the Pembrokian

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SPORTING ADVANTAGE
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DENIM DREAMS: LESSONS FROM THE PERSUASION BUSINESS
NEWS, CATS AND THE FUTURE OF CIVILISATION
ON THE FRONTLINES OF FAKE NEWS

PAST EVENTS



Alumni Weekend
September 2017



Pembroke On The Sofa
October 2017



London Reception
November 2017



Tesdale Lunch
February 2018



Gaudy
April 2018



Annual Fund Series
June 2018



Garden Party
May 2018

REUNION EVENTS

2018

Oxford Alumni Weekend
14th - 16th September, Oxford

Pembroke Alumni Reunion Dinner
Saturday 15th September

2019

Gaudy: 1982-1987
Friday 5th April

Gaudy: 1961-1965
(includes 1959 Diamond Jubilee)
Friday 28th June

Oxford Alumni Weekend
20th-22nd September

Pembroke Alumni Reunion Dinner
(includes 1969 Golden Jubilee)
Saturday 21st September

OVER THE NEXT YEAR



In addition to planned reunions, we hold a wide variety of different events throughout the year, tailored to appeal to different alumni groups, from City Breakfasts and Sofa Events to drinks in the Punch Tavern. However, the Development Office will be revising our strategy for communicating with our alumni community. We will be looking at our physical and electronic publications, our events, and our online presence. In addition, we will carry out an online survey to enable our alumni community to share their thoughts with us about what really matters to them about Pembroke.

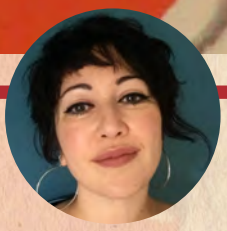
Your views are vital in helping to shape and develop the Pembroke community around the world. We want to know how you feel about the College and what you want from your relationship with Pembroke. What do you love? What could we do better?

We are also seeking any suggestions and ideas on where we hold some of our events. If you are able to host an event or have access to great venues, please get in touch!

Mai Musie, Alumni Relations Manager
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PHOTO CREDIT: DANIEL X. O'NEIL

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



At the ever-excellent Annual Fund Series* in 2017 I listened to Greg Hynes (2014) give a presentation on his research into propaganda in WWI and the idea for this issue of *The Pembrokian* was born. I reflected on the numerous ways in which propaganda, perception and deception have become increasingly commonplace in our present-day lives: the 'fake news' trope ringing loudly in our ears. I felt this was a theme that would be interesting to explore through the lens of our students', Fellows' and alumni research.

My first ask had to be Greg himself, and his piece follows, particularly apt this year referencing as it does the Centenary of The Great War. Carlos Velasquez (2012) was another Annual Fund Series 'alumnus'. A few years ago he discussed his research into how all of our senses are engaged when we eat, and on p18 he demonstrates how sound can augment our experience at the table. A further former speaker in Pembroke's Pichette Auditorium, Vice Chancellor Professor Louise Richardson, who gave the Annual Oxford Fulbright Distinguished Lecture in International Relations last year, has allowed us to reproduce an article on the theme of the importance of universities not least as a counter to our 'post truth' world. Our infographic on p11 seeks to show some key examples of Pembroke's impact from the past year.

Emily Cadei (2005), now working as a political columnist in the US, reports on the worrying influence of social media on our electoral choices on p15. No less influential are reports and concerns on 'the Economy'. Emeritus Fellow, Ken Mayhew, attempts to determine how this abstract concept can be manipulated to illustrate truths on all sides of the spectrum on p17.

When thinking around the subject of propaganda, the advertising profession loomed large in my mind and I was delighted when former BBH Chairman, Jim Carroll (1983) gamely agreed to share some insights into his ground-breaking work on the Levi's ad campaigns of the '80s. It arguably defined an era, made retro cool, and made adverts credible art forms (or perhaps I was simply at an impressionable age when Nick Kamen walked into *that* launderette!).

Propaganda often carries a negative connotation, but can be a force for good. Current student, Sam Pace, considers the tactics used in sport to aid success – something for which our College sportsmen and women have developed something of a reputation! And, another recognised asset of the College is undeniably its association with fantasy fiction: the MCR-founded JRR Tolkien Lecture on Fantasy Literature is now in its fifth year. Fan of the genre, Lindsey Cohick (2016), was the perfect choice to write on propaganda, or perhaps allegory in fiction. Her article considers, among others, the long-term effect of popular fantasy series, Harry Potter, on today's vocal youth. Another growing initiative in College are our now-regular poetry readings, led by Dr Peter King. He introduces the poems on p22.

Finally, James Turner (1998), formerly of Greenpeace, shares with us his latest initiative, Glimpse, which is dedicated to promoting positivity and hope. Read about Glimpse's philosophy and campaigns to date on p24.

I must thank CEO of Heritage England, Duncan Wilson OBE (1975) for agreeing to put himself under our (not-too-intense) spotlight as he is 'Tw-interviewed' on p26, and Timothy Walker (1977) provides his expert recommendation for some mid-summer garden cover on p27.

As ever, I hope you enjoy this issue of *The Pembrokian.* It is my last as your Alumni Communications Editor and I'd like to thank you all for your support, encouragement and friendship throughout my time at Pembroke. I hope to keep in touch.

Have a wonderful summer!

Sophie

@Sophie Elkan

*The Annual Fund Series is an exclusive event for Annual Fund donors. Lively talks and demonstrations by students and alumni are followed by afternoon tea and the opportunity to catch up with friends old and new.

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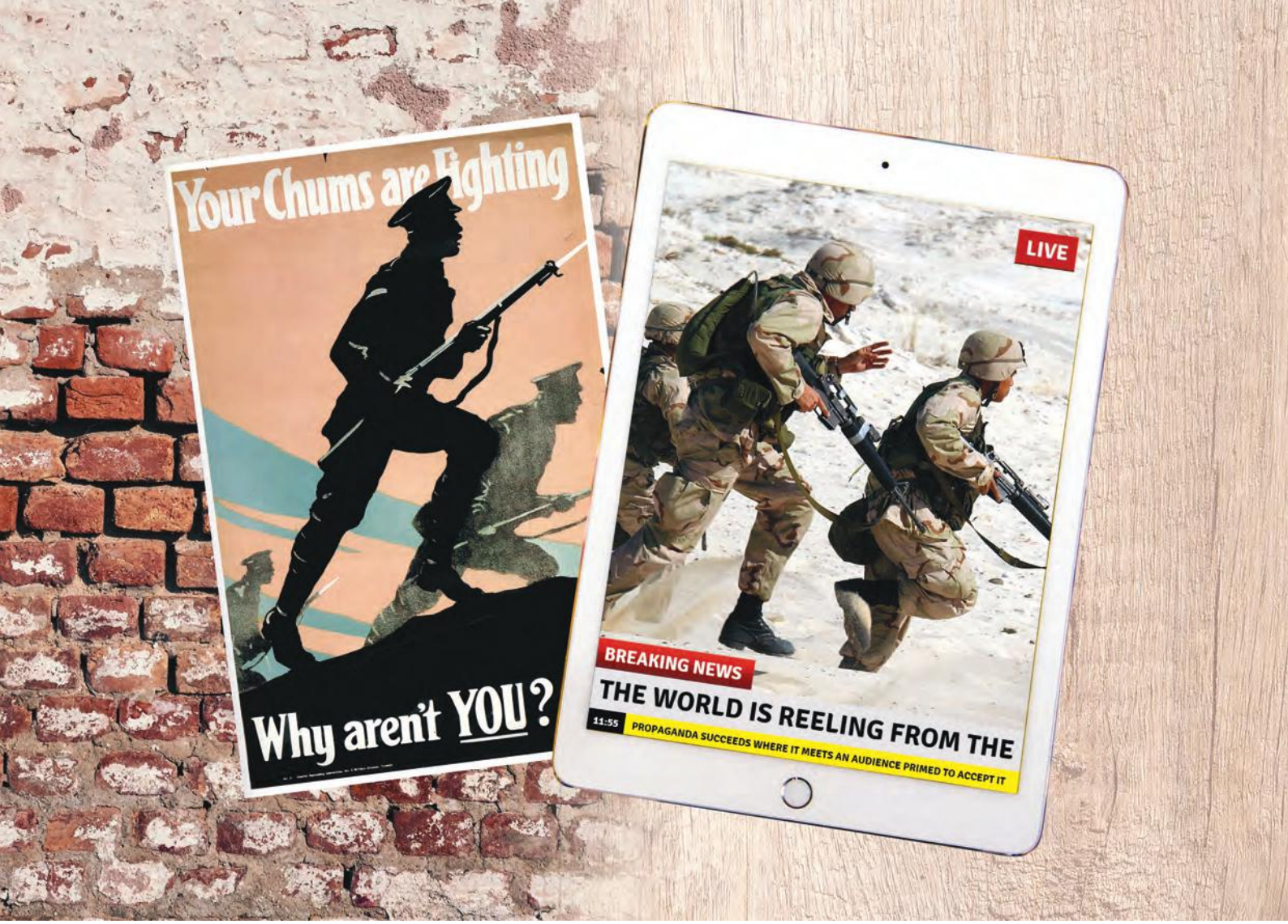
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Edited by Sophie Elkan
Design by Lucy Walters



FIRST WORLD WAR PROPAGANDA – THE ORIGINS OF FAKE NEWS?



GREG HYNES
(2004)

Greg Hynes is DPhil candidate, and current Beit Fund Research Scholar, in Global and Imperial History at Pembroke College, Oxford. His work explores imperial dynamics in British and New Zealand First World War propaganda.

The past several years have seen 'propaganda' return to mainstream consciousness and discussion in dramatic fashion. Whether through overseas interference in the 2016 American Presidential Election, the Brexit vote, or even its role in spreading the influence of terrorist organisations such as ISIS, propaganda is acknowledged as a powerful force in shaping the world we live in, and the direction of politics, in ways not seen since perhaps the height of the cold war. Notable in this shift, however, is how little discussion there is of what the term means. Amongst commentators, politicians, and news organisations of all stripes, the term is used imprecisely, often as a throwaway by-word meaning malign influence. If propaganda is to continue to play such a key role in our world, and crucially, in influencing our perception of our politics, greater precision and understanding of what propaganda is would seem to be useful. To play into a well-worn idiom, this is where a historian's perspective can be helpful: understanding how propaganda developed in the past can give us greater perspective on how it operates today.

From my own perspective, as a DPhil candidate in History at Pembroke, this rise in the contemporary relevance of propaganda in international politics, even since I began my studies in 2014, has been notable. My thesis is a study of official British First World War propaganda, about and directed to, the British Empire, especially the self-governing Dominions. I am attempting to understand how important the empire was as a rhetorical device for British war justifications, and to bolster morale, while more broadly trying to understand how the British Empire functioned during the war. Having spent a lot of time considering the concept of propaganda, its origins, and what it meant during the war and since, seeing its broad and ill-defined application in recent years is striking, and reinforces how history can inform understanding of our world today. Considering issues of continuity and change over time can reveal aspects of how propaganda operates today that may otherwise be obscured.

Perhaps the most familiar examples of propaganda to modern audiences would be Nazi and Soviet propaganda of the twentieth centuries. Both of these examples encapsulate the contemporary understanding: state-directed initiatives to manipulate and influence public opinion, through, at best, exaggeration, and at worst, by outright deceit, coercion, and psychological manipulation. Half a century earlier, however, public understandings of propaganda looked rather different. Widening our historical understanding of the term gives a more complicated understanding of what propaganda can be.

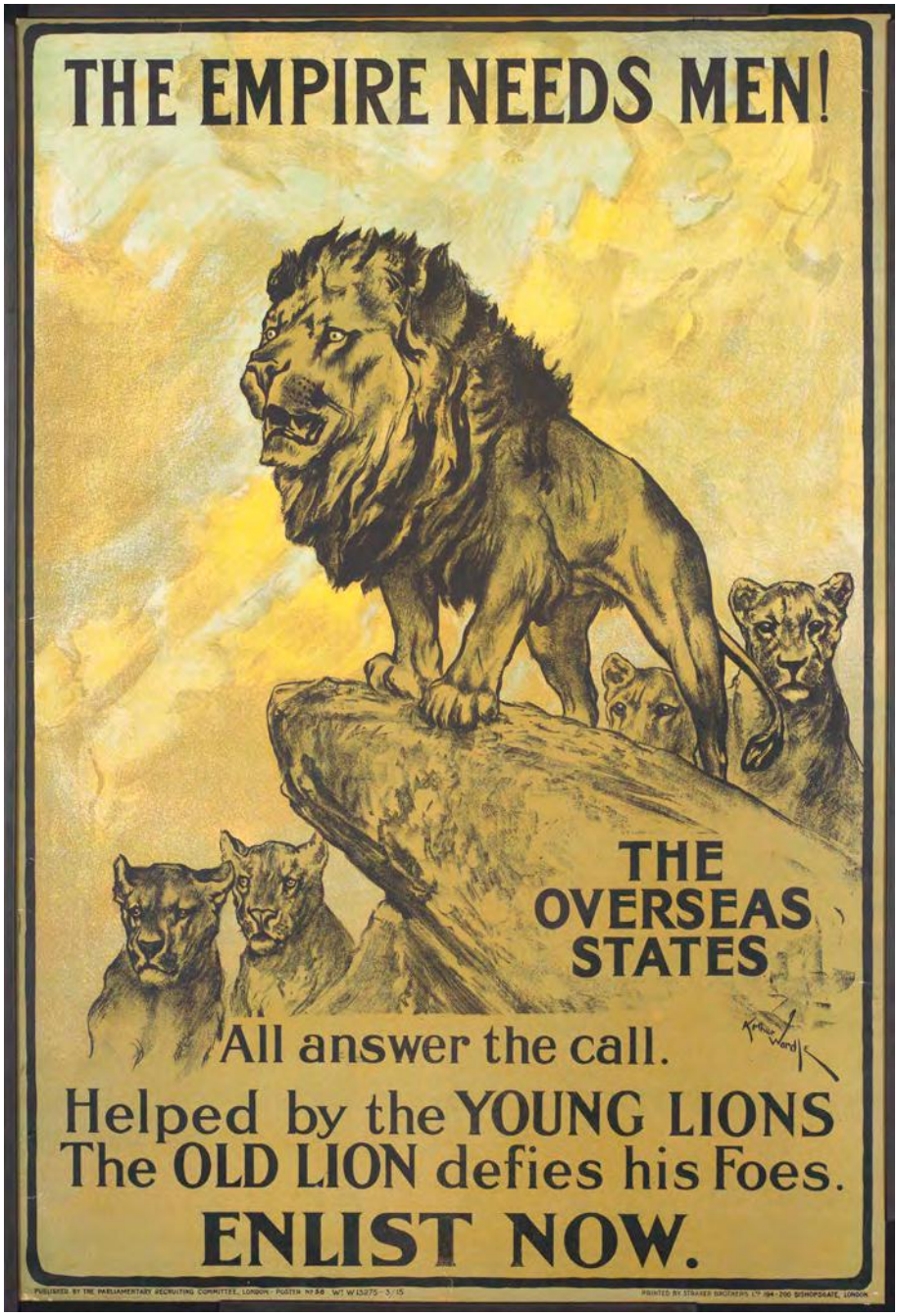
Before the First World War, in the late nineteenth century, propaganda had a much broader public definition than it has today,

instead of being strictly seen as a malevolent or manipulative force. At this time propaganda was seen more as a communicative tool, specifically to persuade an audience or make an argument, but not necessarily deceptively. The term was applied as much to commercial advertising as in political contexts. At this point in time, politicians engaged in propaganda techniques primarily through election campaigning. Alongside more traditional methods of communication, such as public meetings, newer methods such as illustrated posters, and even cinematograph demonstrations, began to emerge, which later propagandists would eagerly embrace. Of course it would be wrong to suggest that such propaganda was not exaggerated, or at times deceitful, however this was largely kept within the typical evocative messaging of political campaigns, rather than connoting a new and more deceptive way of communicating to the public. Importantly, audiences were also often savvy enough to notice when such messaging strayed into the deceitful, or the absurd.

'By the war's end [...] propaganda was seen as the preserve of governments and political actors'

This was the understanding of propaganda that informed the British government's approach at the outset of the First World War. Perhaps the most notable difference to contemporary understandings of propaganda is that at the outset of the war, government-created propaganda was uncommon. Before the war, propaganda was not seen as something that governments did or should do, and accordingly throughout the war, governments' increasing efforts in propaganda caused suspicion and vocal criticism. By the war's end, all belligerents had some official propaganda organisation. Britain eventually had extensive and very effective propaganda machinery, for domestic, foreign, neutral, and enemy audiences. Contemporaries, and historians since, have pointed to the eventual sophistication and effectiveness of British official propaganda as playing a significant role in the allied victory. Not all such assessments have viewed British propaganda favourably from a moral standpoint however. By contrast, at the beginning of the war, Britain had no official propaganda organisations, and had to rapidly improvise to catch up to Germany's sophisticated propaganda campaign, as before this point, propaganda was simply not seen as an activity of the state. The demands of total war changed this. Accordingly, from a diffuse understanding of the term, by the war's end, due to its significance in determining the outcome of the war, propaganda was now seen as the preserve of governments and political actors, a perception that would only harden over time.

An equally significant change as a result of the war was how propaganda became a byword for deception and manipulation, a change from its broader definition before the war. In contrast to the contemporary understanding, connoting lies, manipulation, and deception, during the war itself, British propagandists often quite deliberately strove for the opposite approach. British official First World War propaganda was cautious, and tried to avoid unnecessary falsehood and exaggeration, even if it did not always do so entirely. Understanding propaganda on a scale from white to black, with white being simple, direct, and honest communications of details and unarguable fact, to black denoting outright deception and falsehood, Britain's wartime propaganda could be characterised as generally white to dark grey. Certainly the use of German atrocity stories in the invasion of Belgium, in evocative and charged language, is telling, and showed attempts to play on public emotions and fears, but even at its most emotive, official propagandists tried to avoid outright lies and unnecessary exaggeration. Of course just how accurate or deceitful such atrocity propaganda was is a difficult question to answer, and still hotly debated by historians. More recent scholarship suggests, however, that Britain's atrocity propaganda, particularly the Bryce Report that outlined German atrocities in Belgium, was less exaggerated than many critics claimed it was in the interwar period. Moderation and caution tended to win the day in British propaganda. Even Britain's Defence Against the Real Regulations, which granted the government exceptional wartime powers for social control and censorship, were more commonly deployed against over-enthusiastic pro-war patriotic propagandists, as against anti-war or peace agitators.



FIRST WORLD WAR RECRUITMENT POSTER, 1915. COURTESY IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM

Reconciling this with our contemporary understandings of propaganda is complicated. Most useful, then, is to follow the logic of these wartime propagandists themselves, and consider less the material itself, and more the audience. British propagandists had faith in, and even wariness of, their audience, and their capacity to understand and critique what they received from propaganda. This faith in the audience is something that we as general observers, and even as historians, sometimes lack. British propagandists knew that their audiences were sophisticated and discerning. Since the nineteenth century, literacy rates in Britain had shot up, and by the outbreak of the war the British public were rather media-savvy, familiar with many modes of communication, especially the press. Propagandists were aware of this, and knew they could not flagrantly deceive and manipulate their audience – populations at home and abroad were often shrewd enough to see through outright lies and exaggeration. Indeed, this willingness to decry faking and deception was so acute as to be a problem: British film propagandists were frustrated by the public's criticism of supposed fakery in the extremely popular film *The Battle of the Ancre and the Advance of the Tanks,* even when in reality, the film contained very little staged footage. Audiences did not receive propaganda material in an uncritical way.

'Literacy rates in Britain had shot up, and by the outbreak of the war the British public were rather media-savvy'

Propagandists knew what they could get away with and what they could not: they knew they could not completely deceive audiences, or plant new ideas and opinions in their head out of nowhere. It was considered worse to be caught in a lie than to miss an opportunity to tell a striking story. This was especially so with the added pressure of enemy propagandists looking out for such examples to criticise British propaganda. Instead, British propagandists focused more on building on ideas, opinions, and perceptions that were already in the culture, bolstering suppositions with convincing facts where possible. This should somewhat colour the claim that the British public were falsely led and manipulated into a war they did not want nor understand by deceptive propaganda. Anti-German jingoism, and even a degree of war fever, was present in 1914 Britain – British propaganda certainly stoked that fire. Likewise, this colours our understanding of why the settler Dominions – countries on the other side of the world, such as New Zealand and Australia – would have willingly fought in a war in Europe, which, as many today would claim, had nothing to do with them. 1914 New Zealanders and Australians still considered themselves British. While national identity and pride were strong, and would be stimulated by the war, contemporaries largely understood this as participation in an overarching imperial Britishness. Propagandists and politicians, British or otherwise, did not need to convince these populations that it was as much their war as England's. Just as in Britain, at least for the early years of the war, officials often tried to tamp down excessive pro-war sentiment, rather than try to manipulate the public into accepting the war. Participation in the British imperial family was felt by contemporaries in a way it is hard to understand today, in our post-colonial Commonwealth.

What does this reveal about our modern day experience of propaganda? In many ways, this subtle First World War approach bears striking similarity to many examples of contemporary propaganda, particularly the most effective examples. For example, looking at the 2016 American Presidential election, with the hindsight of almost two years, investigators, observers, and even those politicians and campaign officials closely affected by domestic and overseas disinformation campaigns seem to agree that what made them effective was awareness of audiences' bias. Incoherence or complexity play into this: many varied and even conflicting messages, targeting individuals of all persuasions and opinions can combine powerfully. The utilisation of social media of course makes this all the more potent. Just as First World War propagandists realised one hundred years earlier, the most effective modern day propaganda does not see audiences as blank slates, willing to believe anything. Instead, it plays on existing biases, to dramatic effect. Just as during the First World War, propaganda succeeds where it meets an audience primed to accept it.

'We have to be aware of our role as political and media consumers, aware of our biases, and how different messages can play on them'

History continues to show examples of propaganda's malignant potential in intensifying and exacerbating simmering national tensions into unruly forces and in unexpected ways. What looking back to the term's origins does show, however, is that audiences are not passive in this process – we have to be aware of our role as political and media consumers, aware of our biases, and how different messages can play on them. One hundred years on, propaganda has not receded as a powerful force in our politics and society. The perspective of history can hopefully allow modern audiences to be more aware of its potential.



PHOTO: PAMELA KELLY (FFLICKR)



DENIM DREAMS

Lessons from the Persuasion Business



JIM CARROLL
(1983)

Jim writes about culture and commerce at:
jimcarrollsblog.com @JimCarroll7

During my twenty-five years in advertising, I worked on all manner of client businesses. From banks and beers, to fried chicken and phone networks. Without doubt the experiences that left the deepest impression, and had the biggest impact on my career, were those that I gained on the Levi's jeans account in the 1990s.

Between 1985 and 1998 Levi's campaign for its 501 jeans, developed by the London-based agency BBH, was one of the most awarded and admired in the advertising world. It created a mythical America of enigmatic, unspeaking heroes; of youthful adventure on the open road; of effortless style and heart-rending tunes. And it sold a great many pairs of jeans.

A review of the story behind the campaign suggests a number of broad themes about the business of persuasion, which may be of more general interest and application.

'BE YOURSELF. EVERYONE ELSE IS ALREADY TAKEN.' Oscar Wilde

At the heart of the Levi's 501 story was the determination that it should be true to itself.

Levi's 501 was the original denim jean. It was designed in 1873 for miners in the California Gold Rush. Its riveted construction, button fly and XX stitching sustained it through tough manual tasks. Its rudimentary 'anti-fit' cut was appropriate to its modest origins. It was the jean that was adopted in the '50s by the likes of Marlon Brando, James Dean and Eddie Cochrane, and thereby became a badge of youth rebellion. It had a unique heritage to be proud of.

However, when in 1985 Levi's struggling UK organisation submitted the 501 to consumer testing with a view to a possible re-launch, the results were not encouraging. Modern British consumers were more accustomed to zip flies and figure-hugging fits. The Levi's brand was perceived as middle-aged and middle-of-the-road. What's more, Levi's was quintessentially American at a time when UK youth culture was not looking across the pond for inspiration.

The sensible decision might have been to back away. Or at least to launch a style more in keeping with contemporary tastes.

But Levi's and BBH were determined. This was the original and definitive jean, the blueprint for everything that followed. It was a design classic. It deserved a hearing.

FANNING THE FLAMES OF DISCOVERY

There was a glimmer of encouragement. A small group of cognoscenti in the fashion, music and film industries had already fallen for the 501's authenticity and unique design. There was a growing interest in retro '50s culture, and a thriving second-hand market in 501s from the States. Perhaps, by reflecting what these enthusiasts loved so much about the product, there was an opportunity to fan the flames of discovery.

A SIMPLE STORY STYLISHLY TOLD

A young man walks into a laundrette to the sound of *'I Heard It Through the Grapevine.'* He removes his jeans and t-shirt and puts them in the washer with some stones. He sits down to read a magazine in his boxer shorts and socks, as others look on in amazement.

With a 1985 TV commercial conveying this modest narrative, Levi's 501 jeans were

introduced to the mass British public. Despite its seeming simplicity, 'Laundrette' was an immediate cultural and commercial hit. It was discussed in national media. The music entered the charts. Nick Kamen, the actor playing the central character, became an overnight celebrity. Boxer shorts were suddenly fashionable, with two million pairs being bought in 1986 alone. And 501 jeans sold so quickly that demand outstripped supply.

There followed a series of similarly iconic commercials, all depicting youthful heroes in pursuit of their own American dream, equipped with little more than their 501s, a white t-shirt and an innate resourcefulness. Within three years of the re-launch, 501 sales had increased twenty-fold - at a premium price of between £27 and £30, in a market where the norm was sub-£20.

Levi's succeeded because it didn't follow the convention of the time and hold a mirror up to consumer tastes and preferences. Rather it shone a light on the brand and its unique story. It sought to persuade consumers of its merits, with a simple story stylishly told.

'WHAT THE HEART KNOWS TODAY, THE HEAD WILL UNDERSTAND TOMORROW.'

James Stephens

Although Levi's campaign was inspired by its heritage, it was not an exercise in dry historical narrative. First and foremost the advertising addressed the emotions. It suggested charismatic youth, heroic nonchalance and potent sexual chemistry. It promised freedom, escape, romance and rebellion.

Stripped of spoken words, the ads conveyed all this through compelling storytelling, impactful imagery and emotive music. As John Hegarty, the creative director behind it all, pointed out, *'words are a barrier to communication.'*

EMOTIONAL PRODUCT DEMONSTRATION

Despite the fact that the initial persuasive power of the campaign was emotional, it was also clear that consumers wanted rational reasons to justify their beliefs - to others and to themselves.

So amidst the stylish settings, slim heroes and sensuous music, the commercials always demonstrated the jeans' functional attributes: their strength, durability and wear characteristics. 501s personalised with age and improved with wear. And the more you washed them, the better they got.

Creative teams found that such stories were excellent springboards for lateral ideas. And Hegarty dubbed this advertising approach *'emotional product demonstration.'*

MASS MARKETING A CULT

From the outset there was some concern that, in broadening the appeal of a product originally beloved by a small group of cognoscenti, the brand would lose that critical group's support. What if our opinion leaders sought exclusivity elsewhere? Wouldn't this undermine the whole endeavour?

BBH determined that it was critical to sustain a relationship with opinion leaders. It developed print advertising that directly addressed them in their own discrete magazine titles (publications like The Face, iD and Dazed & Confused). It sponsored cutting edge bands and grass roots music events. And it offered Shrink-to-Fit and limited editions of the core product - something the cognoscenti could call their own.

The lesson was clear: never forget the people that first loved you.

UNITED IN DREAMS, DIVIDED BY REALITIES

Levi's soon looked to export the UK's successful marketing to other European markets. This ought to have been challenging: back in the 1980s few campaigns crossed borders because local cultural differences were thought to be too great.

But BBH found that, though young people might be divided by the realities of their everyday circumstances, they were united in their dreams. The 501 campaign worked wherever the local youth aspired to independence and individuality; to original expression and the open road.

By the mid-1990s Levi's was selling 50 million units per annum across Europe – and always at a premium price.

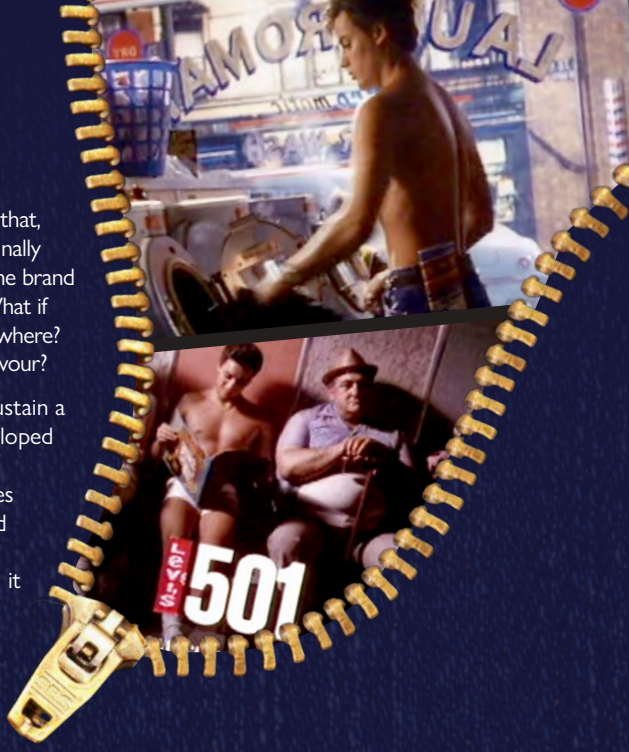
'MOVE IT ON WITHOUT MOVING IT OFF.'

Nigel Bogle

With every new execution in the campaign, the pressure grew to sustain freshness and interest. How do you avoid predictability and familiarity? How do you avoid losing the baby with the bathwater?

The advertising struck a balance. It retained its chassis: the narrative structure; the aspirational hero; the dramatisation of product functionality. And at the same time it underwent constant restyling in its bodywork: the setting; the historical period; the tone; the filmic style; the particular product story.

Over the years 501 commercials were set in pool halls, drug stores and gas stations; in swimming pools, creeks and under the sea; in black & white, colour and animation; in the 19th century, the Depression and in outer space.



As BBH co-founder Nigel Bogle summarised: 'We need to move it on without moving it off.'

Perhaps inevitably, the Levi's 501 campaign did eventually run out of road. There was only so long that one brand could sustain mass loyalty to a single product in the fickle fashion category; only so long that the brand's innovation could be primarily supplied by its marketing rather than by its product; and only so long that that brand could continue to grow volume and premium at the same time. Eventually the centre could not hold, and the market fragmented.

But it had been a pretty good run.

So what did I learn from working on this great, but now long-gone, advertising campaign? I picked up a number of lessons about the fundamentals of persuasion that served me well for the rest of my career:

1. **Don't seek to add value, seek to reveal it.**
2. **Harness the support that you already have: fan the flames of discovery.**
3. **Embrace the power of narrative: simple stories stylishly told.**
4. **Lead with emotion: what the heart feels today, the head thinks tomorrow.**
5. **However much beliefs may be founded on emotion, give people rational justifications for those beliefs.**
6. **Never forget the people that first loved you.**
7. **Find the aspirations that unify people, rather than the realities that divide them.**
8. **Keep moving it on without moving it off.**

I have often felt that these enduring lessons could be of a broader value in the fields of commerce, culture and politics. In an ever more complex, interconnected, fast-paced world, we could all improve our persuasive skills.



PHOTO CREDIT: MIKE MOZERT

BRITISH UNIVERSITIES ARE ASSETS, NOT PROBLEMS TO BE SOLVED

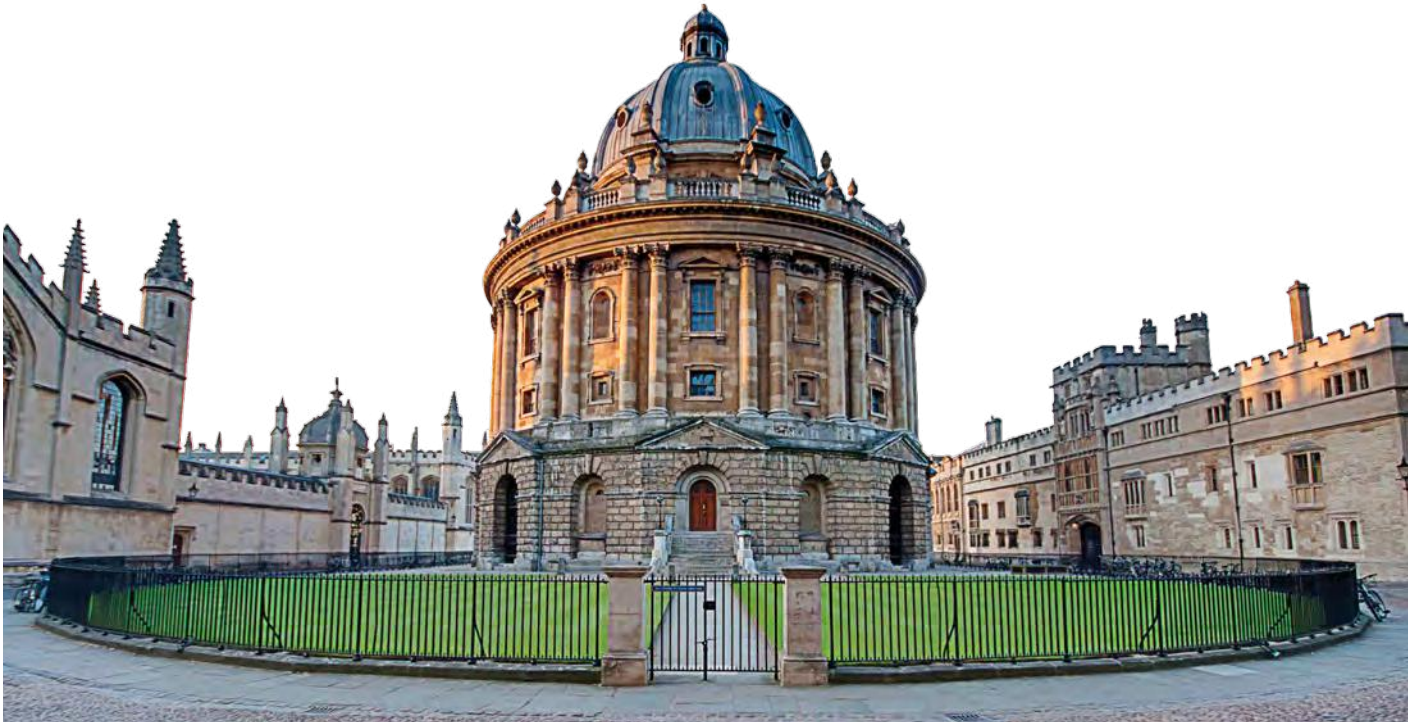


PHOTO CREDIT: MAGNUS MANSKE



In June 2018, Vice Chancellor of the University of Oxford, Professor Louise Richardson gave the Annual Oxford Fulbright Distinguished Lecture in International Relations at Pembroke College. Her lecture, entitled *Universities in the Age of Populism* was an impassioned defence of learning, in an age increasingly defined by propaganda, fake news and post factual analysis, and the political upheaval of the past few years continues to ensure the relevance of the subject matter. Emeritus Fellow, Andrew Seton, reported, 'The work of leading universities is under threat from the alluring comfort of alternative facts and those that spout them. The Vice-Chancellor concluded with a challenge: how can Oxford and its peer universities communicate and engage more effectively with a public made dubious about 'experts'? We can and must do this.'

The role of Universities both in combating the proliferation of propaganda and in enshrining a fair and open education system is one to which the Vice Chancellor has returned in the intervening months. Here, Professor Richardson has given permission for us to reproduce an article written earlier this year, published in *The Financial Times:* British Universities Are Assets, Not Problems to be Solved.

Listening to the public discourse one could be forgiven for thinking that the British higher education system is a failure. It is not. It is the envy of the world.

According to *The Times Higher Education* world university rankings, the UK has three of the top 10 universities in the world and seven of the top 10 universities in Europe. We have 12 of the top 100 universities in the world and 31 of the top 100 universities in Europe.

I cannot think of a single sector of the economy, or of British social or cultural life, in which we do so well. We delight in the success of our athletes at the Olympic Games and root for British films and actors at the Oscars, yet we seem to treat universities as a problem — even though every day our researchers enhance our understanding of the universe, search for cures for diseases and help us to comprehend the world around us.

At a time when university staff and lecturers face cuts to their pension benefits, and when institutions fear the effects of Brexit on research while also facing a potential overhaul of their funding model, it is worth remembering what we do well. Universities are engines of social mobility, drivers of the economy and generators of new ideas.

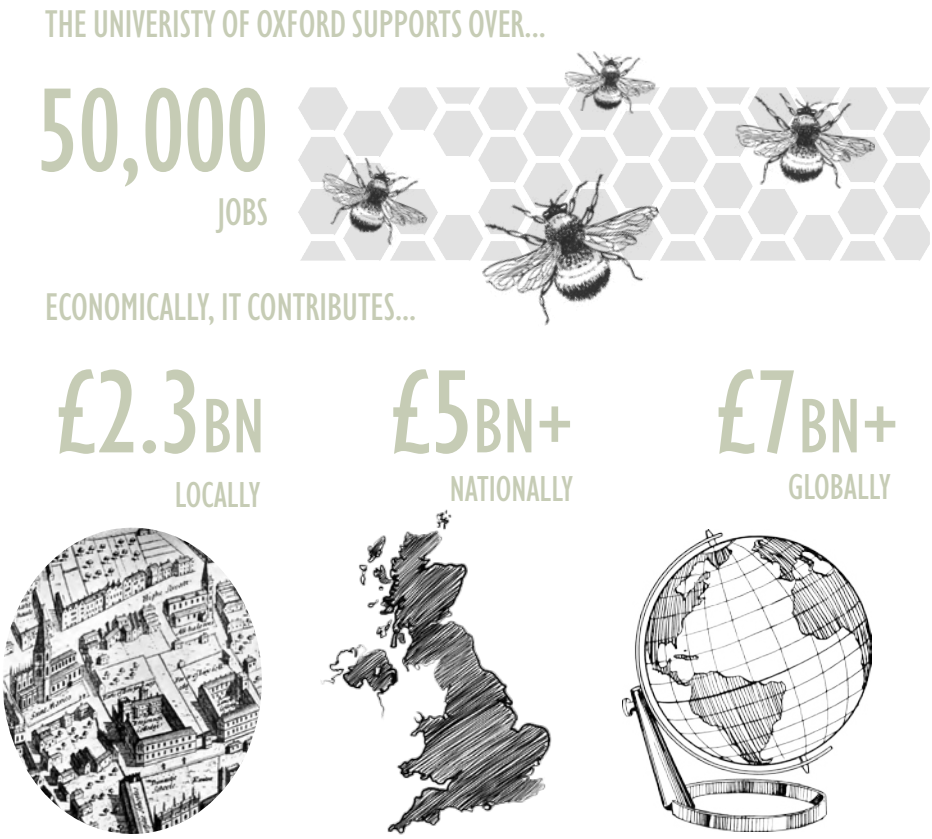
Theresa May, the Prime Minister, admirably identified social mobility as one of her priorities when she took office in 2016. Universities play an integral role in fostering it. The introduction of income-contingent loans has not had the effect many feared of reducing the number of disadvantaged students going on to higher education. On the contrary, English universities are educating more students than ever before and more are coming from disadvantaged backgrounds than ever before. A student from a deprived background is 83 per cent more likely to attend university today than they were in 2006. This should be a cause for celebration.

There are deep socio-economic, regional and ethnic inequalities in British society. Universities reflect them, and cannot eliminate them on their own. But they can be part of the solution. The figures are stark. According to the Social Mobility Commission, a child living in one of England's most disadvantaged areas is 27 times more likely to go to an inadequate school than a child living in one

of the least disadvantaged. Recent data from UCAS, the university admissions body, show that pupils from the most advantaged postcodes are 14 times more likely to achieve three A grades or better at A-level than those from the least advantaged areas. The top eight schools in England produce the same number of students gaining eight A* grades or better at GCSE as the bottom 1,500 schools.

Ethnic differences are stark, too. In 2012-13, according to figures from the Higher Education Statistics Agency, one in 20 black students received three A or A* grades at A level, one in 10 white students, one in four Chinese students and one in eight overall. We need to understand what lies behind these differences. Only then will we be able to mitigate them.

Regional differences are also striking. Buckinghamshire and Hertfordshire together produce almost twice as many students gaining three A* grades (1,352) as the entire north-east of England (734). Most sobering, perhaps, is that the Social Market Foundation, a think-tank, found that for a child born in 2000, where they live is a more powerful predictor of academic success than it was for children born in 1970.



'Universities are being used as a political football [...] But they are too important for that'

Oxford is often criticised for not admitting more poor, ethnic minority and regional students. We invest £17.2m a year trying to do so. The pace is slow and the numbers are low, but the trajectory is clear: the percentage of students admitted from the two most economically disadvantaged groups has increased from 6.8 per cent to 10.6 per cent in five years. The number of students from the two most educationally disadvantaged areas has increased from 9.5 per cent to 12.7 per cent. We have found that the most successful way to recruit smart students from non-traditional backgrounds is to bring them to Oxford, where they invariably discover, usually to their surprise, that other students are "normal".

These are uncertain times for the British economy, but universities such as Oxford can help. Oxford's annual operating budget is £2.2bn. It supports more than 50,000 jobs, generates £2.3bn a year for the local economy, over £5bn for the British economy and more than £7bn globally. When the university recently went to the markets for a £750m 100-year bond, it attracted £2.8bn in potential investment, a striking statement of confidence in the enduring value of the education it offers. Mrs May has in the past talked of an ambitious industrial strategy for Britain. One of the barriers to this is the skills gap. But this will not be overcome by insisting that every university offers apprenticeships. The UK has a large and diverse higher and further education sector. What we need is more clarity of purpose about what different kinds of institutions do best. The example of Germany is often invoked, but I doubt one will find that great German technical colleges are being asked to become centres for the humanities.

It often feels to those of us who work in higher education that universities are being used as a political football in a battle for the youth vote. But they are too important for that. Institutions such as Oxford are accustomed to political turmoil — after all, we backed the losing side in the civil war, and endured visitations and burnings at the stake. Universities today can help lead the country through this time of political uncertainty and fiscal constraint. Political parties should see them as their allies, not their whipping boys.



PROFESSOR RICHARDSON WITH DR PETER CLAUS AND STUDENTS ATTENDING PEMBROKE ACCESS WEEK 2017

Source: Louise Richardson/Financial Times, 24th February 2018. Used with kind permission from *The Financial Times*. All Rights Reserved.

ILLUSTRATIONS: DEBBIE.ELZING (FLICKR) AND WWW.VECTEEZY.COM

PEMBROKE MAKES AN IMPACT

Pembroke's big stories of the past few years have included some headline-making research: Professor Ingmar Posner's work with spinout company, Oxbotica, on 'robot cars', Professor Ben Davis' research into carbohydrates and increased wheat yields and Stephen Tuck's seminal book on the Civil Rights Movement. However, real-life impact which demonstrates Pembroke's own contribution to the importance of universities carries on in College year-round. Here are some highlights from this past academic year:

WHY DID THE UNIVERSE NOT DISAPPEAR AFTER THE BIG BANG?

Professor Alfons Weber was named UK Principal Investigator on a £65m research collaboration between Deep Underground Neutrino Experiment (DUNE) and the Long-Baseline Neutrino Facility (LBNF) – the world's most intense high energy neutrino beam.



ART FOR ALL

Pembroke's JCR Art Gallery welcomed over 250 visitors as part of the annual city-wide festival 'Oxford Open Doors' organised by the Oxford Preservation Trust

GOWN MET TOWN...

...when undergraduate Lizzy Thompson (2014) set up the University of Oxford division for a charity called Student Action for Refugees (STAR). They have paired with a local charity to support Syrian families in Oxford and also created opportunities for Arabic speaking students to meet and talk with local refugees wanting to practise their English.

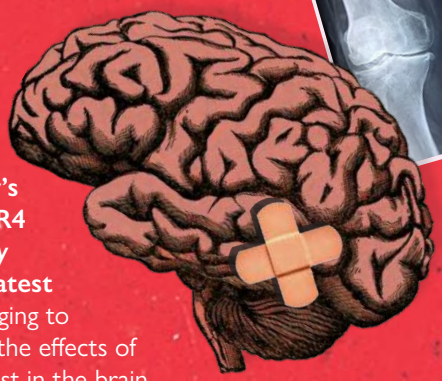




LESS IS SOMETIMES MORE...

...as Pembroke graduate student Ed Burns (2016) has proved. Ed's recent paper on unicompartmental (partial) knee replacements demonstrates that up to 50,000 patients could benefit more from a simple surgery which carries less post-operative risk, allows faster recovery time and increases knee function – plus represents real cost saving for the NHS.

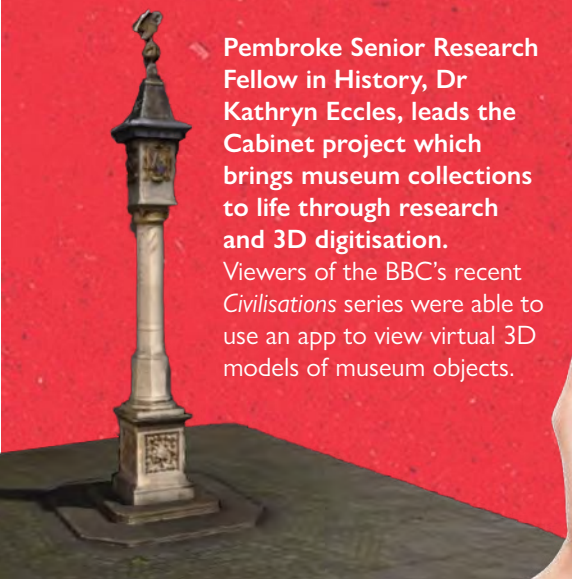
HOW DOES PAIN AFFECT THE BRAIN?



Pembroke Fellow Professor Irene Tracey's research, featured on R4 programme *From Agony to Analgesia*, uses the latest technology in brain imaging to understand more about the effects of pain and how it is manifest in the brain.



FANCY YOUR VERY OWN 'NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM'?



Pembroke Senior Research Fellow in History, Dr Kathryn Eccles, leads the Cabinet project which brings museum collections to life through research and 3D digitisation. Viewers of the BBC's recent *Civilisations* series were able to use an app to view virtual 3D models of museum objects.

BEST GETS BETTER

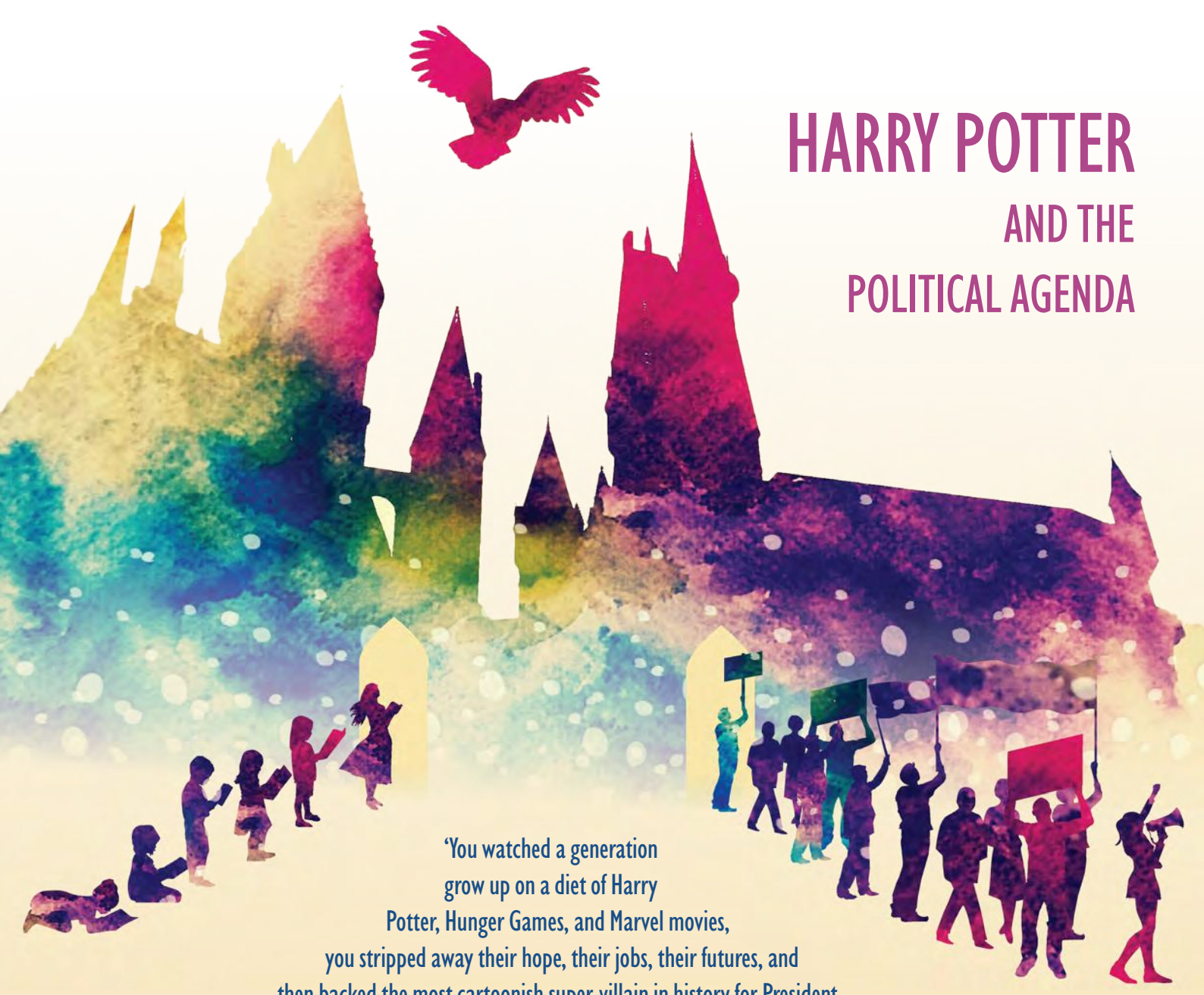
HVMN, a new 'superfuel' drink for athletes, was launched by Brianna Stubbs (2009) based on her PhD research on ketones. Ketones are a natural source of energy produced by the body when it's pushed to its limits.





CHALLENGES FOR THE LAW: WHEN AI GOES WRONG

The *Realising Accountable Intelligent Systems* project (co-led by Pembroke Law Fellow Professor Rebecca Williams) seeks to help developers to provide secure, tamper-proof records of intelligent systems' characteristics and behaviours. These records can then be shared with relevant authorities in the event of an incident or complaint, but the transparency and accountability of these systems is vital to their legal value.



HARRY POTTER AND THE POLITICAL AGENDA

'You watched a generation grow up on a diet of Harry Potter, Hunger Games, and Marvel movies, you stripped away their hope, their jobs, their futures, and then backed the most cartoonish super-villain in history for President, and you're shocked the children are fighting back?'

PATRICK TOMLINSON, AUTHOR

Warning: This article may contain spoilers for *Harry Potter* and *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. But since you're here, we're assuming you've read the books—or at least seen the movies.



LINDSEY COHICK (2016)

Lindsey Cohick is an MPhil Candidate in International Relations at Pembroke College, Oxford. She earned her BA in Japanese and History at Rutgers University in her home state of New Jersey. Her research focuses on historical nonstate actors, such as pirates, and their significance in early modern international relations.

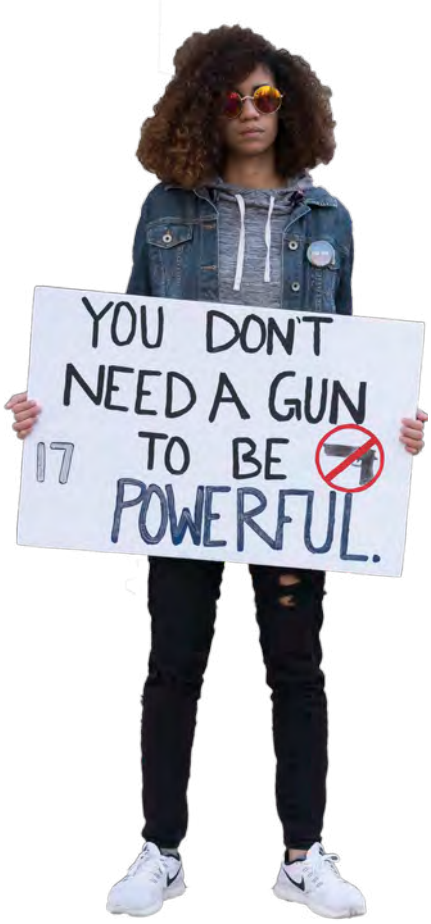
The above quote by Patrick Tomlinson first appeared on Twitter in response to the #NeverAgain movement, which was sparked by the high school shooting in Parkland, Florida earlier this year. The shooting claimed 17 lives, 14 students and three staff, and incited nationwide protests against gun violence. Teenagers led the charge, causing many observers to question not only the movement's efficacy but also its validity, as if young people were incapable of organising and of having a voice in politics. Regardless of one's stance on the issues, Tomlinson's tweet contains a secondary point which few can deny: fictional stories have a reach that extends far beyond the edge of a page. The current generation has been raised on books (and their film adaptations) wherein characters roughly the same age as their target audience rise up against corrupt administrations, taking matters into their own hands when the adults inevitably fail to act. Thus, as Tomlinson points out, it should hardly come as a surprise that the same generation is fighting back against perceived injustice and institutions that threaten their lives, much like Harry and his friends fought back against (arch-villain and nemesis) Voldemort and a compromised Ministry of Magic.

If we accept that fiction can have real-world ramifications, it is worth considering whether fantasy stories, especially stories written for children, can be considered a type of propaganda. Certainly, the word has been

applied to beloved children's fantasy books in the past. For example, a Google search for "Chronicles of Narnia Christian propaganda" yields over 100,000 results. There are clear parallels between The Chronicles of Narnia and the Bible, from Edmund's betrayal to Aslan's humiliating death and miraculous resurrection. Some Christian fundamentalists condemned the books as heretical, whether for their portrayal of magic or for lionising (literally) Jesus Christ. However, the books have also been lauded by Christian groups and used as tools for teaching the Gospel to young people. By the same token, more secular-minded adults have condemned the books as thinly veiled Christian indoctrination, enticing young readers with talking animals and characters their own age.

'Some Christian fundamentalists condemned the books as heretical [...] However, the books have also been lauded by Christian groups and used as tools'

Since its publication, Harry Potter has received similar treatment, with religious groups condemning the portrayal of witchcraft. There were even instances of Harry Potter book burnings in the US. However, when JK Rowling announced after the release of the final book that the beloved headmaster of Hogwarts, Albus Dumbledore, had been gay all along, cries of propaganda took on an entirely new flavour. After the reveal, conservative-leaning individuals, who may have had no other qualms with the series until that point, claimed to feel tricked into supporting the author's pro-gay "agenda." It was at this point that the idea of indoctrination once again entered the conversation. Critics accused Rowling of indoctrinating their children with the outrageous notion that LGBTQ people could be mentors and role models, even heroes. Many fans of the series rejoiced at the news, even though some viewed it as somewhat of an empty victory, considering there is no explicit reference to Dumbledore being gay in the text itself. Regardless, the strong reaction to Rowling's announcement and to her series in general speaks again to the perceived influence of fantasy literature on the minds of young readers, and again begs the question: is fantasy propaganda?



'Authors are influenced by their own values and their views of history and society, and these are often woven into their writing'

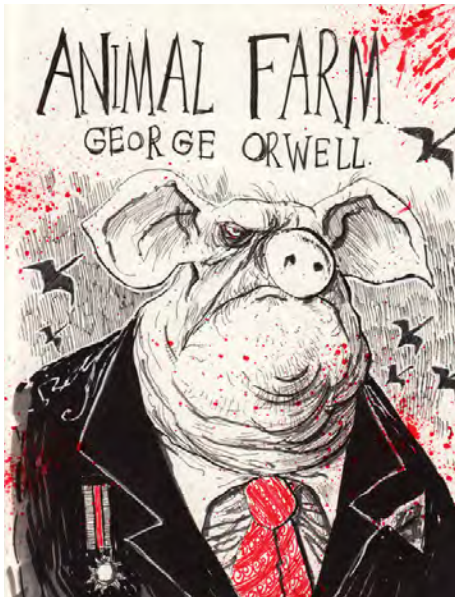
Propaganda is a strong word. My first understanding of it came from reading George Orwell's *Animal Farm* and *1984*; it calls to mind dystopia and totalitarian regimes, brainwashing and Thought Police. Propaganda, generally speaking, is material used to manipulate the masses, often based on biased or misleading information. The connotation is clearly negative. However, what we consider propaganda and what we consider moral lessons—what we consider education and what we consider indoctrination—is constantly changing. Authors are influenced by their own values and their views of history and society, and these are often woven into their writing, whether consciously or unconsciously. Certainly Rowling would never accept the opinion that her stories are propaganda in the traditional sense. In fact, Rowling explicitly addresses the dangers of propaganda in the final book of her series, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows:* under the regime led by Lord Voldemort (the wizarding world's Hitler), the Ministry of Magic begins printing pamphlets entitled, *Mudbloods and the Dangers They Pose to a Peaceful Pure-Blood Society.* Blood purity

'ALL ART IS PROPAGANDA; ON THE OTHER HAND, NOT ALL PROPAGANDA IS ART.'

George Orwell



PHOTO BY LORIE SHAULL



is at the heart of Voldemort's reign of terror, a clear echo of the genocidal policies of the Nazi regime, in which people who didn't fit a specific genetic profile were targeted and eliminated in the pursuit of a "pure" master race.

'While fantasy inevitably possesses elements of escapism, the fantasy stories that really stick with us are those that also possess elements of reality'

Rowling also tackles the topic of education versus indoctrination, particularly in the fifth book when Dolores Umbridge becomes the school's Professor of Defense Against the Dark Arts. Professor Umbridge infamously implements conservative lesson-plans to prevent Hogwarts' students from learning skills that could protect them from dark wizards, because she feels such instruction is unnecessary and would fill the students' heads with dangerous ideas. In a world where the Dark Lord, Voldemort, is on the rise and his followers are multiplying, her restrictive educational policies, which she claims were handed down from the Ministry, are clearly more harmful than helpful. They more closely resemble indoctrination than education. More importantly, they illustrate the dangers of an education that is anti-truth, which is really no education at all. After being removed from her teaching post, Umbridge rises through the ranks of the Ministry of Magic under Voldemort and plays a large role in persecuting Muggle-born witches and wizards, or "Mudbloods," penning the previously mentioned pamphlet. In the end, however, her propaganda machine is dismantled after Voldemort is defeated by the story's hero, Harry Potter, who is, after all, just a teenager when he fights back against the strongest dark wizard in history.

It's been over ten years since the Harry Potter series ended, but its themes still resonate with young readers today who are witnessing Brexit and the Trump presidency, continued violence in many parts of the world, and hatred based on race, religion, sexuality, and gender. Thus, while racism, genocide, and propaganda may seem like pretty adult topics for a children's fantasy series about wizards, elves, and dragons, Harry Potter is no less loved by young readers for confronting these issues. On the contrary, it has achieved worldwide acclaim and is adored by readers of all ages. It goes to show that, while fantasy inevitably possesses elements of escapism, the fantasy stories that really stick with us are those that also possess elements of reality. Since the dawn of storytelling, allegories have been used to impart lessons, often of a highly moralistic nature. Some might call these stories propaganda, especially when they promote values contrary to one's own, but modern fantasy stories are (usually) not intended as such.

Rather, fictional worlds are arenas for authors to explore, obliquely, real-world problems. The traditional Orwellian propaganda





demands blind obeisance, manipulates people's fears, and discourages critical thought. Fantasy, on the other hand, encourages readers to open their minds, to believe in the improbable, and, most importantly, to ask questions. One of the most important lessons of Harry Potter is to question authority when it begins to promote inequality. Thus, fantasy of the Potter variety cannot be said to be propaganda in the traditional sense. However, it does have the curious power to influence the hearts and minds of its readers, and it is understandable that parents and teachers are careful about what they allow children to read. But, today's popular fantasy seems focused on teaching young people to think, to wonder, and, above all, to resist injustice, and that is a kind of magic in itself.



PHOTOS BY SHARON DRUMMOND & JOHN MARKOS O'NEILL



PHOTO BY MIKE MACKENSIE (MODIFIED IMAGE)

ON THE FRONTLINES OF FAKE NEWS

EMILY CADEI
(2005)

Emily is correspondent at U.S. newspaper chain McClatchy, covering Washington, D.C. for the company's California readers. She's been covering US politics, Congress and foreign affairs in DC for more than a decade, including six years as a reporter with CQ Roll Call. Her articles have also been published by Foreign Policy, Fortune, NPR, USA Today and The New Republic. A native of Sacramento, Calif., she has a Bachelor's degree from Stanford University and a Master's in political science from University of Oxford.

In his testimony before the US Senate in April, Facebook founder and CEO Mark Zuckerberg described Russia's disinformation operations across social media in militaristic terms.

"This is an arms race, right?" Zuckerberg told California Senator Dianne Feinstein. "They're going to keep on getting better at this, and we need to invest in keeping on getting better at this, too."

Zuckerberg spoke about new artificial intelligence tools his company is deploying to try and spot the fake accounts Russian intelligence operatives and other bad actors have created to sow discord in the United States and elsewhere - most famously in the 2016 campaign that vaulted Donald Trump to the White House. "We're going to have more than 20,000 people, by the end of this year, working on security and content review across the company," he told the senators.

Zuckerberg has thus far declined to appear before the British parliament. But Facebook Chief Technical Officer Mike Schroepfer testified before the parliament's media committee on 26th April, where he sparred with MPs over how the company can make political advertising more transparent.

The US Government is now weighing whether to follow Europe's lead in enacting new regulations to protect social media users' data, with privacy as well as security in mind. And like other Western governments, Washington is trying to ramp up its counter-propaganda efforts, although a State Department centre to combat foreign disinformation has struggled to obtain the promised funding.

Largely missing from the policy discussion, however, is how we marshal one of the country's most powerful weapons in the information wars - our people. It is average citizens, after all, who find themselves on the front lines of an international cyberwar whenever they scroll through their Twitter feed. Yet few public officials or private sector leaders have taken a hard look at what kind of tools Americans need to fight back against trolls and purveyors of fake news. All available evidence suggests there's a desperate need.

> 'It is average citizens, after all, who find themselves on the front lines of an international cyberwar whenever they scroll through their Twitter feed'

A Buzzfeed News analysis shortly after the 2016 presidential election found that in the final three months before the vote, the "20 top-performing false election stories from hoax sites and hyperpartisan blogs generated 8,711,000 shares, reactions, and comments on Facebook" - easily outperforming the 20 best-performing election stories from 19 major news websites.

And an expansive Massachusetts Institute of Technology study released in March 2018

found that false information spread "significantly farther, faster, deeper, and more broadly than the truth" on Twitter, a tendency that was even more pronounced for political news.

America's current media landscape, moreover, makes it ripe for exploitation. Rapid changes to technology and news consumption habits have upended the existing business models for print news, decimating ad revenue and forcing deep staff cuts at newsrooms across the country. The legacy media's dramatic decline over the last decade has been accompanied by a proliferation of new, online-only news outlets, crowding and fragmenting the media universe.

'It is harder rather than easier to be informed today due to the plethora of information and news sources available'

With familiar news sources increasingly eclipsed by the upstarts and a social media realm that prizes likes and retweets over fact checking, it's not surprising that Americans are feeling unsure about who and what to trust. Indeed, in a 2017 Gallup/Knight Foundation Survey on Trust, Media and Democracy, well over half of respondents said it is "harder rather than easier to be informed today due to the plethora of information and news sources available." And just 27% of Americans said that they were "very confident" that they could tell when a news source is reporting factual news versus commentary or opinion.

Trust in media, meanwhile, continues to sink. That's due in part to an all-out assault on the mainstream media - which has become a pejorative term - by conservative outlets like Fox News and talk radio. Not surprisingly, Republicans are far more likely to distrust the media than Democrats. But, it's not just the political right that relishes attacking the news business. Left wing darling Bernie Sanders regularly bashes "corporate media" in his public appearances. And polling shows that young people, a key source of support of Sanders' upstart 2016 presidential campaign, are more sceptical of the media (as they are of most established institutions) than older generations.

It's hard to think of a more favourable climate for Russia's [alleged] troll army. But it also underscores how much American citizens, themselves, hold the keys to solving what is verging on a democratic crisis. If news consumers can get better at navigating today's online media environment and sifting out the credible information from the incendiary, the information wars will lose their potency. It won't matter as much if the Internet Research Agency stays one step ahead of the Facebook algorithms and government regulators. News consumers can be their own firewall.

They need help, however. And public officials, civil society and business leaders are just beginning to wrestle with how best to provide it. In the United States, the early conversations have focused on a couple of specific fronts. One is how Internet companies can provide users with more context about the information they're exposed to on their platforms. Facebook has begun doing this not only for political ads, but for newsfeed posts, as well.

A number of state governments, meanwhile, have moved forward with efforts to add media literacy training to school curricula. In 2017, Washington, Connecticut, Rhode Island and New Mexico all passed related laws, and others are considering similar provisions.

Newsrooms are also working to address consumers' concerns about news accuracy, although the tactics vary widely from outlet to outlet. Many of the most ambitious ventures are being attempted in partnership with academic institutions. For example, the Trust Project, based at Santa Clara University in California, is working with a global set of news outlets to develop transparency standards that can help readers assess a report's credibility. Initial partners include *The Washington Post*, the *Economist* and *The Globe and Mail*.

'In an Orwellian twist, the label "fake news" has, itself, become a sham.'

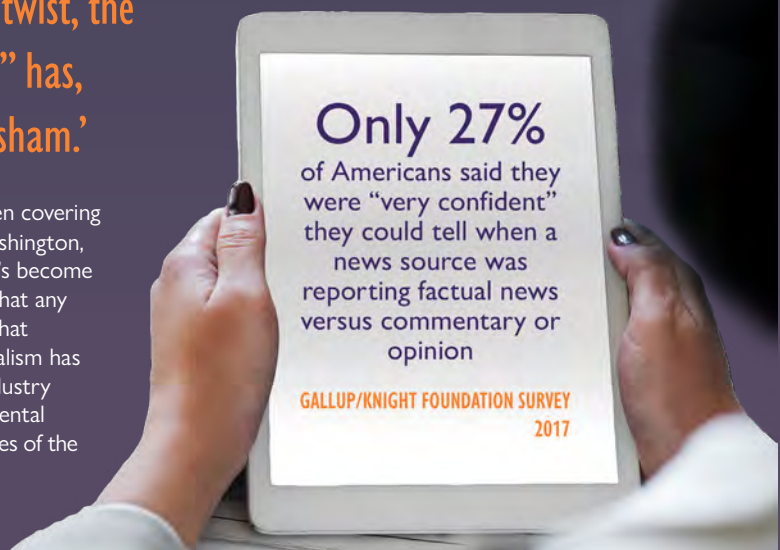
As a journalist who's been covering politics and policy in Washington, DC for over a decade, it's become abundantly clear to me that any national consensus on what constitutes quality journalism has shattered. The media industry has undergone a fundamental restructuring, but the rules of the road have not caught up, and no one seems to agree on how best to adapt.

In my current job as the Washington correspondent for a regional newspaper, I hear from readers with wildly divergent expectations for how journalists should operate, and varying interpretations of balance and objectivity. In an Orwellian twist, the label "fake news" has, itself, become a sham, wielded by readers and politicians to dismiss reporting they disagree with, regardless of its accuracy.

It's hard to imagine a society that can survive for long without some shared understanding of reality. The United States is in desperate need of a national discussion that engages its citizens - not just elites in government, academia, business and the media - on how to distribute information in a way that's digestible and dependable. And I'd wager we're not the only nation that could benefit from such an exchange.

GUIDE TO TERMS

Facebook	Online social networking and sharing site. Founded in 2004 it currently has over one billion active members
Twitter	Online news and social networking service. Founded in 2006 it currently has over 336,000,000 active members
Buzzfeed	An American internet and media company, originally rooted in social news and entertainment, it has increasingly become a source of credible investigative journalism for breaking political and other news stories
Talk radio	Radio broadcast discussing topical matters which encourages listeners to phone in with their own opinions





LIES, DAMNED LIES AND ECONOMICS



KEN MAYHEW
EMERITUS PROFESSOR

Ken Mayhew is Emeritus Professor of Education and Economic Performance at Oxford University and Emeritus Fellow in Economics at Pembroke. Currently he is a member of the Armed Forces Pay Review Body and Honorary Professor at Maastricht University. He is an editor of a recently published OUP Handbook on Skills and Training.

Jokes about the failure of economists to agree among themselves are legion. Ronald Reagan, for example, is reputed to have said that if *Trivial Pursuit* had been invented by economists it would have 100 questions and 3,000 answers. In similar vein goes the interchange: "Why was astrology invented? So economics would seem like an accurate science." Ironically this widespread scepticism about the subject has been accompanied by its vast expansion in the last generation. In the mid 1960s, for example, the UK Government Economic Service had a staff of 22. Today it has over 1,400; an example that serves to emphasise that the profession's increased presence has been felt not just in the ivory towers of academe but also in the world of policy makers and business.

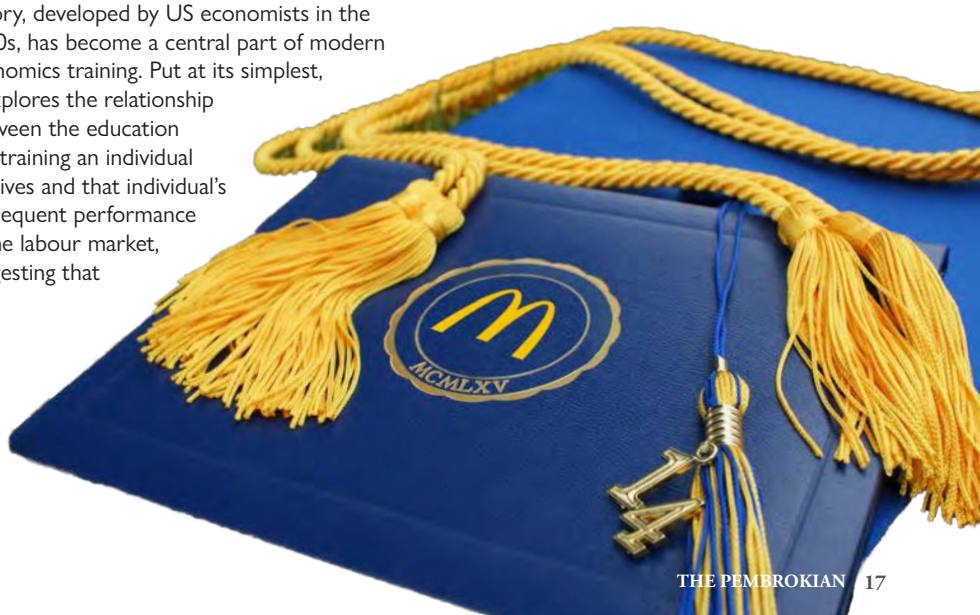
Putting these two observations together might lead one to worry that the country has nurtured a trade that is capable of doing much harm or at least not much good. Whilst some recent episodes, such as the general failure of macroeconomic forecasters to warn about the 2008 financial crisis and the slowness of the profession to fundamentally re-think their forecasting models thereafter, might seem to justify such concerns, they are generally unfair. Indeed it is possible to point to many areas where the profession has significantly improved public policy making. In recent articles in *Prospect,* Wendy Carlin and Diane Coyle do just that – mentioning, for example, policies on global warming and a safer banking system. Carlin goes further to describe initiatives to transform the teaching of economics to more accurately reflect the "real world" rather than an over-simple stylized version of it. However, the salience of economics in public debate continues to carry a significant danger. This is the manner in which commentators and policy makers sometimes latch on to and propagate simple ideas, missing (wittingly or otherwise) complexities and nuances. It is easier to popularise the simple than the complex. A prominent example of this was the way in which the ideas of Milton Friedman and the so-called monetarist school were handled by many commentators in the 1980s, not least by the then editor of *The Times,* William Rees-Mogg. The simple idea is that an increase in the money supply can cause an increase in prices. The operative word is "can" – it depends on many attendant circumstances. Unfortunately in public debate the word "does" was too often substituted for "can". Arguably the consequence was periods of unnecessarily restrictive government policies.

> 'Commentators and policy makers sometimes latch on to and propagate simple ideas, [...] ,missing complexities and nuances'

A contemporary example of the same tendency to be dominated by the simple is given by human capital theory. Human capital theory, developed by US economists in the 1960s, has become a central part of modern economics training. Put at its simplest, it explores the relationship between the education and training an individual receives and that individual's subsequent performance in the labour market, suggesting that the more skills an individual possesses the more productive she will be and the more she is likely to earn.

So far so good; but this approach is essentially about the supply side. What if employers do not need these extra skills? This question is particularly important for today's higher education graduates. The massive expansion of the sector has outpaced change in the structure of available jobs and in their overall quality. The consequence is that many graduates find themselves in jobs that were once done by their non-graduate parents. The frequent response of officialdom is that, on average, graduates still earn more than non-graduates. True, but had higher education not expanded, the extreme likelihood is that these same individuals would have emerged from secondary school and obtained those self-same higher paying jobs; and they would not have incurred the expense that today's students face. However, proper acknowledgment of this would lead to too many awkward questions about the nature of the pathways from education into the labour market available in the UK. At the same time it would challenge the vested interest of universities who sell their places to young people on the promise of labour market rewards.

Economists do not have all the answers, far from it, and often get it wrong but just as big a problem is often the overly simplistic use of their findings. It is the responsibility of both the profession and of those who use its findings to guard against this.





SEASONING FOOD WITH SOUND



CARLOS VELASCO
(2012)

DPhil in Experimental Psychology (2012), Pembroke College

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@velascop

In 1932, the controversial FT Marinetti, one of the founders of the Futurist Movement in Italy, wrote *The Futurist Cookbook*. In it, he suggested that the ideal futurist meal required, among others: "The use in prescribed doses of poetry and music as surprise ingredients to accentuate the flavours of a given dish with their sensual intensity". At first glance, this appears to be a curious approach to the perfect meal. However, a growing body of research now suggests that extrinsic sensory cues such as sounds, colours, and shapes can have profound implications on our eating and drinking experiences.

To illustrate the aforesaid point, here, I will describe some of the ways in which the so called "forgotten flavour sense", that is hearing, plays a crucial role when it comes to our food expectations and perception. Typically, hearing is not one of the senses that come to mind when we think about the role of the senses in food contexts. However, closer inspection reveals it is ubiquitous to them. On the one hand, we rarely eat in silence. On the other, there are multiple sounds related to our interactions with foods and drinks. Thus, what we hear is an important part of what we taste. Let's look at some examples.

When I was doing my DPhil, I conducted a study designed to assess whether people were able to 'hear temperature'. In a preliminary survey, around 50% of the participants reported that they did not think they would be able to discriminate whether a liquid was hot or cold on the sole basis of the sound it makes when poured into a receptacle. However, when presented with the actual sounds of hot and cold pouring liquids, most



RATATAT



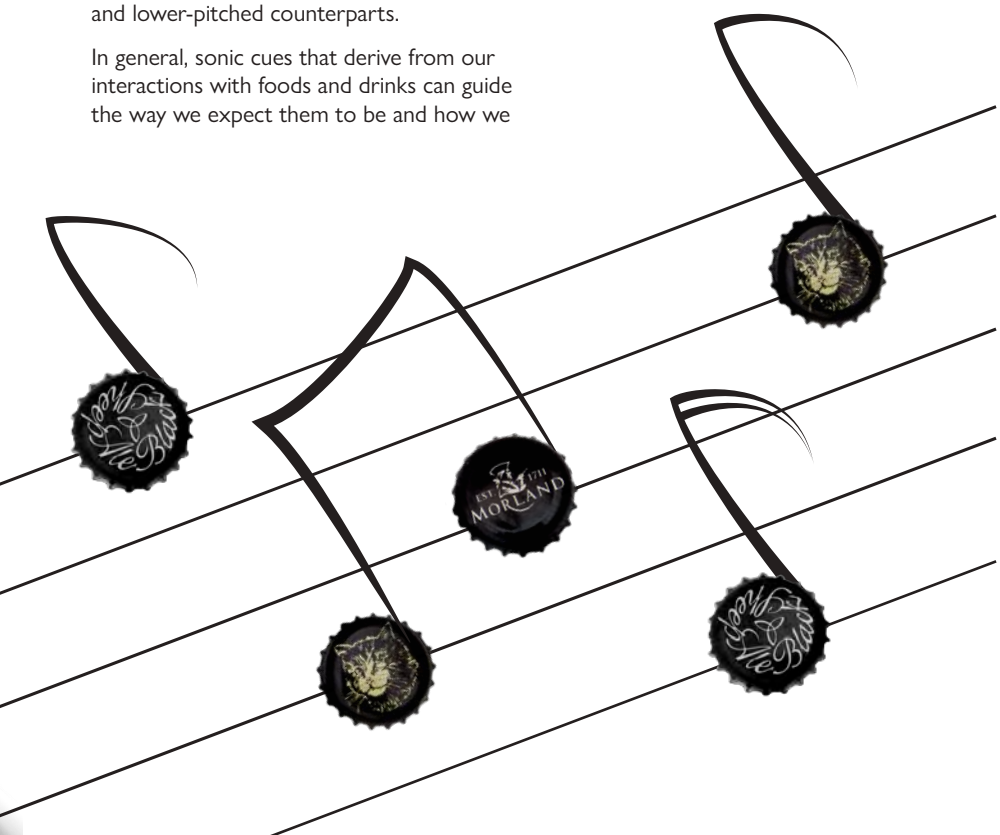
people were very accurate at distinguishing their temperature (more than 70% accuracy). Besides, this study showed that, by changing the equalization of the sounds, it was possible to augment how hot the liquid seemed to the participants. Intriguing, right? You may like to try this yourself by following this link to the sounds we used, **https://goo.gl/taQdgj.**

'Typically, hearing is not one of the senses that come to mind when we think about the role of the senses in food contexts'

The sound of the packaging or receptacle associated with a drink can also guide our expectations about it. In a recent study performed at the Center for Multisensory Marketing, BI Norwegian Business School, in collaboration with Japan's Asahi Breweries Ltd., we found evidence to suggest that there is a relationship between the loudness and pitch of a beer's bottle opening sound and our perception of our perception of whether the beer is of premium quality. Louder and higher-pitched opening sounds result in enhanced premium evaluations, relative to their quieter and lower-pitched counterparts.

In general, sonic cues that derive from our interactions with foods and drinks can guide the way we expect them to be and how we experience them. In South East Asia people usually shake the 'King of Fruits' (durian) to feel and hear whether it is ripe. Moreover, we all use (even if unaware) mastication sounds as diagnostic cues of the attributes of what we eat. For example, the perception of crispiness and freshness is modulated by the sounds that originate from chewing (think of more or less crispy carrots or crisps).

Our growing understanding of how sound influences food perception has motivated the development of several technologies that target food augmentation, or the process of modifying, boosting, or enhancing a given food experience, perceived or imagined. For instance, researchers at KEIO University developed a device that allows people to monitor the process of chewing and use the corresponding movements to synchronise and control sound-delivery. This system may be used to enhance food texture perception (eg, crispiness) with sound in populations with loss of texture sensitivity (the elderly), but also to create novel entertaining experiences, as well (mapping screaming noises to the process of chewing gummy bears).

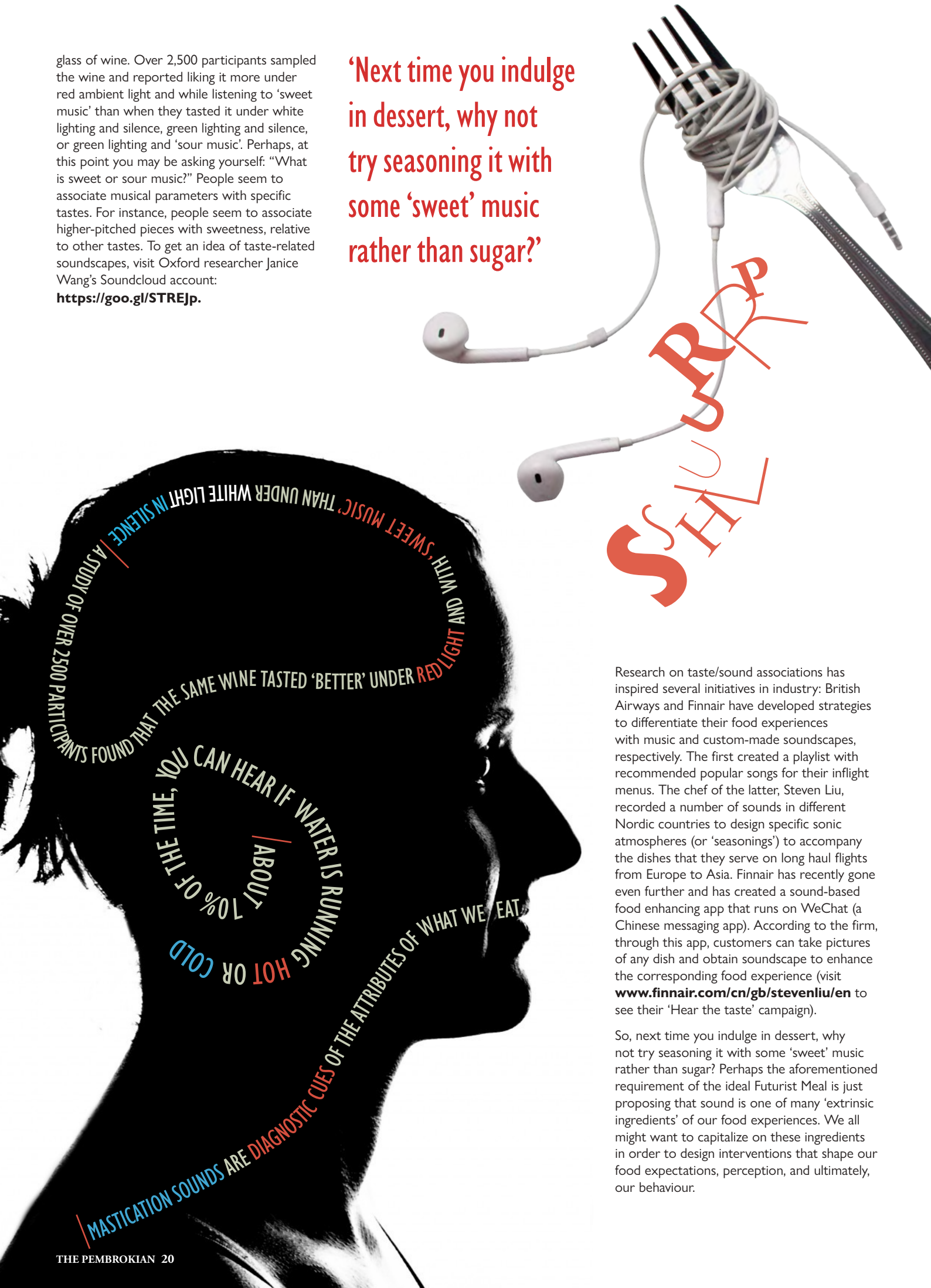


'Sonic cues that derive from our interactions with foods and drinks can guide the way we expect them to be and how we experience them'

When we eat and drink, we are also usually immersed in sonic atmospheres (background music, ambient sounds, or even noise) that can influence our evaluation and enjoyment of foods. Together with some collaborators, we recently conducted a study designed to evaluate the joint effect of both background music and ambient light on the perception of a

glass of wine. Over 2,500 participants sampled the wine and reported liking it more under red ambient light and while listening to 'sweet music' than when they tasted it under white lighting and silence, green lighting and silence, or green lighting and 'sour music'. Perhaps, at this point you may be asking yourself: "What is sweet or sour music?" People seem to associate musical parameters with specific tastes. For instance, people seem to associate higher-pitched pieces with sweetness, relative to other tastes. To get an idea of taste-related soundscapes, visit Oxford researcher Janice Wang's Soundcloud account: **https://goo.gl/STREJp.**

'Next time you indulge in dessert, why not try seasoning it with some 'sweet' music rather than sugar?"



Research on taste/sound associations has inspired several initiatives in industry: British Airways and Finnair have developed strategies to differentiate their food experiences with music and custom-made soundscapes, respectively. The first created a playlist with recommended popular songs for their inflight menus. The chef of the latter, Steven Liu, recorded a number of sounds in different Nordic countries to design specific sonic atmospheres (or 'seasonings') to accompany the dishes that they serve on long haul flights from Europe to Asia. Finnair has recently gone even further and has created a sound-based food enhancing app that runs on WeChat (a Chinese messaging app). According to the firm, through this app, customers can take pictures of any dish and obtain soundscape to enhance the corresponding food experience (visit **www.finnair.com/cn/gb/stevenliu/en** to see their 'Hear the taste' campaign).

So, next time you indulge in dessert, why not try seasoning it with some 'sweet' music rather than sugar? Perhaps the aforementioned requirement of the ideal Futurist Meal is just proposing that sound is one of many 'extrinsic ingredients' of our food experiences. We all might want to capitalize on these ingredients in order to design interventions that shape our food expectations, perception, and ultimately, our behaviour.

SPORTING ADVANTAGE

SAM PACE
(2015)

Pembroke Scholar, Sam Pace (2015) has just completed his third year studying Medicine. He also plays Rugby League at University Level.

The tactical side of sport is often considered as important as the physical side: thinking is as important as doing. In this way, many successful sportspersons and sides have employed elements of deception and utilised tools to adjust perception.

GAGGING FOR A GOOGLY

From a cricketing perspective, the ability to deceive the batsman is crucial for bowling success. The slower ball tricks players into thinking a delivery is faster than it actually is, causing them to make mistakes, and ultimately surrender the wicket. The most deceptive delivery in cricket is, however, the googly. Normally, a leg break bowler spins the ball away from a right handed batsman, but with skillful adjustments to both hand and finger positioning, the ball can turn into the right-hander when a googly is delivered. Given the expectations of the batsman, this delivery can often trick the opposition and lead to a wicket.

BLINDSIDING THE OPPOSITION

Tools beyond mere physical expertise are not restricted to cricket. In rugby, the *Haka,* a traditional war cry/challenge in Maori culture, is performed by New Zealand before every game they play, becoming one of the most anticipated spectacles in international rugby. It involves a variety of facial contortions and vigorous bodily movements, inciting fear in teams watching. The rationale being that even before a tackle is made or a ball is passed the opposition will already be intimated by this, which hands the All Blacks the advantage from the start. In an attempt to combat this advantageous act, teams have endeavoured to negate its impact. Famously, in 2008, Kiwi players from club side Munster pre-empted the All Blacks ritual and performed their own *Haka.* The effect of this was noticeable, as the often so-infallible New Zealand team left it very late to win 18-16, with the match going down as one of the greatest touring matches.

In a similar way, the French decided to move into a stoic arrowhead against the Haka, with their captain at the front of the V. Although the *Les Bleus* lost the final 8-7, this response caused uproar in the crowd. All of which highlights how intimidation can be used in professional sport and how teams may potentially react.

INDIVIDUAL PERSPECTIVE

It's not just teams who will be influenced by their perception of the competition – *folie a l'équipe*, if you will. The perception of the individual player will determine whether they feel confidence or fear before a game. (Consider the implications of playing Wimbledon's famous grass courts against a known 'grunter'). The mental element of sport has become increasingly important as perception of the athlete, at all levels of competition adjusts their neuropsychological response, the 'fight or flight' phenomenon. This can impact on their behavioural and physiological responses: a nervous competitor might reveal this on a physical level by visible sweat and/or experience tachycardia (arrhythmia or raised heartbeat), which can consequently lead to an impaired performance.

From my own experience, deception and perception are key elements of competitive sport. In cricket, when bowling, if I am able to deceive a batsman then I have a greater chance of getting them out. Equally, the ability to intimidate the batsman and thus ensure they view me as a daunting bowler is a very useful tool. In rugby, I often come up against people who are faster and more skillful than me. When defending against someone who has a great step (the ability to fool their opponents into believing they will be in a certain position on the pitch before neatly sidestepping to a more advantageous spot), their potential to deceive me makes them more challenging to face and leaves me vulnerable. It is then up to me to project myself as their equal or better if I want to rebalance the power dynamic and have a fighting chance of winning.

> 'Perception of the athlete [...] adjusts their neuropsychological response, and can impact on their behaviour and physiological responses'

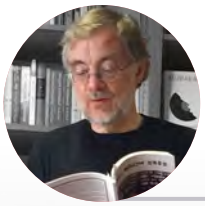
FIRST IMPRESSIONS COUNT

Standing opposite someone who has a bigger physical presence is - unarguably - intimidating, hence perceiving someone as larger, stronger or faster than oneself can be detrimental to performance. One way in which this is effected is through kit: the shoulder pads of American Football are a great example of how to 'beef up' a player's physique and create a powerful impression of strength. Equally, the colour of a football strip can be influential: research into colour psychology suggests that a team with a red kit will be perceived as more aggressive and therefore more intimidating.



We see the mental element of sport become a focus as sportspersons and teams are increasingly employing coaches to help them focus on the mental side of the game, not just on manoeuvres and physical prowess. My direct experience covers googlies and Hakas, but from the silence of the chess table to the roaring crowds at the World Cup, mental deftness and the ability to adjust perception is a key component to sporting success.

IN THE PINK: POETRY AT PEMBROKE



PETER J KING

Peter J King (b Boston, Lincolnshire) teaches philosophy at Pembroke College.

His poetry, including translations from German and Modern Greek, has been published widely in print and online journals. His latest collections are *Adding Colours to the Chameleon* (2016, Wisdom's Bottom Press) and *All What Larkin* (2017, Albion Beatnik Press). www.wisdomsbottompress.wordpress.com

The first reading of the series 'In the Pink' took place in second week of Michaelmas Term 2017, featuring an Old Member of Pembroke, Roz Kaveney (1968), who was featured in a previous issue of this magazine. By the end of Trinity Term, 2018, the series was going strong.

Over the course of the academic year, we have heard poetry in many different styles, from sonnets to sound poems, from poems read from the page to poetry on film or combined with music, from the meditative to the exuberantly comic. The majority of work has been in English, but we've heard poems in Amharic, Arabic, Armenian, Chinese, Dutch, French, German, Greek, Navajo, and Turkish. We have featured Old Members and current members of Pembroke, including poets from the JCR, MCR, SCR, and College staff, and we've heard poets and translators from Canada, Cyprus, England, Ethiopia, France, Germany, Greece, Iraq, Ireland, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Turkey, and the USA.

In short, we've done our best to provide audiences with as much variety as possible — and next year's programme is already being put together with the intention of providing an even greater range of nationalities, languages, and styles. The readings are weekly in term time and open to all, with free admission.* Our audiences include regulars from within Pembroke, from other Colleges, and from outside the University. If you're passing through Oxford during term, check the website for details, and drop in.

I've been asked to select two poems for this edition of *The Pembrokian*, both of which reflect its overall theme. The first is by Jay Ramsay (1977), and I wrote the second, which was first published in *Adding Colours to the Chameleon* (2016, Wisdom's Bottom Press), myself.

* Visit the College website for regular updates on events open to all: **www.pmb.ox.ac.uk/events**



PHOTO BY ANDRÉS OJEDA LAGUNA

JAY RAMSAY:

The Bells, Pembroke College, Oxford

23RD APRIL 2018

It was the bells, as we were about to leave
that suddenly broke out chiming
against the neon uplit stone-lit sky—
in a conversation, an exclamation
back and forth like raised voices: we raised our eyes
(you half in the car on the backseat, as I stood leaning)
and it was divine, a glory of bells
a raining of bells, a rainsong of bells
for as long as the rainfall in its outpouring
as we gazed up at the tower

and it was as if God saying
– in a belly voice made of brass –
Let go of all your old smaller self
and sing a new song, a wilder song with Me
closer to who I am, and you are meant to be.



PETER J KING:

1914

"In September 1914, a man had to stand five feet eight to get into the army. A month later, so great was the need for recruits, the minimum height requirement was lowered to five foot five; in November, after the losses sustained in the First Battle of Ypres, it was lowered again, to five foot three."

Catherine Bailey,
The Secret Rooms, p248

August

When war broke out I was too short;
they shook their heads
showed me the door.
I sat at home and fretted that
I wasn't five foot eight.

October

As thousands died, they changed their minds;
I tried again —
but still too short
I cycled home and fretted that
I wasn't five foot five.

November

But things were bad along the Front;
third time's a charm,
they shook my hand,
and I embarked in khaki drab,
a manly five foot three.

December

I fell for good at Plugstreet Wood[1] —
our guns or theirs,
I wasn't sure;
my legs were shattered by a shell,
and struggling for one last breath
amid the sounds and smells of hell
I fretted that I'd meet my death
too short once more.

[1]Ploegsteert Wood was part of the Ypres salient; it later became a rest and recuperation centre.



NEWS, CATS AND THE FUTURE OF CIVILISATION.



JAMES TURNER
(1998)

James Turner is the co-founder of Glimpse, a collective for creative people who want to use their skills for good.

www.WeGlimpse.co

According to the philosopher Alain de Botton, the news now performs a similar function in Western society as religion did in years gone by. Like scriptures and parables, our news apps have become a primary source of meaning in our lives. We check our feeds 'religiously' and treat everything we read as gospel. The stories we hear about Trump, Kanye or Kate become the shared narrative we live by, a version of the world which presents itself as immutable and unassailable.

But unlike religion, the news rarely offers much in the way of salvation. Almost everything we hear about the world is negative and riven by conflict or scandal. From penny newspapers to modern day clickbait, editors have always known that the surest way to seize our attention is to elicit feelings of fear, outrage or a sense of impending doom. What's different these days is the sheer relentlessness of it. Many of my friends still get notifications every time something terrible happens in the world, as if being the first to know will somehow help them make sense of the mounting chaos.

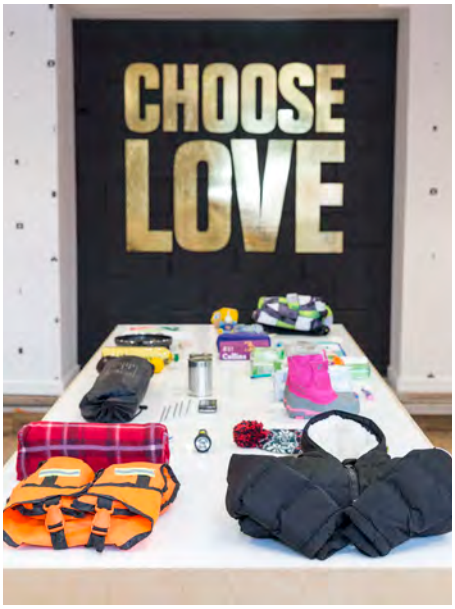
Of course it's important to know what's happening, not to shut yourself off from the horrors of the world. But if we only surround ourselves with stories like these we forget the possibility of hope. Humans are story processing machines, we exist through shared fictions. If the defining narrative of our time is about collapse and division then this is the reality we inhabit. If we want to get our species through the 21st century I believe we need to create a new ecosystem of stories (and myths) which explore things like empathy, community and connection.

'From penny newspapers to modern day clickbait, editors have always known that the surest way to seize our attention is to elicit feelings of fear, outrage or a sense of impending doom'

In 2016 I founded a new organisation which is dedicated to this mission. Instead of focusing on the problem, we create a 'glimpse' of a positive alternative and use that to inspire action. Our first project was called the Citizens Advertising Takeover Service (CATS), a Kickstarter campaign to replace every single



'PEOPLE LOVE CATS'



POP-UP STORE

advert in a London tube station with pictures of cats. Nearly a thousand people donated money, and later that year we installed 68 unbranded cat posters at Clapham Common station, for two weeks.

What was intended as a gentle dig at the level of advertising in public spaces became something quite different: a wave of positive energy which rippled through the station and far out into the world. Strangers stopped to talk to each other and find out what was going on. Tourists made the trip to South London just to see the posters. Station staff said they were better treated by passengers and the atmosphere improved noticeably. And despite a decade working with Greenpeace, this was by far the most successful media campaign I had ever worked on: we reached over a billion people.

So what does this tell us? People love cats. Advertising can be oppressive. But the main impression I had when walking through the station was a sense of unexpected joy. Why on earth had someone done this, without a brand sponsor or political message to get across? Imagine if all Tube stations made me feel happy, or public spaces helped me smile? Soon after the posters came down we decided to make Glimpse a social enterprise, and we now have over 2000 volunteers. Our mission is to help people think more positively about the world and realise they have the power to change it.

Our most recent campaign focused on consumerism at Christmas. Most of us enjoy the act of giving, but sometimes the actual gifts leave us feeling a bit empty. A novelty golf set. A solar powered waving queen. None of us wants this crap, but how can we find a way out? Based on this insight we created the Choose Love store: the world's first shop that sells real products for refugees. In December last year we opened a boutique pop-up shop in London. Visitors could browse things like baby-grows, blankets, even meal ingredients. But instead of taking them home, each purchase went towards a similar item for someone who truly needed it. Working with an incredible charity called Help Refugees, we sent thousands of meals, nappies and school books to projects in Europe and the Middle East.

'If we have any faith in humanity, then we must also entertain the possibility that we can fix these problems'

Just like CATS, this project was about questioning our shared reality. When people entered the store they seemed to understand instinctively, as if something like this already existed somewhere. They spoke with the shop assistants who were former volunteers in Greece or Calais. As they went down the table many cried as they picked up a pair of children's boots or a packet of sanitary towels. Over 10,000 people bought something and most shared their experience on social media. From Sky News to Mashable, media outlets visited and spread the idea more widely, finding a rare new angle on the refugee issue (it helped that Dermot O'Leary did a shift on the tills). By the end of January we'd raised nearly £1m, funding over 6,000 children's coats, 3,000 boots, 5,000 blankets and much more.

But beyond the money raised, the shop became a kind of beacon of hope against the dread of the evening news. This was by far the most powerful thing for me. Because when we approach the 'refugee crisis' or any of the world's great challenges, I believe we must try to imagine a positive outcome. If we have any faith in humanity, in our capacity for love and compassion, then we must also entertain the possibility that we can fix these problems and emerge stronger and more unified on the other side. Climate change is a fact, and it's going to put massive pressure on people across the world. But if we choose to approach this with intelligence and compassion then we can minimise the harm it causes while building more resilient (and happier) communities for our children. You may say I'm a dreamer, but I see this as a choice - not just about policy solutions, but about the tone and tenor of our collective imagination.

The novelist Mohsin Hamid puts it like this:

"Everywhere around the world, people are having difficulty imagining a future. People are on the move. Things are going to change. And yet all of our leaders seem to be telling us to go back to a previous time when things were better. You know, in Britain, it's go back before the European Union… In America, it's make America great again. In much of Iraq, Iran, Pakistan, it's go back to the caliphate of 1,000 years ago.

The danger is that we're not imagining futures, not imagining a place we can go to that's different and progressive. And that, I think, is part of the job of a novelist, to start imagining those futures, to make people comfortable with what I think is the inevitable reality of a world where billions of people are going to move in the next couple of hundred years. You know, the climate will change, sea levels will rise, people will move. And if we can't find a way to be hopeful and optimistic and find beauty in that, we're in real trouble."

The news stories we hear rarely contain that beauty, but that doesn't mean it isn't there. I urge you to seek it out, in the quiet places beyond the headlines.

DUNCAN WILSON OBE (1975) IN 280 CHARACTERS: THE TW-INTERVIEW SLOT

@Pembroke Oxford
Town House or Manor House?

@HE_ChiefExec
Town House

@Pembroke Oxford
Most impressive restoration project of 21st Century?

@HE_ChiefExec
Well I would have to say one of the ones I've been involved with I suppose, and for sheer scale of ambition it would have to be opening up the former Royal Naval College in Greenwich to the public and as a new university campus, based in Wren's historic buildings

---

@Pembroke Oxford
If I could time travel, I'd go back to…

@HE_ChiefExec
Out of curiosity to Stonehenge in the Neolithic to find out what really went on, what language they spoke and how (and why) they dragged those bluestones there all the way from the Preseli mountains

---

@Pembroke Oxford
Will 'There Always Be An England'?

@HE_ChiefExec
Yes, but our idea of what it is will always keep changing

@Pembroke Oxford
Top three criteria in determining 'Historic' status?

@HE_ChiefExec
Connection with events and people whose stories resonate today, architectural and artistic significance, and authenticity

---

@Pembroke Oxford
Live for the present or plan for the future?

@HE_ChiefExec
Live for the present

@Pembroke Oxford
Complete the sentence: The 1990s were to architecture what…

@HE_ChiefExec
…the 1970s were to fashion



Duncan Wilson OBE (1975) @HE_ChiefExec

Duncan Wilson, PPE, joined Historic England as the organisation's first Chief Executive on 1st April 2015. Historic England is a public body which champions heritage across England. It helps people understand, enjoy and value the historic environment, and protect it for the future. Previously, Duncan was Chief Executive of the Alexandra Park and Palace Trust, the Greenwich Foundation for the Old Royal Naval College, and the Somerset House Trust. He is a qualified archaeologist and chartered accountant and was awarded the OBE for services to heritage in 2007.

@PEMBROKE

A YEAR ON TWITTER

Are you one of @PembrokeOxford's c5,400 followers on Twitter? From celebrating successes and sharing student and Fellows' research to College news and – of course- stunning pictures of Pembroke looking lovely, we have an active and vibrant social media presence. Here are our highlights of the past year:

Huge congrats to Pembroke's Women's First (W1) crew for attaining Summer VIIIs 2018 Headship, topping Wadham's W1, who held Head of the River in 2017 @PCBCOxford
[Full story on website]



JUN 2018

'There is some science behind that "gut feeling"...' Amazing stuff from Pembroke DPhil student Katerina on @OxfordSparks Facebook LIVE earlier. Catch up here: facebook.com/OxSparks



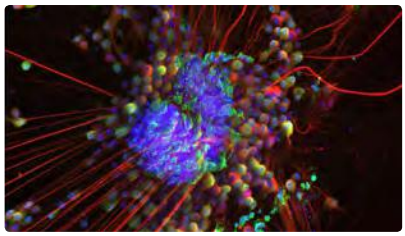
FEB 2018

Beautiful snow in Chapel Quad #PembrokeCollege #Oxford #Oxmas @UniofOxford



DEC 2017

Malte Kaller won the @UniofOxford Innovation Photography Competition for his striking DPhil research image!
[Full story on website]



NOV 2017

Our most precious manuscript, a 15th Century Bohemian Book of Hours, features a stunning illumination of Jacob and his ladder #librariesweek



OCT 2017

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED

From 1988-2014 Timothy Walker (1977) was the Director of the Oxford University Botanic Garden & Harcourt Arboretum, during which time the Garden won 4 Gold Medals at the Chelsea Flower Show and was awarded a Queen's Anniversary Prize for Higher & Further Education. He is now a College Lecturer in Biological Sciences with a particular interest in plant conservation. Here he recommends the best way to 'fake' a vibrant summer garden…

FILLING THE GAP...

The chances of there being a gap somewhere in your garden's borders in the second half of the year is very high. Even if nothing dies, there will be spring flowering plants that have done their thing for the year revealing bare soil. At this point you need a filler and one of the most spectacular for an English garden is the bat-pollinated *Cobaea scandens.* That it looks tropical is unsurprising because it is native to tropical America. The common name of "the cup and saucer plant" is very easy to understand because the petals are fused together into a cup-like structure, and the sepals are fused into a flatter saucer-like ring at the base of the cup. However, in addition to being a wonderful ornamental plant, it is great plant for use in teaching evolutionary botany.

Both convergent and co-evolution evolution are seen in a very important area of biology: pollination syndromes. This is one place where plants and animals interact very closely as equals, with both organisms benefiting. The degree of co-evolution can be so tight that this was possibly the only time that Charles Darwin referred to natural selection producing "perfection".

Flowers pollinated by bats show a number of similarities. First, the flowers are dullish shades of white, green, or purple - colour blindness is common in bats. Second, they are either large and bell-shaped (as in *Cobaea*) or smaller and arranged in a pincushion-like arrangement - the bell-shape has been shown to aid echolocation (sonar). Third, the flowers are in an exposed position outside the plant meaning they are easily accessible. Finally, they produce large volumes of nectar to reward the bat which is one of the largest and most hungry of the pollinating animals.

Further, the flowers have to attract the bat in the gloom of night and this they do by producing smells that would not attract a human. Scent is most important in species which grow in a cluttered landscape where visual signposts will be more difficult for the bat to perceive. These smells could be produced by a variety of chemicals, but bat-pollinated flowers from many, very distantly related parts of the evolutionary tree have all gone for dimethyl disulphide (a garlic-like odour). This is a very simple and clear example of convergent evolution.

In sum, if you don't mind garlic, and want a climber which will bring forth a burst of summer blooms, the *Cobaea scandens* is a great choice.

'The common name is "the cup and saucer plant"...very easy to understand because the petals are fused together into a cup-like structure, and the sepals are fused into a flatter saucer-like ring'





ARE YOU CONNECTED TO PEMBROKE?

We can be found daily on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram - plus our YouTube channel **(/PembrokeCollege)** is bursting with short films on subjects, access and admissions and life at College.



Recent Instagram highlights include these stunning pictures **(pembrokeoxford)**



We have two Facebook pages:
Pembroke College, Oxford
for news and information and
Pembroke College Oxford Alumni,
which is where we put all alumni event photos

Finally, LinkedIn **(Pembroke College Oxford)** is worth connecting with for news and debate with College, alumni and Fellows



Other ways to be in touch?

Our website has the most up to date news and events and all information for alumni **(www.pmb.ox.ac.uk)**

Your email and current postal address help us make sure you're receiving invitations to events and college news - make sure you're on the mailing list by emailing **development@pmb.ox.ac.uk** with all your details

Or, if you'd rather, pick up the phone, drop us a line or even pop in and say hello at...

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