

MAGDALENE

MATTERS

Spring/Summer 2020 | issue 50

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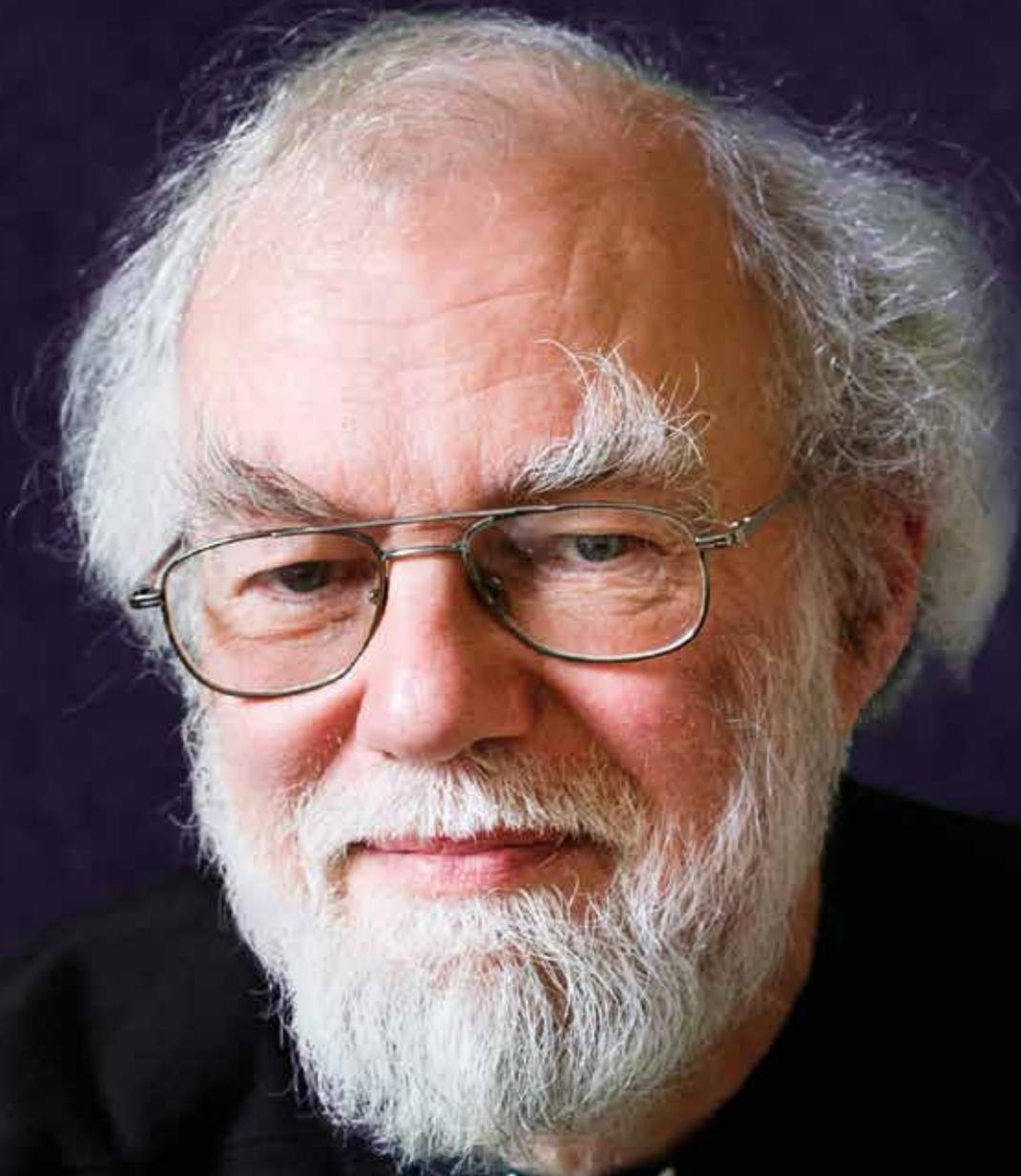
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MAGDALENE COLLEGE
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

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Welcome

Dear Members,

Living and working in the time of the corona virus is certainly different, unsettling, worrying and sadly deadly for many but also strangely liberating for those of us who are lucky enough to be well and safely ensconced at home. Having time to cook rather than commute, to think, to finally read that novel, these are the positives that will stay with me long after we return to 'normal'. Life at Magdalene is busy all year round but Easter term in particular tends to fly by in a blur of activity, so much so that we have neither time to appreciate our wonderful College gardens, our beautiful College nor the bustling City we are proud to live and work in.

The first three years of the *Future Foundations* Campaign have been a whirlwind of activity involving many events, activities and global travel; three wonderful and rewarding years generating an amazing response. Again and again we have been gratified and humbled by the generosity, loyalty and commitment of our Members and Friends.

As many of you will know, we had all but raised the money for the New Library which is looking wonderful in the north-west corner of the Fellows' Garden but work stopped in late March and we don't know when it will start up again. We will keep you informed and when the time is right will outline the revised financial situation and the new date for the grand opening of the New Library. For now, we are focussing all of our fundraising efforts on our people. Many of you took part in our first ever Giving Day in March which feels like a life time ago and we raised just shy of £100,000 during the 36 hours. Most pleasingly, 335 of you chose to make a gift and more than 100 did so for the very first time. Thank you for the part you played in making this such a successful endeavour.

You will find a link to a gift form in this new look digital issue of Magdalene Matters. You will note that it invites you to help the College to look after our students, staff and Fellows during this unprecedented time by supporting the new Emergency Fund focussed on alleviating financial distress immediately and generously. Some of you will choose to respond and others will dislike being asked. Magdalene's pockets are not deep enough to help all those in our College community who need financial assistance now. That is why we look to you for help.

Keep well, stay safe and keep in touch. We post regular updates on our website www.magd.cam.ac.uk

CORINNE LLOYD
Editor and Director of Development

Magdalene Matters is published electronically by the Alumni and Development Office. For further information or if you would like to submit content for future issues please contact the Communications Officer, Mr Matthew Moon, or the Editor, Mrs Corinne Lloyd. The views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent the views of Magdalene College Cambridge.

Photo on the front cover Dr Rowan Williams, Master of Magdalene.
Taken by Paul Rodgers.

DR ALI MEGHJI (2011)



Dr Meghji is a Lecturer in Social Inequalities at the Department of Sociology and Official Fellow in Human Social and Political Science at the College. Ali previously held a research fellowship in sociology at

Sidney Sussex College, and had a visiting fellowship at the Weatherhead Centre, Harvard University. He studied for his BA, MPhil, and PhD (all in Sociology) at the University of Cambridge, and, while an undergraduate at Magdalene, served as JCR President. His research focuses on critical race theory and the dynamics underlying contemporary racism through the investigation of national racialised social systems, and analysis of the ongoing presence of coloniality in the world system.

MS LISA KREUSSER (2019)



Ms Kreusser has been elected to a Nevile Research Fellowship in Mathematics. After studying Mathematics at the University of Kaiserslautern with research visits at the

National University of Singapore and at Imperial College London, she came to Cambridge for her PhD. Her research focuses on mathematical models in biology, industry and data science, combining her desire to extend the boundaries of mathematical knowledge with advancing the understanding of real-world problems of practical importance. For this work, she has been awarded the Smith-Knight and Rayleigh-Knight Prizes, and has been selected as a TakeAIM Prize Winner by the Smith Institute.

NEW FELLOWS

WE ARE DELIGHTED TO WELCOME THE FOLLOWING NEW FELLOWS TO COLLEGE.

MR JONNY BODEY (2013)



Mr Bodey has been elected to a Bye-Fellowship from October 2019. He originally came to Magdalene to study Natural Sciences as an undergraduate in 2013. He continued his studies, starting as a PhD student in experimental quantum physics. His research requires him to spend most of his time working in a dark, air-conditioned room with no windows, which has greatly enhanced his love of the outdoors. This combined with a near-total immunity to bad weather, thanks to his rural North Yorkshire upbringing, means that he can probably be found outdoors, preferably on a hill, and almost definitely on two wheels.

DR SARA CAPUTO (2019)



Dr Caputo, the Lumley Junior Research Fellow, completed her PhD thesis in History on *Foreign Seamen and the British Navy, 1793–1815* at Robinson College. Her main research area is transnational social and cultural history, exploring the ways in which individuals negotiate interactions with state boundaries. She is also interested in the application of programming and 'hard-quantitative' techniques to historical analysis. Whilst at Magdalene, she will be starting a new project on the medical culture of sailors across various national fleets. Her main passion is studying as many languages as possible, and seeing how they change her worldview.

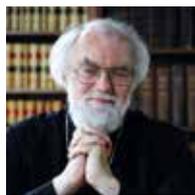
MR DYLAN GAFFNEY (2017)



Mr Gaffney, one of our new Bye-Fellows, is an Archaeology PhD candidate researching human prehistory in the Indo-Pacific islands, specifically on New Guinea and New Zealand. Dylan's New Guinea research has focused on the production and exchange of material culture by Austronesian-speaking communities around Karkar Island and Madang on the northeast coast of Papua New Guinea; Pleistocene-Holocene settlement, agriculture, and trade around the New Guinea Highlands; and, most recently as the subject of his PhD research, and human adaptation to small rainforested islands in eastern Wallacea and northwest New Guinea.

FELLOWS' NEWS

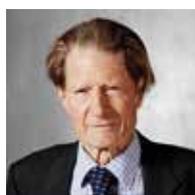
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The Master, Dr Rowan Williams, and Professor Williams

The Master and Professor Jane Williams have both been elected as Honorary

Fellows of the College from 1 October 2020. Honorary Fellowships bring enormous distinction to the College by confirming and celebrating our association with scholars who share the values of Magdalene, who have contributed to the intellectual life of the College and who have made an impact on their personal field of study.



Professor Sir John Gurdon (1995)

Sir John has received a doctorate honoris causa in Translational Medicine from the University of Pisa

Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna (Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies). John was recommended for this honorary doctorate by the Italian Ministry of University and Research, and by the overwhelming support of the Institute of Life Sciences and the Academic Senate of the *Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna*. The award was conferred upon John in recognition of his distinguished life's work for having revolutionised the pre-existing theories on cellular specialisation and paving the way for new vision of Biology and Medicine.



Professor Eamon Duffy (1979)

Professor Duffy has been awarded an honorary doctorate of letters by the University of Bergen

in Norway. Professor Duffy has also published *John Henry Newman: A Very Brief History*, which comes out to coincide with the canonisation of the English theologian.



Professor Paul Dupree (1996)

Professor Dupree was awarded the B. A. Stone Award for his outstanding contribution

in plant polysaccharide biochemistry. This is the highest award in the field and is conferred only occasionally. The medal was presented to Paul at the XV International Cell Wall Meeting held in Cambridge.



Professor Bill Cornish CMG QC (1990)

Professor Cornish's entry in the Squire Law Library's Eminent Scholars Archive, which consists of

biographical details, bibliographies, photographs and interviews with eminent scholars connected with the Faculty of Law, has recently become available. Please see more at:

www.squire.law.cam.ac.uk/eminent-scholars-archive/professor-william-rodolph-cornish



Professor James Raven (1990)

Professor Raven succeeds Lord Boateng as Chair of the English-Speaking Union of the Commonwealth

(previous Chairs include Winston Churchill and Francis Pym) with 30 branches in the UK and more than 50 national ESUs worldwide. To read more about Professor Raven and the ESU please see page 18 and 19.



Dr Annja Neumann (2014)

Dr Neumann has published *Wrestling with Marionettes: Entangled Embodiment and Posthuman*

Agency in Schnitzler's 'Zum großen Wurstel' in *Austrian Studies*. It applies genetic analysis in order to examine the entangled embodiment of the real audience in Schnitzler's theatrical parody by focusing on the mutual constitution of the materiality of bodies and their human and other-than-human agency. Read more about Dr Neumann's research on the College website. www.magd.cam.ac.uk/theatres-of-medicine

Dr Nikita Makarchev (2015)



Dr Makarchev (Bye-Fellow from 2017 to 2018) has won the third prize at the Association of British Turkish Academics Doctoral Researcher Awards. This

is a national competition, now in its eighth year, and receives around 200 entries. The final included presenting research to the judges at UCL and Nikita's topic was meritocracy in China and Russia's governance system.



Dr Joe Jarrett (2018)

Dr Jarrett's book, *Mathematics and Late Elizabethan Drama*, has just been published with Palgrave Macmillan, in their

Palgrave Studies in Literature, Science and Medicine series. It is the first book to examine the influence that 16th- and early-17th-century mathematical thinking exerted on the writing and production of early modern drama. It examines how the terms, concepts, and implications of early modern mathematics impacted upon the vocabularies, forms, and aesthetics of plays by Marlowe, Greene, Dekker, Shakespeare and Chettle.



Mr Graham Walker (2016)

Mr Walker, the Precentor and Director of Music, has released a new album with his group Classico

Latino. The album, which they recorded in Cuba (and which is rather different from the choral or cello music you may have heard him performing elsewhere), is called *Havana Classic*, and is available on all the main streaming and download sites. More information is on their website:

www.classicolatino.com



Dr Simon Ravenscroft (2018)

Dr Ravenscroft has co-edited a volume published by CUP: *Patents on Life: Religious, Moral,*

and Social Justice Aspects of Biotechnology and Intellectual Property. The book assembles an international cast of contributors who bring a variety of ethical, political, theological and legal perspectives to bear on debates concerning biotechnology patents.



Dr Pierre Haas (2017)

Dr Haas has been elected to a Hooke Fellowship at the Mathematical Institute at the University of Oxford; it is a two-year

appointment. Appropriately for a position at the Other Place, his post is named after Robert Hooke, whom Isaac Newton could not stand! He will take up the fellowship towards the end of the academic year.



Mr Fintan O'Toole (2019)

Mr O'Toole is a writer, critic and columnist with the *Irish Times*, the *Guardian*, the *New York Review of Books*

and many other publications. He started out as a theatre critic in Ireland, then in the US, and has published books, mostly on playwrights whose names begin with Sh (Shakespeare, Sheridan and Shaw). Brexit has distracted from his primary current project, the official biography of Seamus Heaney, and he is seeking refuge in Cambridge to get back to it. Please see page 17 for an extract of this year's Parnell Lecture.

Dr Meng-Shan Tan (2019)



Dr Tan gained her medical practitioner's qualification certificate in 2010, her physician's practice licence in 2012 her MD degree in 2012 from Capital Medical

University, Beijing, and her PhD degree in 2015 from the Ocean University of China. Her work focuses on the genetics, biomarkers, preventions and therapies for Alzheimer's disease, and she was the recipient of the 2014 International Scholarship Award from the American Academy of Neurology.

Professor Allan Pring (2019)



Professor Pring is the Distinguished Professor of Chemical Mineralogy at Flinders University, Adelaide, South Australia. He has lived and worked

in Adelaide for over 35 years and spent most of his career at the South Australian Museum as Head of Earth Sciences until 2014. He has been a Visiting Fellow in Mineralogy at Trinity College, Cambridge (1999–2000) and an Alexander von Humboldt Fellow in Inorganic Chemistry at the University of Hamburg (1993–4). His research interests focus on the physics and chemistry of ore deposit formation and his group has pioneered development methods to study hydrothermal mineral forming reactions at high temperatures and pressures.

I left Magdalene with an Engineering degree for a career in investment banking; now I am the co-founder of a science academy for children as young as three years old!



BIG BANG ACADEMY

BY MISS SARAH TONG (2011)

The impact of education

My years in Cambridge impressed upon me the importance of a good education. Cambridge has helped me to develop an informed curiosity and a passion for learning. Upon graduation, I took a job in finance as I was intrigued by the way capital markets developed and how important they are to modern society.

My background in science and engineering has always driven me to constantly learn new things. When my work in the finance sector became too routine, I felt I needed to venture out of my depth and to carve a new path in my career.

Q What was the impetus for Big Bang Academy?

The turning point that kick-started this initiative was a conversation with my cousin. She asked me, if I were to do anything to make a change or an impact upon society, what it would be. The first thing that sprang to mind was to inspire more children to fall in love with learning science.

There's a distinct childhood memory I would describe as the 'lightbulb' moment when I found my passion in science. At the age of around five to six, my parents would discourage my siblings and me from watching too much television. When their entreaties seemed to fall upon deaf ears, they decided to cut off the source completely. One day, I came home to find that the TV could not be switched on. After a thorough check, I came to the conclusion that it had to be broken, since the switch was in the right place. But when my parents returned home from work, it would work fine again. I spent days investigating the TV and its circuits, finally realising that there was a tiny compartment in the

circuit which was missing a very small tube inside. I searched the house inside-out and eventually found the correctly-sized tube in my parents' closet. They had removed the fuse so the TV could not be switched on! From that moment, I knew that science could help me solve problems (not being able to watch TV being my biggest problem as a kid!); the experience taught me not to give up and to keep looking for solutions.

It was this positive, joyful memory that inspired me to read more about, and develop my interest in, science. There is an increasing demand for talent in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) careers. More often than not, science is taught by rote learning and memorisation which renders it overly complex and dull. I believe that a fun, hands-on experience could have a huge impact on a child. I want to recreate these 'lightbulb moments' for children who often face immense academic pressure and therefore overlook the joy in learning.

Forming the business idea

From that day onwards, I was determined to find a way to work towards my new goal. Most of my friends work in finance so I had no connections to the education sector. I felt it important to gain experience in the field, so I took



Miss Sarah Tong with Big Bang Academy student.



www.bigbangacademyhk.com



on part-time science instructor jobs during the weekend alongside my full-time banking job. I also volunteered to teach hands-on science classes at a local community center with lessons I designed myself. My most memorable experience was teaching a class of 20 young kids without having had any prior teaching experience. It was a lot of effort to get them to pay attention for a whole hour! I observed that a lot of pre-school children really enjoy exploring and learning through science activities. However, most pre-school teachers have no training in teaching science so they struggle to design age-appropriate and easy-to-understand content for early-age kids.

Upon discovering this niche in the market, I felt more confident about developing my own venture. I spoke to others about the idea with the aim of forming a team. I rekindled a friendship with a fellow Cantab who read Natural Sciences and is equally passionate about science. I shared my vision with him and we clicked immediately. We decided to name our business the Big Bang Academy, signifying the start of everything.

Q What have we achieved? What's the future plan?

Big Bang Academy's mission is to redefine early age science education. We

believe science is for everyone and no one should feel excluded. We promote 21st century skills like problem-solving, critical thinking and creative thinking through fun, hands-on science classes. Our students participate in immersive learning where they actually dress, act and think like a scientist. When our children define themselves as inventors, scientists and engineers, they embrace a growth mindset and a positive attitude towards failure.

We have developed a comprehensive curriculum for children between three and ten years old covering the six key pillars of science: physics, chemistry, biology, engineering, astronomy/earth science and environmental science. In every class, students will be learning about different scientific phenomena that relate to their daily lives, such as how plants produce food, how planes fly or how to build a tall tower. All of our classes are hands-on, so students complete at least one experiment or build a mini-project to bring home.

Nothing is more rewarding than seeing the joy in children when they find interest in what they are learning. It is encouraging to have parents tell us that their five-year-old daughter or son now aspires to become a scientist or an

engineer after attending our classes. Such feedback really makes our day.

We dream big and we aspire to become the top early-age science academy in Asia. In under a year, we have accumulated 400+ students and our workshops can be found in several locations throughout Hong Kong. We are also planning our flagship summer camp with a detective theme, including well-known science engagement educators (some of whom are Cantabs) to host the activities.

Our business has definitely been affected by the coronavirus outbreak, but it has also motivated us to innovate and quickly react to provide new solutions. In addition to face-to-face classes, we now offer live-streamed hands-on science lessons online. We are also working with one of the biggest online parenting platforms in Hong Kong to produce fun, educational fun science videos for children to learn at home.

The entrepreneurial journey has been much more challenging than I'd expected. The focus of entrepreneurship is often seen as starting a profitable business; however, we are glad that our venture also creates value for others by stimulating the growth of young minds in the pursuit of science and technology.

MS FUCHSIA DUNLOP (1988)

THE FOOD OF SICHUAN

Fuchsia Dunlop is a cook and food-writer specialising in Chinese cuisine. She was the first Westerner to train at the Sichuan Institute of Higher Cuisine, and has spent much of the last two decades travelling around China, collecting recipes and exploring its food.

Almost twenty years after the publication of her first book *Sichuan Cookery*, declared by *Observer Food Monthly* as one of the ten greatest cookbooks of all time, Fuchsia revisits the region where her own culinary journey began, adding more than 50 new recipes to the original repertoire and accompanying them with her incomparable knowledge of the tastes, textures and sensations of Sichuanese cookery. We caught up with Fuchsia to ask her a few questions.

Q What first led you to explore the world of Chinese food?

I'd always loved cooking and one of my early ambitions was to be a chef. While I wasn't sure what I wanted to do after leaving Magdalene, I imagined I'd end up in something related to food, and perhaps also travel. I first became interested in China through a sub-editing job at the BBC Monitoring Unit, not long after leaving Cambridge, and visited the country for the first time in 1992, backpacking. After that, I started Mandarin evening classes at Westminster University and eventually won a British Council Scholarship to attend Sichuan University in Chengdu. I was supposed to be studying Chinese minorities

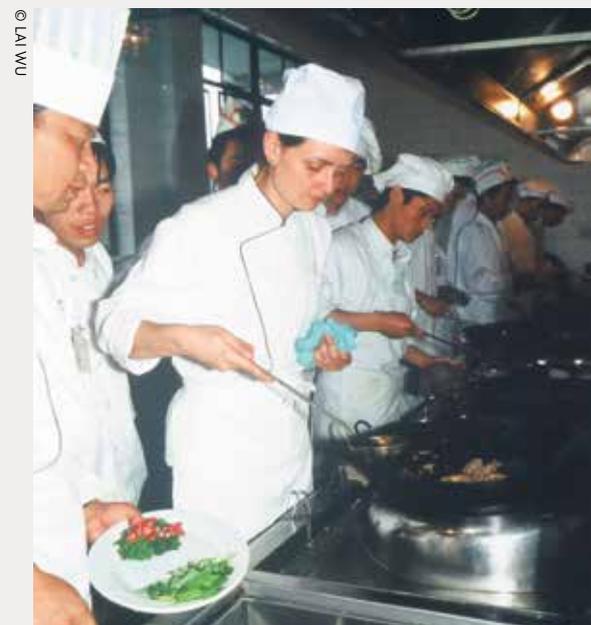
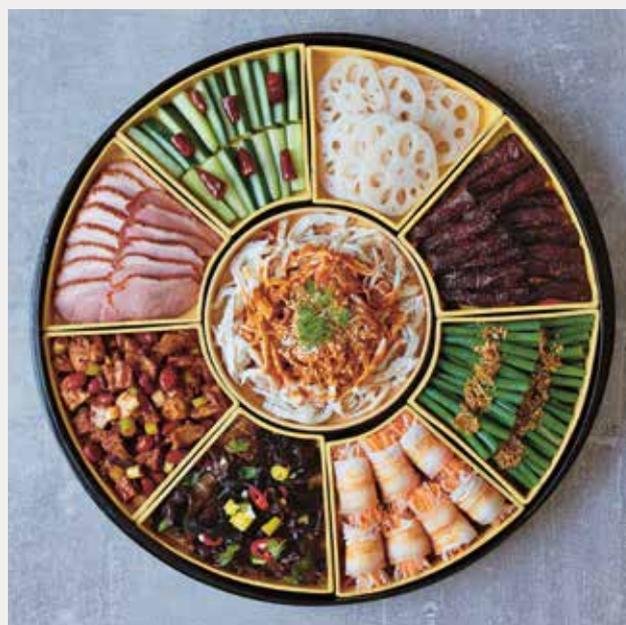
history but quickly became distracted by the amazing local food. I started asking restaurateurs if I could learn in their kitchens, and ended up becoming the first foreigner to train as a chef at the Sichuan Higher Institute of Cuisine. It was great fun and totally crazy in retrospect: I was one of three women in a class of about fifty young men (almost a repeat of Magdalene!), and all our classes were taught in Sichuan dialect.

Q You read English Literature here at Magdalene (as part of the first generation of Magdalene women, no less!) before becoming an acclaimed writer; how was your understanding of the art of writing shaped by your studies? Was there a writer in particular who inspired you, whether from your studies or otherwise?

My contemporaries used to joke that English was a completely useless subject – and I've actually been surprised by how incredibly useful it turned out to be! Firstly, it's just an immense privilege to have the time to read one's way through so many great classics of literature, and reading good writing is essential for anyone who wants to write. Also, reading critically teaches you some of the tools of the trade and makes you think deeply about how language works. By the time I left Magdalene I was instinctively a sharp editor, which turned out to be extremely useful in my career. And apart from the direct benefits of studying literature for an aspiring writer, learning how to pull the strings of language is invaluable for self-expression, persuasion and communication in any walk of life.

ASSORTED COLD DISHES

Centre: 'strange flavour' bang bang chicken.
Clockwise from lower left: fine green beans in ginger sauce, 'white' pork in garlicky sauce, sour-and-hot wood ear salad, rabbit with peanuts in hot bean sauce, tea-smoked duck breast, spiced cucumber salad, coral-like snow lotus, numbing-and-hot dried beef.



I didn't read any food writers as part of my course, but the highlight of my studies was undoubtedly Shakespeare: a joy. I was particularly lucky to have as a supervisor Tom Morris, who is now artistic director of the Bristol Old Vic but was then writing a PhD on Renaissance drama, who unlocked the subject for me. Foodwise, my writing idols include MFK Fisher, Fergus Henderson (for his recipes), John Lanchester (for *The Debt to Pleasure*), Claudia Roden (for her culinary ethnography) and the Qing Dynasty Chinese gastronome Yuan Mei.

Q From Barshu and Jianbing shops to Xi'an Impression and Master Wei, Brits are learning about the huge breadth of regional specialities across China, beyond the relatively narrow range of Cantonese classics they're used to like sweet and sour pork or prawn toast. What do you think is likely to take off next in England?

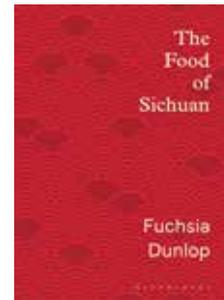
There is no shortage of delicious Chinese regional foods for westerners to 'discover'; the main problem is that immigration rules are now so tight that it's virtually impossible for new chefs to come over from China to work in the UK. So although I'm sure people here would love the cuisines of Yunnan and Guizhou, just for a couple of examples, I'm not sure who is going to bring them to public attention!

Q You often describe Chinese food as treating vegetables as the star of the show, in particular with tofu as an ingredient in its own right rather than a mere meat substitute. As we become increasingly conscious about the environmental and ethical impact of consuming meat, what place do you think Chinese food has in this conversation?

The traditional Chinese diet can be a source of inspiration for anyone seeking to eat less meat, because the vegetable dishes are so delicious. Many are made either with small amounts of meat, or with fermented beany seasonings and pickles that bring rich umami flavours to the main vegetable ingredients – which means that you can eat less meat without feeling any loss of satisfaction. In a Chinese culinary context, a little meat can go a long way. Unfortunately westerners tend to think that typical Chinese restaurant food, which often emphasises meat, fish and poultry involves a lot of deep-frying and is heavily seasoned, is representative of the cuisine as a whole. Actually, the Chinese know far more about healthy and balanced eating than most westerners do; the ideas that food is medicine and that a good diet is the absolute foundation of good health, are deeply engrained in Chinese culture.

Q Who, dead or alive, would be your ideal dinner party guest and why?

The aforementioned Yuan Mei, an eighteenth century Chinese gourmet and author of the seminal cookbook *Recipes from the Garden of Contentment*. He was a brilliant and eccentric scholar, a poet, a witty and irreverent writer and, of course, an extremely discerning eater. I'm sure he'd be great company.



If you would like to find out more or try any of Fuchsia's mouth-watering recipes, *The Food of Sichuan* is available in all good bookstores and online sellers. Happy cooking!

www.fuchsriadunlop.com

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ISBN-10: 1408867559

ISBN-13: 978-1408867556



TWENTY-FIVE YEARS exporting British food

by Mr Sean Ramsden MBE (1990)

It's fair to say that I enjoyed my time at Cambridge – arguably rather too much! I suppose I was there at the tail-end of when admission wasn't quite so academically-focussed as it is now. The amazing social and sporting life Cambridge had to offer in the last years of Thatcherism really took priority over my academic work, and I graduated with a “Douglas Hurd” – a third, in what was seen then as one of the 'lighter' subjects – History of Art. Hardly my proudest achievement.

Whilst at Cambridge, I'd spent some of my vacations working in one of my family's businesses, a large grocery distribution business. I discovered that, hidden within its bowels, it had a tiny amount of export business, supplying mostly ex-pat markets with British favourites such as Heinz Baked Beans and Colman's English Mustard. The early 90s saw the formation of the European Single Market, the creation of frictionless trade within what was then the EEC, but also a weakness of sterling, the result of our exit from the disastrous Exchange Rate Mechanism. The circumstances were ripe for the growth of an export business, so that's the leap I took, forming the nascent export business into a stand-alone business run by myself and employing...well...myself.

The early years were difficult, but fun. Unlike my life at Cambridge I actually had to work pretty hard! In hindsight I had no idea what I was doing, but, somehow, I managed. It turned out I had a naturally commercial mind-set and what one might call 'entrepreneurial flair'! The following years seemed to go by in a flash, but we averaged an amazing 30% year-on-year growth over a 15-year period, taking us from 'one-man band' to one of the UK's largest food exporters, and three-times winners of the Queen's Award for Enterprise and over 80 other business awards.

Ramsden International now supply products from more than 600 manufacturers – everything from small artisan producers to all the big global names – to more than 700 retailers and wholesalers in over 135 countries worldwide. The ex-pat market is still there, but much of our growth has come from supplying retailers who in turn cater to sophisticated, affluent and cosmopolitan consumers around the world who recognise the quality of British food, in

particular the growing middle-class in markets such as Africa, Asia and the Middle East.

I've been fortunate enough to have travelled to more than 85 countries with work, and we now have sales offices in eight markets worldwide and employ nearly 100 wonderful colleagues. A year ago I appointed a Managing Director to run the business on a day-to-day basis, freeing up my time for guiding the business at a strategic level, but also allowing me to take on some pro-bono non-executive directorships, which I find both rewarding and stimulating. I serve on the board of the British Chambers of Commerce, the Institute of Export and the main committee steering Government trade policy post-Brexit, as well as a few others. We're certainly living in fast-moving times as far as trade is concerned, but I'm still optimistic about the opportunities for UK plc.

It was a huge honour and surprise to hear I'd been awarded an MBE in the New Year Honours list, for services to international trade, coming as it did on my 25th anniversary of starting the business.



IMMIGRANTS IN NELSON'S NAVY

by Dr Sara Caputo (2019), Junior Research Fellow

The late 18th century Royal Navy lingers powerfully in British national memory. Trafalgar monuments, Nelson monuments, museum exhibits, images of sailing warships, or some old charity shop copies of Patrick O'Brian's and CS Forester's novels are always at hand, even in the most remote corners of Britain. "England expects that every man will do his duty", the flag signal which Admiral Nelson raised before the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805, has been periodically redeployed to prop up patriotism and national identity. As the UK faces one of its deepest moments of crisis, the blanket use of the word 'England' to signify 'Britain' rings problematic to our ears. It also did, perhaps, to those of some contemporary Scots and especially Irishmen. However, there is another substantial group of men whom a nationalistic reading of the Navy's exploits readily forgets.

British immigration law was much more permissive in the 18th century than it is today. Aliens were allowed to move, work and settle freely (the main restrictions were on appointment to crown offices and ownership of land or ships). There were caps to the employment of foreigners in the peacetime merchant marine. In wartime, however, alien seamen could constitute up to three-quarters of a merchant vessel's complement, and, especially if skilled, they were absolutely welcome in the Navy. In fact, after two years of service they were granted naturalisation, a privilege which was otherwise rare and expensive. As long as the war lasted, sailors were a useful type of immigrant, and the state treated them as such.

England expected that these men, too, would do their duty. Their pay, treatment, and living



Dr Sara Caputo is Lumley Research Fellow in History at Magdalene. Her main area of research is 18th century transnational maritime history. She is completing a book provisionally entitled *Foreign Jack Tars*, based on research in British, Italian, Maltese, Dutch, German and American archives. She has papers out in the *Historical Journal*, *Scottish Historical Review* and *Annales Historiques de la Révolution Française*. Her other research projects concern the history of naval medicine and technology and 18th century charts.

During the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars (1793–1815), thousands of foreigners served in the Royal Navy. I am finishing a book on this subject, derived from my PhD thesis. Judging from my sampling results and those of other scholars, I estimate that between 8% and 14% of the fleet would have been foreign-born, but I have also come across at least one ship on which this figure was 23%. Crucially, 'foreign' here does not necessarily mean someone from British imperial territories. In a sample of nearly 4,400 sailors, Americans (or Britons pretending to be Americans) were the largest single group, followed by West Indians, but either of these categories was in fact outnumbered by northern Europeans: Germans, Scandinavians and Dutchmen. If we add other continental Europeans (Portuguese and Italians, Frenchmen and Spaniards, Maltese, Russians and more), imperial recruits, however we define the 18th century British Empire, were the minority.

conditions were the same as those of British tars. It was illegal to press-gang (forcibly recruit) aliens into the Navy, but many of them were press-ganged regardless. It was problematic, and technically forbidden, to recruit a French seaman who was a prisoner of war, but this, too, was often done. Other governments had varying attitudes towards the recruitment of their own seamen into a foreign Navy, ranging from the open protests of the United States to the grudging compliance of Mediterranean countries which relied on Britain for their survival. Yet the British Navy kept recruiting or snatching the men it required, paying limited attention to diplomacy. The needs of a state at war did not discriminate in terms of national belonging. National mythology, however, very much does.

It is a seriously strange business writing this in a mostly deserted college, in the midst of a great deal of work for the college officers as they try to support staff and students through the largest disruption we have experienced for centuries. And it is rather poignant to think that my last term as Master will be spent in this relative isolation. But this at least gives me some sense of what it's like for this year's graduating cohort, who will be deprived of their hopes for a triumphant and celebratory end to their time here, and of the opportunity for a proper farewell to teachers and friends.

description from a Canadian academic of his experience in a university department in Toronto in its heyday. He called it a 'hardworking, coherent and meaningful community'; and that, I said, was what I thought a college should be. The Master's job was, I thought, to do what could be done for the coherence and meaningfulness – making sure that people conversed with each other across generations and disciplines, nurturing a spirit of hospitality at all levels, trying to hold up a shared picture of a purposeful and humane identity. I had the sense, during that conversation,

MY TIME AT MAGDALENE: a letter from the Master

by Dr Rowan Williams (2013), Master of Magdalene

In a college like ours, this feels especially hard. Magdalene has consistently declared its pride in being a college in which human community really matters. Its priorities, its political colouring, its social composition have all changed radically over the years; but this has been a constant. When I ask undergraduates why they chose Magdalene, the answer is invariably to do with the quality of our shared life; and I am always delighted when students, unprompted, tell me about conversations with friends from other colleges in which they have trumpeted Magdalene's superior virtues as a supportive, informal community. At best, I think we're quite good at exhibiting a corporate version of what the Italians call *sprezzatura* – a lightness of heart and touch that grows out of confidence and intimacy.

When I accepted the offer of the Mastership eight years ago, I still knew relatively little of Magdalene. I had had a couple of acquaintances here when I was at Christ's in the late 60's, and I had good friends in the Fellowship, but it was difficult in my undergraduate years not to think of Magdalene as being a bit of a world to itself – and those were the years when it still had the name of a college a bit more devoted to field sports than to the collective earnestness of 1960's undergraduate life (and Christ's was a fairly earnest place in its way). But coming here to be interviewed for the Mastership gave me a vivid sense of an academic community where people enjoyed one another's company – something not universally true (they say) of collegiate life...

At that interview, I had to say a few words about what my vision for the college would be; and I recall borrowing a

that this rang bells. And when I started in office, I recognised just how much my predecessor and Lisa had done to imprint this afresh in Magdalene's DNA; for Jane and myself, there was a strong feeling that all we had to do was to let ourselves be carried by this powerful and generous current.

One of the trying things about the position I had held before (one of a good many!) was that you didn't have colleagues in the normal sense. You had a feverishly hard-working staff, and you had a group of other bishops and archbishops who shared the basic work of keeping the Church going. But there often seemed a large number of decisions only the archbishop could take and a weighty expectation of being able to stand up in public and express the identity of a painfully diverse collection of often contentious subgroups.

Although a Master's powers are – like an archbishop's – limited in terms of sheer executive liberty, they have some of the same purpose, something to do with setting both a tone and an agenda. But what I found so welcome in Magdalene was a culture in which there seemed to be a genuine sense of the common ownership of decisions – and rather less of the unhelpful urging to show 'leadership' that came from those who were invariably the first to complain when any decision actually got taken. Not the least pleasure of the last seven-plus years has been the confidence that this community is able to handle conflicts and direct policy without posturing, partisanship and rancour. Of course there have been stressful and abrasive moments; but I shall look back on this period as a mercifully positive one – a very satisfactory convalescence from the high temperature of ecclesiastical politics.



And then of course, there has been the pleasure of the company of our students. Always a stimulus, always a delight – and often an inspiration, too. Magdalene students of the last few years will have got used to my telling them that they are here to learn how to ask constructively awkward questions. And when they do, whether it's questions about college, university or wider society, that is a refreshing reminder of how a university education equips people to challenge what seems obvious, especially when what seems obvious is actually stifling, lazy or sterile. And – to pick up another regular theme of what I've said to undergraduates – the college experience is there in order to 'humanise' the university experience in such a way that you learn the confidence to raise questions in a climate of engaged and friendly exchange across a variety of disciplinary frontiers.

Every single encounter with our alumni has confirmed my feeling about what the college is and what matters in its life. The alumni community – enthusiastic, involved, endlessly and imaginatively generous – has been no less a joy than the resident community, and I am going to miss those lively events, in the UK and worldwide, when we've gathered to celebrate Magdalene and what it has meant for us.

The coming months as Jane and I prepare to move (to Abergavenny in my homeland) will be a lot odder than we'd planned, and we feel acutely the lack of an opportunity to say proper goodbyes and thank-yous to all the various categories of Magdalene folk who have welcomed us and supported us in these years. But our feelings of gratitude and loyalty are no less strong for all that. We have had a wonderful time here, all we could have hoped; and it is a privilege to have had the opportunity, and to have enjoyed your friendship.

BUILDING EXCITEMENT

by Ms Anna Bardos (1994)



Can school buildings inspire students?

“It must be inspirational”, we hear without fail. Schools rightly want to deliver more than simply good teaching and learning spaces – they want to fire up students and staff. But ‘inspiring architecture’ isn’t just a building which ‘looks exciting’ – that alone does not endure. An inspiring education building enthralls through the ways it encourages and allows people to act and interact within it – the things it encourages to happen.

I have worked with many schools as they formulate their ambitions, from which we in our team devise buildings to foster their particular educational vision. Sevenoaks School’s vision was a new Science and Technology Centre to inspire curiosity and enquiry, and transform students’ learning experience.

We discussed in depth with the school community their experiences and wishes – every school is different, and it’s their own ethos,

pedagogy, and activities which must be designed for. Initially we asked what staff and students want to do rather than discussing ‘rooms’, sidestepping a limiting physical context. Detailed analysis of physical requirements, curriculum, timetables, extracurricular and outreach activities followed, revealing a web of activities and demands in flux throughout the day and year. We sat in on lessons, studied how existing buildings’ attributes affect school life and researched educational science and technology precedents.

Students told us they want to study ‘subjects not on the curriculum’. School alumni in research and industry concurred that interdisciplinary approaches are where the action is. Team projects drawing on real-world problems – demanding interdisciplinary solutions – are key to the school’s pedagogy too. Clearly the new building had to foster interaction, beyond simply bringing together the disciplines previously dispersed around campus.



View through vitrine to laboratory beyond.

Another need was a feeling of vibrancy and openness. By necessity, efficient, flexible labs are shared by many teachers and cleared of apparatus after each class – sterile vessels awaiting their next 50-minute incarnation. Exciting paraphernalia hide in technicians' areas, off-limits and out of sight – occasionally shuttling out for a brief lesson-time appearance. A series of blank labs, inaccessible to students unsupervised, hardly excite. Contrast any art room brimming with creative force, materials and evolving work all casually on show – you feel invited to grab a brush. So we wanted to create a place for science and technology which invites participation – where the means of experimentation feel at hand, minimising the distance – both physical and psychological – between sparking an idea and pursuing it. The people, kit, research all within reach.

Of course the real inspiration in any educational building is the exchange of energy and enquiry between students and staff within. There is no

An inspiring education building enthuses through the ways it encourages and allows people to act and interact within it – the things it encourages to happen.

substitute for this. Our task as architects is to design spaces capable of genuinely enhancing and supporting that energy.

A key idea behind the new Science and Technology Centre is that activity is visible all around: experiments in progress; prototypes being tested; challenging exhibits; classmates and staff in activity, discussion and debate. Laboratories, workshops, project rooms, technicians' areas, the CAD-CAM machine room and offices all open from a 3-storey central daylight atrium, with glazed screens allowing views into and between. Despite this transparency, excellent acoustic separation allows complete focus. Open staircases rise through the atrium, filled with tides of movement and chatter at lesson changeover.

Shared collaboration areas within the atrium let the buzz of creativity continue outside class. Students gather here for self-coordinated group work, lively clubs, to finish writing-up, talk with a tutor, or simply hang out. Students had told us they'd love somewhere which 'feels different to a classroom'. The informal, approachable nature of these spaces, with staff and students weaving past, differs completely from study in detached rooms, and acknowledges learning as a social activity.

Full-height vitrines line the atrium collaboration spaces, with views into and out from teaching spaces beyond. Students and staff readily devised topical exhibits – probing fundamental questions of our time, showcasing an incredible breadth of student technology creations and gathering books on the beauty, philosophy and literature of sciences – no 'textbook' in sight. New ideas flourish. The power to express ideas in a compelling manner – in 3 dimensions, integral with the building fabric and visible to all – has proved valuable and engaging.

'Visual' links between disciplines have created genuine bonds through the interaction consequently encouraged – and that interaction is as crucial within each department as between disciplines. The school's previous buildings had technicians hidden in dark 'back-of-house' prep rooms, invisible to students and separated from teachers. We appointed technicians' areas the core, adjoining both staff offices and teaching spaces, opening from the atrium to reveal their essential work of concocting clever experiments and engineering ingenious technical approaches – collaborating with staff and students to support their various ventures.

continued



Atrium of Sevenoaks School Science and Technology Centre.

Shared teapoints at the intersection of teaching and technical staff spaces hope to evoke the frequent anecdotes from research institutions that it was their shared kettle or sofa – not a fancy piece of kit – which transformed research outcomes.

Students' eyes light up at the thought of 'a place to try stuff out', and alumni engineers and innovators recalled a formative chance to 'tinker' independently in their student days. But such freedom is tricky to provide, given obvious and advancing safety logistics of chemicals, burners, machinery, and requisite staff supervision. We arranged advanced projects labs and workshops linked to staff spaces, with glazed screens between, allowing students to work as independently as possible with inherent or direct supervision on hand nearby. Group science demonstrations, lectures and exhibitions are enabled by a large multipurpose hall.

Laboratory design emerged after months of discussion and analysis of various options. Resulting labs are flexible and reconfigurable to suit different activities and class sizes, with a few fixed layouts where stability is key. This ongoing iterative consultation and design process continually tuned the building to the school's needs, as discussions progressed from blue-sky ideas down to the last socket position.

Creating a building is a decidedly interdisciplinary endeavour. We always collaborate in close teams from the outset, so interdependent matters of architecture, structure, services, environmental design, acoustics, cost, craft and construction are resolved together. Their elegant and legible resolution is of particular value in an education setting.

The building has an expressive structure, evident construction and durable natural materials. Spaces are bright and airy, beautifully-daylit and naturally-ventilated throughout. We wanted a fresh, practical and robust character – not the 'clinical' feel of some science facilities. A concrete frame and slender steelwork support inclined, ribbed, precast concrete roof slabs, giving a dynamic structural appearance and reflecting daylight into the spaces below. The atrium acts as a lung, providing natural through-ventilation to all spaces. Tough yet warm self-finished natural materials of concrete, timber and rubber are offset by fine white steel balustrades and glazed screens.

Staff and student tours during construction illustrated the journey from concept to realisation such as demonstrating the cunning structural design of the 'floating' atrium stairs, plus techniques and logistics of their manufacture and installation.

The building is shaped by principles of passive environmental design, and is designed to exceed the requirements of 'Excellent' rating under BREEAM, the world's leading sustainability assessment method for buildings. Chosen construction materials are renewable, recyclable or recycled and sustainable, and contribute to a healthy indoor environment. Concrete contains a cement substitute, greatly reducing its carbon footprint. Several innovative bespoke features are included, such as the natural ventilation strategy incorporating light-proof louvers, allowing labs to be blacked out for optics experiments. More well-known sustainable design strategies comprise thermal mass, night-time cooling, borehole water low-carbon cooling, recycled water flushing, photovoltaic panels and a sophisticated building management system regulating interior comfort and optimising energy use. We hope some students may be enthused by these attributes.

We've been thrilled to see the building come to life the moment staff and students entered. Once settled in, the school reported: "the more we do, the more students lead and generate new ideas. The building gives space and quiet to think, collaborate and activate".

Young people have a passion and commitment to the big challenges of our time, and we endeavour for their experience at school to equip them in their pursuit.



i **ANNA BARDOS** (1994) is an architect specialising in all types of education and arts buildings, whose work has won many awards. She has devised long-term development masterplans for numerous schools, and has particular expertise in consultation and development of project briefs. She is a guest reviewer at several schools of architecture. Following her studies at Magdalene and at MIT, Anna joined Tim Ronalds Architects in 2000, becoming a director in 2006. She left the company in 2019 and now works independently. She has worked with Sevenoaks School for 14 years and was project architect for the school's development masterplan, The Space Performing Arts Centre, Science and Technology Centre and Global Study Centre.

SEAMUS HEANEY'S Escape from History

by Mr Fintan O'Toole (2019), Parnell Fellow

On April 24th 1960, the Wolfe Tone Dramatic Society in Bellaghy, County Derry, staged a one-act melodrama, James Ignatius Fanning's *Melody Alone*, about the last hours of the Irish nationalist hero Robert Emmett. Plays about Emmett, who was executed in Dublin in 1803, following a grimly abortive attempt at a rising, had long been a staple of popular Irish nationalist culture. The audience that flocked to the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) hall in the village would have known the main characters as well as a Greek audience would have known the figures from collective myths they were about to see in a tragedy by Euripides. As well as Emmett, there were his sweetheart Sarah Curran, the insidious informer Leonard McNally and the cruel Major Sirr.

This was not just a historical drama. It was history understood as a drama. Emmett embodied an idea of resistance, defeat and resurrection that was evoked in 1848, 1867 and in 1916. While his martyrdom, for the most part, had been sentimentalised into a lachrymose harmless, it could still be incendiary: Patrick Pearse, leader of the 1916 Rising, saw himself quite explicitly as a reincarnation of Emmett. This 1960 production, moreover, was being staged in Unionist-dominated Northern Ireland. Both the play and its context were loaded with signifiers of allegiance to an oppositional nationalist culture: Emmett, Wolfe Tone, the GAA. Alongside the actual performance, there was inevitably on such an occasion the implication of a much larger drama being imagined collusively by the audience: Irish nationalism, at some point in the future, fulfilling its long-thwarted destiny.

The star of the production, playing Robert Emmett, was a student from the local area who had made his debut a year earlier with the Wolfe Tone players in another nationalist melodrama, *For the Land She Loved*, set during the 1798 rising. The reviewer for the Mid-Ulster Observer was stunned by the performance of the leading man: "Never can there have been a more true characterisation... Is there a better portrayal of the 'darlin' of Erin? We think not." This "fiery", "idealistic" and "noble" Robert Emmett was Seamus Heaney, who had just celebrated his 21st birthday.

As this year's Parnell Fellow at Magdalene, I am working on the official biography of Seamus Heaney, who was of course an honorary fellow. As a tribute to him, and to his great friend

Professor Eamon Duffy, I had planned (before the intervention of Covid-19 in all our lives) to give the annual Parnell lecture on Heaney and history. It is not, as this vignette illustrates, an abstract subject. Nor is it a simple one. For even in this little moment, we can see two things.

One is that Heaney, as a young man, could not avoid a very specific and inherited notion of what history means and where it is tending. Indeed, the evidence suggests that he was both willing and able at that point in his life to inhabit a communal, even tribal, history. The other, though, is that he chose, as a poet, to forget or elide this moment. In *Stepping Stones*, his marvellous book of autobiographical interviews, conducted by Dennis O'Driscoll, Heaney does mention "historical pageants based on the rebellion and capture and execution of Robert Emmett". But it is in the context of seeing them performed by a travelling professional troupe, not of being himself an incarnation of Emmett. Immediately after this answer, he is asked whether seeing such plays imbued him "with the ambition to perform." His reply is: "Not at all."

The point here is not that writers – poets especially – invent their pasts, choosing what is useful and what can be discarded. Of course they do. It is rather that what is discarded can be a source of creativity just as much as what is chosen. In this case, there is a richly fertile unease, a willed amnesia that proves to be imaginatively potent. Throughout his poetic career, Heaney would explore a number of alternative ways of thinking about history and this restlessness would fuel some of his greatest work. This is perhaps a lesson in the importance of having to live down one's youthful triumphs.

Seamus Heaney, portrait taken shortly after winning the 1995 Nobel Prize, by Bobbie Hanvey.



Working for the English-Speaking Union

by Professor James Raven (1990)



I have worked for the English-Speaking Union of the Commonwealth for 40 years – ever since entering an ESU schools' sixth form competition, also resulting in a student exchange to the US. It was my first time abroad. No-one in my north Essex family had gone on to higher education and, without the ESU's help, I wouldn't have had the confidence to apply to Cambridge. This January, I took over as Chair of the ESU, succeeding Lord Paul Boateng who had given five years' distinguished service.

As an ESU volunteer for so long, I know the charity from the inside, contributing to educational activities for the young and disadvantaged, chairing current affairs events and helping our many members and branches in the UK and abroad and in our sister ESU in the US. I am also cheered by the distinction of the ESU Board, and not least our Treasurer,



ESU-Lindemann Communicating Science Day for Primary Schools at Cripps Court.

another Magdalene Member, James Scruby (1975). And that ESU confidence-boost given to me years ago still comes to the rescue. Nonetheless, the responsibility of the task ahead was re-emphasised in early March, at the Commonwealth Day service at Westminster Abbey, when asked to process with the Aga Khan as representatives of two of the most senior Commonwealth charities. Predecessors as Chair of the ESU include Winston Churchill and, more recently, Francis Pym. More Magdalene reassurance was at hand though with a friendly wave from David Hoyle (1988), as Dean, busily greeting Meghan and Harry (and others whom the world's press were less interested in).

So, what is ahead? The English-Speaking Union was founded in 1918 in the aftermath of the Great War to promote people-to-people understanding, or, in the words of its founder, "that international relations should not be left to governments alone." That belief still stands strong today. As communities diversify, societies also seem more polarised, and there is a huge need to understand different perspectives and opinions. New technologies transform communication, but critical engagement is often lacking. The ESU aims to help young people – where English happens to be a common language – to listen and evaluate other points of view, to distinguish fake news from real. We hope to enable young people to disagree without being disagreeable and to learn that what they think and say matters.

Our ESU speech and debate programmes and cultural exchanges improve the ability to communicate effectively and civilly and they encourage academic attainment and a range of social, emotional and interpersonal skills. In recent years, we have worked in particular in areas of disadvantage, and as I lead the ESU with its formidably talented staff and its thousands of members, many working in local ESU branches in this country and in ESUs abroad, I hope to fundraise to boost participative as well as competitive activities. We offer fun, games-led workshops which encourage students to discuss a wide range of topical issues

with an open mind. We sponsor speaker meetings on current affairs, promote oracy in the classroom (including through a new All-Party Parliamentary Group) and we provide teachers with Continuing Professional Development opportunities in speech and debate. Nationally and internationally, we also run public speaking and debating competitions and offer a variety of cultural exchanges for students, teachers and professionals to build relationships and share ideas across communities and countries.

These are challenging times for charities, but last year alone we developed the oracy skills of over 10,000 young people in England and Wales and reached well over a million young people in over 50 countries through our International Public Speaking Competition. We introduced some 2,000 primary school students in disadvantaged areas to our Discover Debating programme, awarded 26 secondary school exchange and professional scholarships and provided 75% of all competitive debating in rural England. For many years now, the regional finals of ESU schools' public speaking competitions have been held in Cripps Court Auditorium in Magdalene, which is also the venue for our annual ESU-Lindemann communicating science day for primary schools. This March, more than 100 ten-year-olds were enthralled by presentations (among others) by Magdalene Research Fellows Lisa Kreusser (2019) and Dr Alastair Gregory (2010), both hugely gifted in involving their young audience in talks about mathematical patterns and the way sound-waves work.

THE COLLEGE HAS BEEN HUGELY SUPPORTIVE OF THESE IMPORTANT OUTREACH ACTIVITIES AND IT IS A JOY TO SEE THE EXCITEMENT IT BRINGS TO THE CHILDREN AS WELL AS TO THEIR TEACHERS AND PARENTS.

A father wrote to me after one of the primary school days: "as parents of kids in a struggling state school, this kind of event meant a lot more to us, and to many people, than the somewhat media-led outreach... efforts Oxbridge... [seems] to excel in. And since Rowan Williams himself has called out Cambridge for being one of the most unequal parts of the country, I think it is excellent you are looking to Magdalene's own doorstep with such efforts". Feedback like that makes it all worthwhile.

And that confidence-building continues. Owing to my taking my seat in the Abbey without realising the need to process, I left my things under my seat as I scrambled to get to the off-position. This meant that when I processed out at the end I had to carry my elderly raincoat and a bulging bag exposing a half-eaten ham sandwich to TV-view the length of the Abbey. But then perhaps mixing formal skills with informality is the key to our work to unlock potential and boost confidence and achievement.

JCR UPDATE

by Mr Cyrus Yazdanpanah (2018), JCR President

It has been a very busy start to the year for the newly elected JCR committee this term, with everyone on the committee really stepping up to the plate from the get-go. The term started with a great 'Refreshers Week' ran by our Freshers Rep, Caitlin, who also hosted the ever-popular Marriage Formal for first years later on in term. Our Refreshers Week ended with a very popular 'Pyjama Party' themed bop organised by our Ents Officer, Alice. Sadly, this proved to be the last bop of the year as the one planned for the end of term was cancelled, much to the dismay of many in the JCR.

In early February about 100 of us went to Oxford for our annual Magdalene-Magdalen Sports Day, competing in several different sports. There was great success in hockey and darts; the rugby team put in a valiant effort on the pitch despite the absence of their captain and talisman due to injury, losing by one try. The day was overall incredibly enjoyable for all involved, and we are all excited to be hosting next year.

In terms of Access work it has been unbelievably busy for our fantastic Access Officer, Alex, who has thrown himself into the job from day one. Aside from organising school visits, and working with CUSU on their Shadowing Scheme,

he organised Magdalene's first ever Access/Class Act formal at the end of term. Welfare Officers Gabrielle and Tom have continued to run welfare doughnuts and sexual health clinics, as well as doing a lot of incredibly important work behind the scenes to help with all areas of student welfare. Our Women's Officer Emma has also been busy, finishing term by organising a fundraiser brunch for Plan UK and Cambridge Women's Aid held on International Women's Day.

Overall, it has been a pleasure working with the committee in my first term and I look forward to my tenure ahead for the rest of the year.



JCR Pyjama Party themed bop.

BOOK REVIEWS

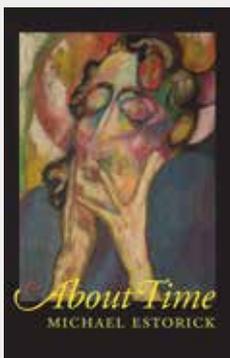
About Time

by author Mr Michael Estorick (1970)

Publisher: Arcadia Books (10 July 2019)

ISBN-10: 1911350668

ISBN-13: 978-1911350668



Michael Estorick's sixth novel takes a scalpel to the comfortable inheritance of the English middle class, following its two main characters, Bill and Pete, as they navigate the end of their middle years and prepare for what is left. The two men, friends for almost fifty years, meet and meet again to evaluate and revisit their shared past.

About Time is not a calm or forgiving story; neither is it a swaggering comedy. It is too knowing and intelligent for that. But beneath the jaded sophistication is an exceptionally well-crafted picture of two lives which are at once privileged and haunted.

Estorick's ability to write naturalistic dialogue breathes vibrant and immediate life into their twin journeys.

But there is also a brave and original construction to the novel. Bill and Pete's brittle exchanges are contained in miniature chapters which tantalise the reader. So much is left unsaid. It is like being on an archaeological dig where tiny bits of a complex site protrude from the earth.

There is a great deal to enjoy in the casual snobbery and obsessive pondering over relationships and the writer's acute observation sometimes produces delicious embarrassment. Through all this, the bonds of friendship strain but refuse to break.

In the denouement, caution, both from the writer and his characters, is thrown to the wind.

Written by CH (1970)

MCR UPDATE

by Mr Jacob T Deasy (2017), MCR President

It's been a busy year here at Magdalene for the MCR Committee. We started our term of office by making the MCR constitution more supportive and up-to-date with a landslide majority from the MCR community. Summer Banquet was a resounding success, with prosecco in Pepys cloisters preceding a raucous affair; one or two even took a dip in the river to end the night! The Committee were quick to make their mark on the MCR social calendar with this enjoyable conclusion to year.

After a busy summer of research, Freshers' Week quickly arrived, welcoming over 80 new faces to the MCR. The freshers were keen to get to know their fellow matriculands, making the most of all that Freshers' Week had to offer. During Michaelmas Term, we held the largest ever MCR bop, with over 150 in attendance from across the University. This was an evening enjoyed by all and a fantastic showcase of Magdalene's wonderful community. Michaelmas Term concluded with the Christmas Banquet which was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone. Singing carols over mince pies and a glass of port was a wonderful way to end the year.

Lent Term began with 'welcome back' events and the Burns Night Ceilidh, before continuing with



Members of the MCR at their Matriculation.

movie nights, formal swaps and international food nights. After the Lent Term elections, I'm pleased to report that James Ball (2019), Antonia Kefala-Stavridi (2018), Lina Vassiliu (2019) and I will form the executive committee for 2020/21 as President, VP, Secretary, and Treasurer respectively. I am sure we will continue to successfully support the MCR community.

Although this year has finished amidst difficult circumstances, the Committee and I hope that those who had their time at Magdalene cut short can take some solace from the friendships formed during their two fantastic terms.

The Shame Game: Overturning the toxic poverty narrative

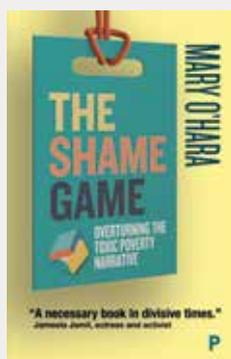
by author Ms Mary O'Hara (1988)

Publisher: Policy Press (27 Feb. 2020)

ISBN-10: 1447349261

ISBN-13: 978-1447349266

[www.policy.bristoluniversitypress.co.uk/
the-shame-game](http://www.policy.bristoluniversitypress.co.uk/the-shame-game)



Drawing on a two-year, multi-platform initiative, this book by award-winning journalist and author Mary O'Hara examines what it means to be poor in Britain and America. She argues that for decades the primary narrative about poverty in these two countries has focussed on 'bad life decisions' rather than policy choices or economic inequality and asks how we can overturn this portrayal. Crucially, she turns to the real experts to try to find answers – the people who live it.

Mary O'Hara is an award-winning journalist and author specialising in social policy and social justice. She was inspired to write about social issues in part because of her experience of childhood poverty growing up in Belfast, Northern Ireland. Mary freelances across a number of

publications and platforms including *The Guardian* and *Mosaic Science*. She was named International Columnist of the Year in 2017 and 2018 by the Los Angeles Press Club Southern California Journalism Awards for her *Guardian* column *Lesson From America*. She is also an executive producer on the podcast *Getting Curious* with Jonathan Van Ness and founder of the anti-poverty initiative Project Twist-It.

Mary is also the author of *Austerity Bites: a Journey to the Sharp End of Cuts in the UK* and has contributed to other books including *The Violence of Austerity* (2017) and *Council Skies* (2019) by the artist Pete McKee. In 2009–2010 she was an Alistair Cooke Fulbright Scholar at UC Berkeley. Mary is also the founder and chair of the David Nobbs Memorial Trust.

HUMAN ADAPTATION & CHANGING CLIMATES:



Digging up lessons from Pacific prehistory

by Mr Dylan Gaffney (2017), Bye-Fellow

Over the coming century, it seems certain that humans will have to adapt to a changing climate. We will need to innovate novel behaviours and new technologies to respond to anthropogenic increases in temperature, rising sea levels, changes to forest cover and the extinction of fauna. But this is not the first time in our species' history that we have been confronted with climate change. What happened when the earth began to warm towards the end of the last Ice Age, about 20,000 years ago, and what can we learn from how our ancestors responded to this climatic change?

Our collaborative archaeological project in the Raja Ampat islands at the far western edge of the Pacific Ocean

is attempting to shed light on some of these questions, delving into what made Stone Age hunter-gatherers so readily-adaptable and behaviourally-flexible in response to environmental change. Humans have been living in the region for somewhere between 40,000 and 60,000 years, but when sea levels rose by about 120 metres at the end of the Ice Age, vast stretches of the Australian and Asian continental shelves were inundated, creating new islands and encouraging the growth of littoral and estuarine environments.

In fact, the large continent called 'Sahul,' consisting of Australia, New Guinea, Tasmania, and the Raja Ampat islands, was split apart during this time, while the 'Sunda' shelf of peninsular Southeast Asia fragmented into the



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Excavations underway at a large cave site on the south coast of Waigeo Island, Raja Ampat. The archaeologists are excavating through the ashy remains of former fireplaces. At this site there is evidence of prehistoric food remains and broken artefacts left behind by hunter gatherer groups.



A reconstruction of marine transgression in the Asia-Pacific. Left: Sea levels 120m below present during the Last Glacial Maximum, 20,000 years. Centre: Rising sea levels 12,000 years ago cutting some islands off from the mainland. Right: Approximately modern-day sea level from 8,000 years ago (right).

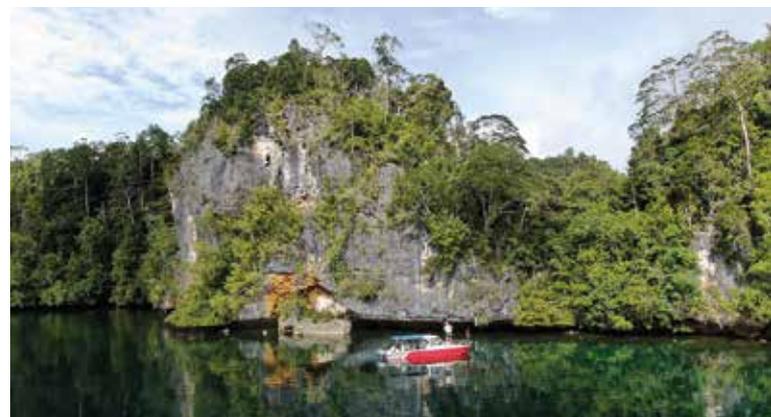
islands of Borneo, Java, and Sumatra. Moreover, with increasing temperature and precipitation, equatorial rainforests expanded into new areas that were formerly savannah. Megafauna such as the *Diprotodon* (a marsupial the size of a hippopotamus but closely related to wombats) became extinct in the area, probably in part due to the restriction of their grassland habitats, as well as hunting and landscape burning by early humans.

To investigate how humans responded to these dramatic changes, two seasons of Raja Ampat fieldwork were completed in collaboration with Indonesian and West Papuan archaeologists and members of the local community. Our team spent two months in early 2018 mapping and recording archaeological sites in the archipelago, noting the presence of over 150 new sites, including several enormous caves and rockshelters. This involved coastal reconnaissance around limestone karst systems, along with ground surveys in the rainforested interior of the islands. Aerial drones were used to produce imagery of the surrounding landscape and to map sites that could not be accessed by foot. A key part of this research has been to examine raised coral reefs and 'tidal notches' in the limestone which can give clues to tectonic uplift relative to past sea levels.

Later in 2018–2019, our team undertook four months of archaeological excavation at three of the largest recorded cave sites, uncovering stratigraphic deposits that have now been radiocarbon dated back to the last Ice Age. By digging systematically, centimetre by centimetre, we are able to carefully map the artefacts and fossil/bone remains in three dimensions and correlate them securely with deposits of known age. These kinds of excavation in the Pacific are always community events and involve working closely alongside local landowners, custom leaders and enthusiastic members of nearby villages.

Laboratory analysis of the excavated material is now underway. We hope to describe how the local environment has changed since the last Ice Age, and how humans adapted their technology and foraging behaviours in response. Bone isotope and palaeobotanical analyses in collaboration

with specialists in Germany and Australia are helping to reconstruct local palaeoenvironmental sequences. These will be correlated with analyses of stone tools, bone points and shell artefacts that I am currently undertaking at the Department of Archaeology to investigate whether humans innovated new technologies to respond to rising sea levels, insularisation and the expansion of tropical forests. Zooarchaeological analyses of the fossil bone assemblage is already shedding light on how humans changed their animal hunting strategies, with provisional results showing that people responded to an unpredictable climate and an island way of life by focussing their hunting on smaller but more predictable game such as fruit bats, cuscus and large murids.



Coastal survey around the limestone karst of the Raja Ampat islands.

As we carry on further into the 21st century, the low-lying Pacific Islands are again on the front line of global sea level rise. The thing that will mark the coming century as unique in human history will perhaps be the rapid nature of the changes. Whether present-day humans respond with the same behavioural flexibility that our ancestors seemingly did remains to be seen, but by examining the deep interwoven history of human adaptation and climatic change we can get closer to understanding our species' capacity for novel innovations and transformative responses.



For further information please see: raja-ampat-arch.com



THE ROWAN & JANE WILLIAMS BURSARY FUND

In the final academic year of the Master's tenure, the College has established The Rowan and Jane Williams Bursary Fund in honour of the Master and Lady Williams to mark their wonderful contribution to the College.

The fund will endow, in perpetuity, up to three bursaries each year. It is hoped

that the first of these bursaries will be awarded in Michaelmas 2020.

The Master and Lady Williams believe no one should be put off or prevented from fulfilling their academic potential because of financial constraints. Indeed, the College has long been committed to the principle of 'needs blind admission' and that no suitably qualified student should be deterred from applying to Magdalene due to financial concerns.

In recognition of Dr Williams' home country and the College's close connection with Wales given our continued outreach and access work in collaboration with the Welsh

Government's Seren Network, one of the bursaries will be awarded to a student from Wales where possible.

Donations in support of undergraduate bursaries, one of the four objectives of the *Future foundations* Campaign, can be directed to The Rowan and Jane Williams Bursary Fund.

Support from Members who have not previously made a charitable gift to Magdalene or the University will be eligible for matched funding from the Harding Challenge Fund.

www.magd.cam.ac.uk/rowan-williams-fund

College & Virtual Events

All College events to the end of the academic year have unfortunately been cancelled, the grand opening of The New Library and the Reunion Dinners in September have all been postponed. Please be assured that we are working to re-arrange these events and all those whose reunions have been cancelled will be invited to attend a reunion in 2021 (COVID-19 permitting).

With the College's events program sadly on hold we will be diving into the digital events world and invite you all to attend our first ever virtual events! Please pop these dates in your diary and join us online, further details will be circulated shortly.

27 May 2020, 1pm Different aspects of COVID-19 research in Cambridge

Senior Research Fellow, Dr Sarah Caddy (2015), is a Wellcome Trust Clinical Research Fellow at the MRC-Laboratory of Molecular Biology and the Cambridge Institute for Therapeutic Immunology and Infectious Disease (CITIID).

Join the Master, Dr Rowan Williams, for a virtual conversation with Dr Sarah Caddy on her work on a number of Cambridge projects fighting COVID-19 ranging from virus sequencing, to antibodies to COVID-19 in animals.

18 June 2020, time TBC Seamus Heaney: A conversation

Join world leading experts for a virtual conversation about Nobel Prize winning Irish poet Seamus Heaney.

The Master, Dr Rowan Williams, will chair a virtual panel discussion with Emeritus Professor of the History of Christianity, Professor Eamon Duffy (1979), acclaimed Irish journalist and Magdalene Parnell Fellow, Mr Fintan O'Toole (2019) and guest yet to be confirmed. Join them for what promises to be a lively and enjoyable conversation.

Further details on registration will follow but please feel free to email alumni@magd.cam.ac.uk to express your interest in joining us online for these virtual events.

EMERGENCY FUND SUPPORT

In these unprecedented and uncertain times we have taken the decision to concentrate on raising funds to help our people, the students, researchers, supervisors and academic staff suddenly facing unexpected and exceptional financial difficulties, and our College. We have created an unrestricted Emergency Fund to give the Senior Bursar the freedom to respond to immediate pressing needs swiftly and generously. Thank you very much for choosing to support us particularly at this difficult time.

www.magd.cam.ac.uk/support