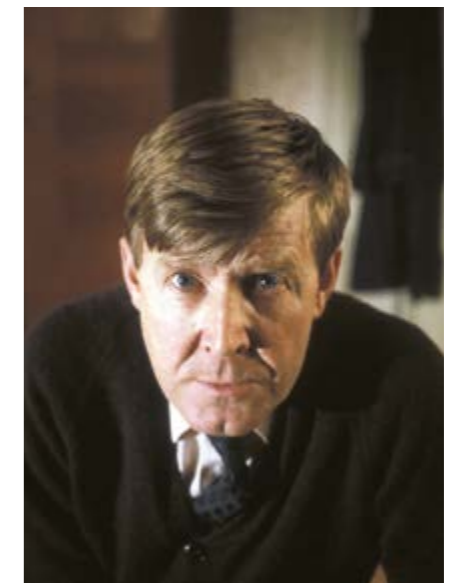


Whilst the characters are predominantly white, middle aged women, there is such an everyday 'blankness' to their lives that we begin to feel like these people reappear in our own lives under various guises

Bennett isn't trying to shock for the sake of a cheap thrill, the kind we find in 'cattle prod' horror films. It appears to me as though the twists are effective because they highlight what we all fear, that the banal everyday can become corrupted. Bennett asks us to question what lies behind the trimmed hedges and stuffy politeness of British culture. There is no single demographic which can claim these stories. They reflect a cultural anxiety that crosses every boundary. Whilst the characters presented in these monologues are predominantly white, middle aged women (Martin Freeman and Lucien Msamati making up the only men in the cast, Msamati and Rochena Sandall the only people of colour), there is such an everyday 'blankness' to their lives that we begin to feel like these people reappear in our own lives under various guises.

Talking Heads once again asks us to question what it is we believe about our communities. We are made to watch as the facades we present to the world crumble when others are allowed to gaze into our inner lives. As for Alan Bennett, I think this new production, with its two new stories plus 10 reinventions from the original *Talking Heads* series, will help to remind us that he is more than a tired impression. Bitterly funny, grotesquely shocking, and drier than old toast, *Talking Heads* is an insight into the lie of our comfortable lives, expertly examined by one of Exeter's finest exports.

***Talking Heads* is available to watch in the UK on BBC iPlayer.**



Pictured top: Lucien Msamati, as Wilfred in Playing Sandwiches. Bottom left: Martin Freeman as Graham in A Chip in the Sugar. Bottom right: Alan Bennett himself, playing Graham in a previous version of A Chip in the Sugar. Previous page top: Jodie Comer, as Lesley in Her Big Chance. Previous page bottom: Rochena Sandall, as Marjory in The Outside Dog

MARTIN AMIS INSIDE STORY



‘THE ONLY WAY FORWARD IS TO TALK’

With an autobiographical novel about to hit bookstores around the world, Honorary Fellow Martin Amis (1968, English) spoke to **Costanza Levy** (2019, Philosophy and Modern Languages) about the book, the role of direct experience in writing, and the importance of open public debate

Inside Story, the new autobiographical novel by Martin Amis, is unlike much of his other work. It delves into Amis's personal experiences and the central figures in his life: his closest friend, Christopher Hitchens (pictured, left, with Amis on the cover of the new book), his hero, Saul Bellow, Phillip Larkin, and Iris Murdoch, amongst others. The idea for the novel came to Amis many years ago, but it was the death of Hitchens that led him to write the story: 'It took a year or two after he [Hitchens] died for me to think, I could try that novel again. Because all the main characters are dead now. And there's a certain ... there's room to manoeuvre when everyone's dead and gone. I just felt freer.'

Freedom of expression in writing is deeply important for Amis, the setting of whose novels range from London at the turn of the 21st century (*London Fields*) to Russian gulags under Stalin (*Koba the Dread*). Amis acknowledges the pressure for authors to write, or not write, about particular experiences, especially those which the author may not be in a position to relate to. 'You are aware of it', he notes, but 'you mustn't be intimidated by it. People who feel proprietorial about certain experiences ... I feel it's so anti-literary.'

The majority of Amis's works do not rely on his own direct experiences. Rather, for Amis, 'novels are about things you haven't experienced'. *Inside Story*'s reliance on Amis's own experiences is what makes it unlike his other works.

Comparing the process of writing this autobiographical novel to that of writing his memoir, *Experience*, 20 years ago, Amis notes that, 'it was much harder to write than a memoir. It felt like a novel most of the time, and that actually made it much more difficult to write.' He explains that, when writing novels, he notices a crucial, albeit hard to define, contribution from subconscious thoughts. But in

the case of an autobiographical novel, writing about direct experiences leaves much less room for subconscious influence: 'the subconsciousness has so little to do. It is underemployed.'

That said, whilst *Inside Story* chronicles many of Amis's direct experiences, the novel also focuses on the social climate in which the story is set. Amis is clear that, for him, 'imaginative writing doesn't much overlap with "opinion" writing. You don't write novels to persuade or even assert – editorials do that.' The mention of 9/11 and the fragility of the American political system appears in the novel because it is a topic which Amis, who now lives in New York, has been thinking about – 'it's a preoccupation of mine'. However, outside of imaginative writing, Amis believes that open public discourse is incredibly important.

The surge in discussion and action with regard to the Black Lives Matter movement is an example of the power of discourse and is in Amis's opinion 'the biggest reassessment that America has made in recent history'. He refers to the acknowledgement by many Americans of the prejudices that black people face as 'something of a revolution in consciousness'. He sees increased discussion and discourse, both in media and personal life, as key to maintaining the momentum of the movement.

Amis is a firm believer in the importance of not stifling debate, both in literature and public discourse. He was among over 150 people to sign 'A Letter on Justice and Open Debate', published in *Harper's Magazine* in July. The letter states that, 'as writers we need a culture that leaves us room for experimentation, risk taking, and even mistakes.'

Be it to allow for a creative range of imaginative writing, or to make real change as a global community, 'the only way forward is to talk', says Amis.

The impact revolution

The revolution is here, Sir Ronald Cohen told an audience of Exonians recently. The tyranny of profit is over. Businesses must now weigh up risk, return and *impact*. **Matt Baldwin**, Communications Officer, reports

Sir Ronald Cohen – Honorary Fellow, alumnus, venture capitalist and philanthropist – wants to ignite a revolution: the impact revolution. That was his topic for a webinar in June, and is the subject of his new book, *Impact: Reshaping Capitalism to Drive Real Change*.

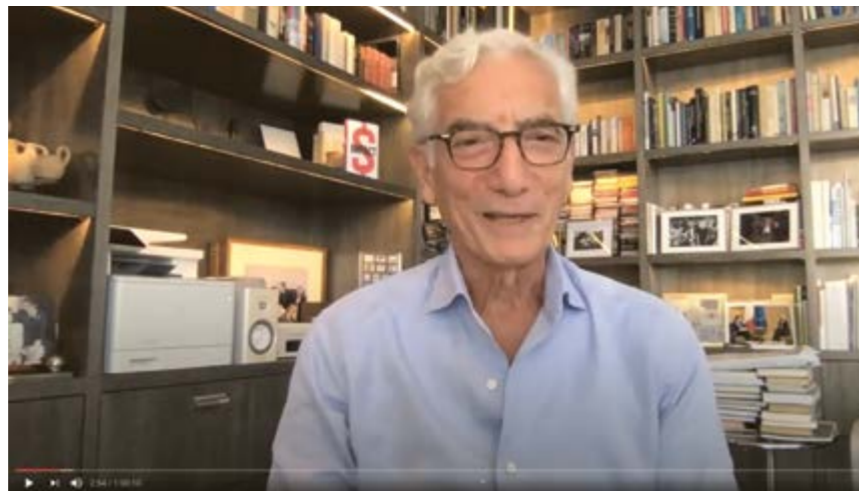
Sir Ronald read PPE at Exeter in the mid-60s before receiving a Henry Fellowship to attend Harvard Business School. 'When I was there,' he told the audience of Exonians, 'I felt a revolution was in the air. The revolution was the tech revolution.

Up until then, everyone had assumed that only big companies could deliver technological innovation. The notion that young people – even dropouts from university – with the ambition to change the world would actually be able to influence their sectors for most people was just an illusion.'

By 2013, Sir Ronald sensed revolution approaching again: 'the world was changing,' he said. 'It was changing because young people were refusing to purchase the products of companies whose values they didn't share. They were refusing to work for these companies. Investors were already beginning to say "We can't chase after profit only; we have to have environmental, social and governance improvement as well."

These changes have grown into the impact revolution. 'The impact revolution is very similar to the tech revolution,' Sir Ronald asserted. 'It is driven by young people ... No business today can operate without technology, and no business in the future, in my view, will be able to operate without impact.' He explained: 'Our economic system in its search for profit is self-defeating. We could cope with this aspect of it when the consequences were relatively manageable. Today, governments can't cope with the environmental consequences or even with the social consequences of the system, and so we have to ask ourselves how can we get our system to redistribute outcomes more fairly?'

Today, Sir Ronald said, investors have put \$30 trillion into environmental, social and governance investment



Sir Ronald Cohen discusses his new book about reshaping capitalism

and another \$715 billion into impact investment. While both types of investment intend to create impact, only the latter measures it. This, Sir Ronald believes, is crucial: 'Are we really investing in companies and measuring only the profit they make, without measuring the damage they are causing to society and the environment?' He is calling for generally accepted impact principles, similar to the accounting principles used to measure company profit and loss, which would allow for the good and the harm that companies create to be audited. 'The amazing thing that has happened since I left Exeter College,' he said, 'is that technology today enables us to do this.'

Sir Ronald cited the example of three oil companies – ExxonMobil, Shell and BP – whose operations create environmental damage ranging from \$38 billion to \$13 billion per year, according to a Harvard Business School study. 'Are these not figures,' Sir Ronald asked, 'that every one of us should be aware of, and especially investors? ... I think we have to share these figures because it is the way for us to cross the watershed, from a paradigm that has served us well for 250 years but that is no longer appropriate for the big challenges we face, to a new paradigm of risk, return and *impact*. We have to bring impact to the centre of our economic system, alongside profit, to overthrow the tyranny of profit, and to put impact by its side, to keep it in check.'

ALUMNI IN THE SPOTLIGHT

This year we shine a spotlight on four alumni for whom, in different ways, their time at Exeter and Oxford has proved pivotal

For Carolyn Evans, discovering the value of interdisciplinary learning helped her to shape the strategy of Griffith University, where she is serving as the institution's first female Vice-Chancellor. Screenwriter Mike Lesslie met future collaborators at Oxford and in tutorials he developed the fine art of the pitch. Studying History, Ella Mae Lewis realised that the persistent struggle for human rights was where her passion lay. Most significantly of all, for Chisanga Puta-Chekwe, whose career has spanned law, finance, mining, politics, academia and the charity sector, his three-and-a-half-year internment as a political prisoner in Zambia came to an end after a successful campaign mounted by Oxford University and Amnesty International.

CAROLYN EVANS (1995, LAW)

Carolyn is the first female Vice-Chancellor of Griffith University, and the first female graduate of Exeter to head a university

I came to Oxford in 1995 to undertake a DPhil on issues of religious freedom in Europe. Hard though it may seem to believe now, this area was considered an intellectual backwater; my mentors advised me to focus on an area of more contemporary interest. Fortunately, Mark Janis, who was one of the Law Fellows at Exeter, at the time shared my interest in law and religion. He took on my supervision and made it possible for me to get a place at Exeter. Needless to say, being at the forefront of this area of research has only been beneficial to my career ever since.

Life in Oxford was dizzying at first. It was an extraordinary experience to be plunged into an intellectual community with other graduates from around the world who were working in every conceivable area. I stayed for my first year at Exeter House and got to know people working on Jane Austen, machine learning, theology and chemistry. This was a welcome change from my home country of Australia where people tended to stick with those studying the same discipline. Later, I found the same



intellectually stimulating environment in the Senior Common Room, and it convinced me of the importance of creating opportunities for those from different disciplines to share their insights and expertise. Interdisciplinary is a strong theme in the new Griffith University strategy.

Two years into my DPhil, Dr Janis took some time off to travel back to the US and I was appointed to the Stipendiary Lectureship that filled the gap in his absence. It turned out to be a two-year period and it was my opportunity to gain experience teaching a wide range of subjects to a talented group of Exeter undergraduates. I discovered my love of teaching at Exeter, and I only regret that my current role makes teaching very difficult.

My daughter was born in Oxford and I completed my thesis and viva a few months later. My husband (who also completed his DPhil at Oxford) and I were torn about returning to Australia given the wonderful time that we had in Oxford, but decided in the end that it was better to bring up our children close to family – and, dare I say, in better weather?

I returned to Australia: the research and teaching experience I had gained at Oxford allowed me to take on a lectureship in the Law School at Melbourne University, where over time I became a Professor and then its first female Dean in 150 years. Eventually I took up the role of Deputy Vice-Chancellor at Melbourne and in 2019 was appointed by Griffith as its first female Vice-Chancellor.

CHISANGA PUTA-CHEKWE (1977, PPE)

Chisanga is the President of the Masomo Education Foundation, a non-profit organisation which provides scholarships for post-secondary education to children from low income families

The Rector of Exeter College, Greig Barr, was a trustee of the Rhodes Trust and I suppose he was interested in having a Rhodes Scholar as one of his students. This was a blessing as I found Exeter College to be friendly and inclusive – it certainly had the cheapest Summer Ball in town! I found Barr to be a thoughtful and empathetic leader, as were my tutors.

When I returned to Zambia to practice law, much of my practice was devoted to the preservation of human rights at a time when the bill of rights had been suspended. Many of my clients were members of the clandestine pro-democracy movement. It took torture, and a three-and-a-half-year stint as a

political prisoner, for me to return to England as the vice president of a Zambian-owned bank, my release being the result of a successful international campaign mounted by Oxford and Amnesty International.

In 1989 my family and I packed our bags once again and headed to Canada. The early days in Ottawa were difficult on account of limited employment opportunities for those without Canadian experience, but after a few unsuccessful job applications, I formed the Chekwe Consultancy. Shortly afterwards I was also appointed part-time adjudicator at the Ontario Criminal Injuries Compensation Board, and was later appointed Chair and CEO

of the organisation. I served in that capacity for three years before being appointed Executive Director of Oxfam Canada.

I returned to the Ontario agency sector in 1998 when asked to serve as founding Chair and CEO of the Ontario Rental Housing Tribunal. After six years there I was asked to lead the Social Benefits Tribunal, which was in need of reform. It only took a relatively short period of time to introduce the necessary efficiencies and put the agency on an even keel.

In early 2009, I was appointed Deputy Minister for Citizenship and Immigration. I also had responsibility for the Women's Issues portfolio, in addition to serving as Secretary General of the Order of Ontario. Later, I had the additional portfolios of Seniors' Affairs and International Trade. I served in this capacity for six years before joining the Directors Education Program at the University of Toronto. Thanks to my Exeter training, I was able to succeed.

Today I spend the bulk of my time serving as volunteer president of the Masomo Education Foundation, a non-profit organisation which provides scholarships for post-secondary education to children from low income families. I also serve as non-executive director on First Quantum Minerals' largest subsidiary company, which I had previously served as Zambia Country Manager. I am thankful to my Exeter education which helped me to hone my communication and analytical skills.



MIKE LESSLIE (2003, ENGLISH)

Mike is a screenwriter, producer, and playwright whose writing credits include *Macbeth* (2015), *The Little Drummer Girl* (2018) and Netflix's upcoming adaptation of *Hamlet*

I applied to study English at Exeter because of Jeri Johnson, an English Fellow at the College. Her forensic approach to language appealed to my urge to find something – anything – objective in a subjective discipline. Without that, I thought, we'd just be debating feelings.

Ironically my career as a screenwriter, playwright, and producer is now driven by feelings. Most usefully Exeter taught me the linguistic and narrative structures to best communicate them. Tutorials also taught me how to pitch. Screenwriters have to sell their stories. We argue – for plot, scenes, characters, and even punctuation – with actors, directors, and anyone more powerful than us (i.e. everyone). Jeri's tutorials helped me to be articulate under pressure.

Exeter tutorials also showed me how wrong I could be. However much I want there to be a right answer in my work, literature is inescapably subjective. Everyone's opinion is valid, and every voice should be heard. Screenwriting is the most collaborative creative discipline I can imagine, and learning that those seeking to change my scripts aren't attacking them, but taking ownership of their part of what they will become, was a lesson begun at Exeter. This understanding is extremely useful as a producer, too. The job requires collaborating with experts whose skills embarrass mine in fields I could never understand. Enabling them to do what they think is right, rather than intruding on their fields, is something university drilled into all of us.

A huge benefit of Oxford at large was the number of future collaborators I met there. Topmost has to be Patrick Marber, the visiting Drama Fellow in my second year. He told me I was a writer, and I'm unsure I'd be working professionally without his mentorship. I found other drama types through the acting scene, from which a disproportionate number of practitioners now prominent in the industry have emerged. This is both a testament to the talent Oxford draws, and depressing evidence of the chances available to those of less privilege.

Two things Oxford didn't prepare me for were failure and misrepresentation. I've had work celebrated, which is great, but one play met lukewarm reviews, which was a far

more useful experience than success. Worse, one particular project on which I'm credited didn't use my script at all, and my feelings of embarrassment and injustice when the bastardised version was released still burn to the bone. But Oxford shouldn't teach you everything!

I've now been lucky enough to work with directors from Park Chan-Wook to Errol Morris, actors from Marion Cotillard to Michael Shannon to Riz Ahmed. Oxford helped give me the confidence and connections to work in the arts; Exeter gave me the empirical approach and crushing sense of my own idiocy essential to keep doing so. It also taught me that thinking can be work, and that you have to earn other people's collaboration. So thank you Jeri!



ELLA MAE LEWIS (2010, HISTORY)

Ella Mae is a founding team member and the Director of Product at Apolitical, an online platform that helps public servants discover, learn and share to solve global problems

I studied at Exeter partly thanks to the full opportunities bursary for students from low-income backgrounds. I grew up in council housing and my school was in Ofsted Special Measures. I couldn't have been more thrown by interviews in what looked suspiciously like an ivy-clad sandstone palace, but the History tutors' patient coaxing managed to put me at ease.

Whilst at Exeter, the concept of 'rights' most caught my interest. Throughout papers spanning different eras, what captivated me was the same questions being explored anew: What does society owe its citizens? Who are its citizens? Does how we interact depend on these questions, or something more fundamental? I decided that human rights and public policy were the natural paths for my interests – though notoriously they're not easy ones to crack into!

It took a year of volunteering to get a job in the space I wanted. Before then I worked as a live-in nanny in Barcelona and in the evening



I volunteered through UN Online Volunteers and cold-outreached to non-profits. An Australian foundation called Walk Free eventually took me on as a supply chain researcher; with them I did a stint with the House of Lords lobbying on the Modern Slavery Bill, before deciding to get away from the desk and out into the field itself. I became the senior field advisor on human trafficking in Africa for the Global Fund to End Modern Slavery, based in Washington, DC. There I conducted in-country investigative research into sex trafficking and child labour in Ghana, South Africa, and Mozambique, which got me interested in data and technology solutions to solve complex problems.

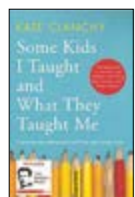
After meeting two wildly impressive women who were founding something visionary, I moved to Berlin as Head of Knowledge and Research for the still-nascent Apolitical. It was a risky move, but I couldn't resist the

chance to do something with such grand ambition – to make government globally more inspired, informed, and connected. Initially I conducted interviews, surveys and research, but more and more I became interested in turning those insights into a digital platform – after a couple of years of training in UX, product strategy and coding I became the Director of Product and moved back to London. The platform now has policymaker members from 140+ countries, and I oversee the design, membership, data and engineering teams.

I strongly feel that those deciding what they want to do after Oxford should think carefully about what they've been given – one of the best educations available anywhere. Ideally, using your talents shouldn't just be about finding something highly paid or stable, but about using those advantages to create a positive, lasting impact in the world.

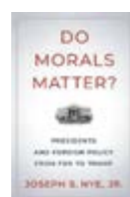
Recommended reading

Our selection of alumni publications is a smorgasbord of treats, from children's fantasy fiction to poetry collections



Some Kids I Taught and What They Taught Me

Kate Clanchy (1984, English)
Kate Clanchy reflects on 30 years spent working to empower children as a teacher, highlighting the importance of teaching and shedding light on the British education system.



Do Morals Matter? Presidents and Foreign Policy from FDR to Trump

Joseph Nye (1958, PPE, Honorary Fellow)
What role does ethics play in American foreign policy? Nye uses intention, means, and consequences to assess the ethics of US Presidents' foreign policy, starting from Roosevelt and ending with Trump.



The Zinoviev Controversy Resolved

John Symons (1964, Literae Humaniores)
The Zinoviev letter, long believed fraudulent, is not. Symons raises the question of whether this document, published days before the 1924 British general election, was overlooked or deliberately concealed by those with an allegiance to the Soviet Union.



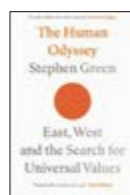
Heat Wave

Julian Stannard (1985, PGCE)
'What good is sitting, alone in your room?/ come hear the music play!' Stannard's eighth collection is a form of poetic cabaret which addresses the many crises which confront us. It subverts, it entertains, it may make a reader cry and laugh on the same page.



Impact: Reshaping Capitalism to Drive Real Change

Ronald Cohen (1964, PPE, Honorary Fellow)
Capitalism and democracy are being challenged. The world must change, but we cannot change it by throwing money at old ideas. We need a new path, where inequality is shrinking, natural resources are regenerated, and people can benefit from shared prosperity.



The Human Odyssey: East, West and the Search for Universal Values

Stephen Green (1966, PPE, Honorary Fellow)
In 2020, the world is the most connected it has ever been. But can the Confucian ideals of the East and the more individualist worldview of the West work together in a constructive, mutually enriching way?



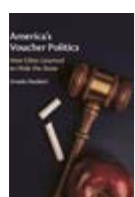
Out of a Dark Winter's Night

Flora McDonnell (1982, Literae Humaniores)
When darkness comes, hope carries a young child and their animal friends till dawn. In McDonnell's words, this is a story 'to give courage to any child or adult who feels they are stuck in the darkness of a winter's night'.



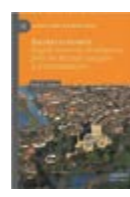
Legacy

Chris Pyrah (2011, Classical Archaeology and Ancient History)
Young Torben has been resigned to a sheltered existence, until a chance encounter catapults him into a world more dangerous than he ever imagined. A world of Humans, Dwarves, tribes and rival kingdoms. A world that he must save from collapse.



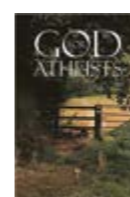
America's Voucher Politics: How Elites Learned to Hide the State

Dr Ursula Hackett (2006, Politics)
What explains the explosive growth of school vouchers in the US in the last two decades? Hackett shows that the voucher movement is rooted in America's foundational struggles over religion, race, and the role of government versus the private sector.



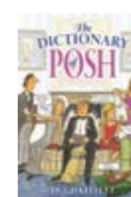
Barriers to Growth: English Economic Development from the Norman Conquest to Industrialisation

Eric Jones (1958, Economics)
What have been the barriers to economic growth in English history? Jones explores the effect of early misallocations of resources, floods, fires and 19th-century reforms in his original discussion of economic history.



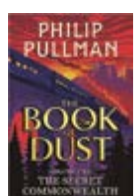
God for Atheists

Ian West (1961, Botany)
Three friends, Lector, Credens and Auctor, discuss their belief, or disbelief, in God. In this book, Ian West explores the relationship between God and the human striving to be moral.



The Dictionary of Posh

Hugh Kellott (1974, Modern Languages)
'Mention', that is to say, 'mansion'. 'Ace', that is to say, 'ice'. Hugh Kellott's wit, along with cartoons by Oliver Preston, provides a hilarious insight into an endangered language, Posh.



The Secret Commonwealth

Phillip Pullman (1965, English, Honorary Fellow)
In the second volume of *The Book of Dust* we re-encounter Lyra Silvertongue. Except she is no longer a child, but an undergraduate at St Sophia's College, Oxford.



Core Conservatism: Edmund Burke's Landmark Definition

Graham Ray Catlin (1975, Modern History)
Catlin defies revisionist doubts by using historical evidence to reassert the classic view that Edmund Burke defined the foundations of modern conservative thought.

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