

INSIGHT
MAGAZINE

UNITE

MICHAELMAS 2021 | ISSUE NO. 10

OxWIB
OXFORD WOMEN IN BUSINESS

**BUILDING YOUR OWN SMALL
BUSINESS**

**UNITING WIB
SOCIETIES AROUND
THE WORLD**

**NAVIGATING OFFICE
POLITICS**

VIRTUAL UNITY



Dear all,

On behalf of Oxford Women in Business, I would like to extend to you our warmest welcome. I hope you are well and have found time to recharge for the coming term.

Our purpose at OxWIB is to empower young women to become value-driven leaders in the world of business and beyond by helping them build the skills, connections, and confidence to pursue their own path to success.

This Michaelmas is in many ways a very special term. It marks not only the start of a new academic year, but also a (partial) return to pre-Covid normality, and we are thrilled to finally be able to welcome our members and engage with our speakers in an in-person setting. It is the first time in a long time that we are able to come together, and in light of that, the theme of our termly magazine Insight is "Unite". It contains fascinating articles, poems, pictures, and so much more, so I'd highly encourage you to give it a read.

In line with our aim of diversifying the meaning of business, we will be exploring a variety of industries through our Business of Online Dating, E-commerce, and Business of Beauty panels. We remain committed to showcasing female leadership across diverse areas of business and are thrilled to announce this term's Inspirational Women Speakers: Scarlett V Clark, the CEO and founder of the Smart Girl Tribe, as well as Eccie and Gini Newton, the founders of Karma Kitchen.

Mental health awareness is a theme that we will be focusing on in Michaelmas, so watch out for our mindfulness workshop, as well as self-defence and yoga classes that will help you get through 5th week blues. We hope to see you at our bimonthly drop-ins which are a great opportunity to meet and connect with like-minded women from across the university in a rather informal setting. I would also like to extend an invitation to President's Drinks which is bound to be one of the highlights of the term!

At OxWIB we are continuously striving towards self-development and growth and are very excited to announce our Investment Operations Project which is aimed at empowering women by providing them with knowledge and hands-on experience in the field of investing. Through a range of opportunities that include a trading academy, a blockchain workshop, and an impact investing panel, we are hoping to provide our members with the skills and confidence to navigate the world of investing in an independent and empowered way. We are also thrilled to be partnering with Revolut to increase financial wellness amongst young women.

We are privileged to be sponsored by and partner with amazing companies that believe in our vision. To help our members explore career opportunities at top companies, we will therefore be hosting a range of career-focused events including networking sessions, coffee chats, and company presentations – most of them in-person!

To support the career development of our members, we will also be launching the third iteration of our International Mentorship Scheme in Michaelmas. With over 80 mentors from a variety of industries, it presents a unique opportunity to build meaningful connections with accomplished female professionals.

Finally, I would like to thank the Michaelmas committee for the hard work, dedication and enthusiasm they have put into creating this amazing term card. Being part of such a driven committee of incredible young women is a great privilege, and I am so very proud of everything we have achieved as a team.

I wish everyone a wonderful and successful term ahead, and I hope to see you at our events!

With best wishes,

Sofija Petrovic,
President, Michaelmas Term 2021

President's Welcome



“
OUR PURPOSE
AT OXWIB IS
TO EMPOWER
YOUNG
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BECOME
VALUE-
DRIVEN
LEADERS

”

EDITOR'S NOTES

A new academic year, and with it comes new beginnings. Since the pandemic started, we have battled to keep our education and wellbeing afloat and now, as we return for Michaelmas term, it's finally looking like normality may be within reach. Without wanting to jinx anything, the OxWIB committee felt 'UNITE' addressed multiple areas of our current lives, and we hope this can be seen in the diversity of submissions we have received.

Thank you to everyone who submitted for this term's edition of Insight, and thank you to our incredible team for making this possible. Without being biased, it feels like our best edition yet.

Enjoy!

Caitlin MacClay
Marketing Co-Director

This term's Insight magazine is a goldmine of talent which shows exactly what Oxford Women in Business is all about: community, connection, respect, ambition and uniting in unexpected ways. Most of all, it's great to see that we are achieving our vision of expanding the notion of business with articles on science and technology, reading recommendations, poetry and a brilliant photography competition among many other creative pieces. I have loved working with some of our talented writers during the editing process, who have impressed me every step of the way. Here at OxWIB we believe that there is no idea that cannot be improved by collaboration, and the multitude of responses to our theme 'UNITE' this term, proves just that.

I hope you all enjoy this edition as much as I do. It is not only full of incredible content but has been edited to perfection by the Marketing Team.

Clara Marks
Secretary

We are really excited to present you our latest edition of Insight — a big thank you to our team and all who have submitted to us! Themed "UNITE", this issue is a collection of heartfelt memories, intriguing stories and earnest reviews. In light of the pandemic, we thought that it would be encouraging to learn more about how other people have been able to come together to help make the world a better place for everyone.

I hope you enjoy reading this, and wishing you all a fruitful Michaelmas term ahead!

Jada Fong
Marketing Co-Director



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UNITE Photography Competition
See the winning photograph, as well as all the other captivating submissions.



A Whole New World?

Navigating Workplace Politics

BY CALISTA CHONG

If you have managed to secure an internship or job upon graduation – great! But if you feel intimidated about navigating the unfamiliar, working-adult world, read on to allay some of that (understandable) worry. Calista Chong, Vice-President at OxWIB, compiled a list of disconcerting dilemmas one could face in the workplace and spoke to three wonderful working women – **Peggy Klaus, Shirly Piperno, and Stephanie Onukwugha** – for some tips on improving one's social and political savvy.



"Ignore the noise, live with confidence and charisma and focus on being the best at what you do to create an undeniable impact for your team and organisation,"

Dilemma #1: I feel that I am not taken seriously in male-dominated spaces and I don't know how to deal with being spoken over or interrupted in meetings.

To Stephanie and Peggy, this dilemma needs to be overcome by a single, powerful word: mindset. In Peggy's words: "Women have to decide that they want to make their voices heard. It is a commitment to courage and confidence."

"A lot of times, women focus on the obvious disparity in the ratio of male and female coworkers. Ignoring this disparity alleviates any subconscious pressure or insecurity you may feel to make yourself be seen or taken seriously. Ignore the noise, live with confidence and charisma and focus on being the best at what you do to create an undeniable impact for your team and organisation," Stephanie shared.

Peggy has advised her clients – many of them women in leadership – to write three behavioural prompts and repeat these to themselves: Speak first; speak often; I will be doing a disservice to my team, the company and myself if I don't speak up. "The more they see these prompts, the more it reinforces better behaviour. Come prepared with things that you want to say – observations, facts, statistics – so you can contribute to the discussion confidently."



What about dealing with being abruptly cut off in team meetings? After overcoming the initial shock and flash of hurt, how do we react to this 'snub'? While it is natural to assume ill intentions on the interrupter, Peggy recommended that we should first assume good intentions – an oversight or overexcitement on the individual's part. "Start by giving a friendly, non-threatening comeback – identify the person, give a reason for calling them out, and tell them what it is that you are going to do."

This could look something like: John, I know you don't mean to interrupt me. I really wasn't finished yet – I'm going to continue what I was saying, because it is really important.

"... practice speaking up for others when it is difficult to assert yourself"

"We really do have difficulty with boundaries, we worry about hurting people's feelings, being disrespectful, being seen as difficult or aggressive," Peggy said. Shirly, who works in a department with a ratio of 5 girls to 300 guys, advised to practice speaking up for others when it is difficult to assert yourself – whether it is because of power dynamics, or your relatively junior position. "Create a support system around the problem...include even guys who are a bit more junior. Make sure that someone has your back, and that you have the back of others."

Dilemma #2: People tend to claim credit for the results of my hard work – how should I claim credit where it is due, while still showing that I'm a team player?

First, there is nothing wrong with claiming due credit. Peggy, who published the book 'Brag! The Art of Tooting Your Horn Without Blowing It' said, "Braggarts are obnoxious because they talk incessantly; they steal credit; they exaggerate and condescend, among others. If you've done it, it ain't bragging. Don't feel bad about asserting your worth, where necessary. Just do it the good way!"

But Stephanie has a word of caution. "A lot of bosses will do this, as you are there to help them accomplish tasks, it's part of the job description. When it comes to supervisors – tread lightly. You don't need to address

the issue constantly. People know when you are a valuable member of the team. When you build up rapport with your supervisors and bosses, you can then mention that you would love to be recognized for your work. When it comes to your co-workers, however, calmly and confidently interject and correct their statements. If it is a recurring affair, pull the person aside and discuss it with them," Stephanie said. When facing this potentially difficult conversation, Peggy asked for us to start, again, with curiosity. "State how you feel and list your contributions. End with something like: In the future, I'd like you to make sure that my work is acknowledged."

To Shirly, it is best if we can be "preemptive" about the problem. "Make sure that your managers are aware that you are in charge of the project in the first place. When there is a weekly call for updates, make sure that you are mentioning the steps you are taking to accomplish it to prevent people from taking credit for it later on."



Dilemma #3: I'm feeling very stifled as my boss is a micromanager. How do I convince them to trust me?

It's annoying, I know.

But to our three ladies, it is an inevitable occurrence. According to Peggy, "At the beginning of a working relationship with anyone, it is "normal" for a manager to micromanage. Don't take it personally. What I would suggest, is when your manager gives you a specific assignment, make sure you get specifics on how the manager would like it to be completed – ask them a lot of questions. Then ask them if they are open to you bringing new ideas to discuss. At your performance review, you can talk about your satisfactory performance and mention that you would like more

freedom. And be specific about what that freedom looks like to you." Stephanie concurred, saying that micromanagers micromanage because "they don't feel like they would get the outcomes they desire, without interference."

From what I'm hearing, the best thing to do is not to feel frustrated and just go with the flow – fingers crossed that the rein will loosen over time.



Dilemma #4: I have no idea how to approach networking, particularly with seniors or people outside my team. How do I create organic opportunities to meet new people?

In Stephanie's opinion, the two secret ingredients to networking well are preparation and charisma. "Be open, flexible and very alert to situations – and the last one is key – that when taken advantage of, will steer you closer to achieving your goals." She advised us to identify the people in our company that can help us achieve our long-term goals and treat every interaction as the first and last. What we want to do is make sure that we are presenting the best version of ourselves to the people we meet, so that they will feel comfortable vouching for us when the need arises. Charisma goes a long way in making these goal-driven interactions natural.

Shirly tries to email a different person once a month about something that she is interested in. For example, having been involved with Effective Altruism at Oxford, she spoke to someone at the Philanthropy unit of her company, hoping to find out more about different approaches to philanthropy work.

She also spoke to a lady about their shared interest in fashion. "You don't get to discuss these niche topics of interest at work, a lot of people miss these spontaneous conversations. I'd say the best way to approach networking is to have good conversations and follow your passions." This was so refreshing to hear – who knew that your bachelor's thesis could signal the start of a budding friendship?

Dilemma #5: I'm struggling to stand out in the workplace. What could I do?

Now, let's get back to basics. "You have to have a great attitude. You have to be delighted to be there – be friendly, introduce yourself, offer to help. The emotional temperature that you bring into the organisation will permeate everything that you do, and punctuality and preparation are foundational attributes for anyone looking to be successful." Peggy also recommended following up with colleagues or managers with pertinent information after meetings. These little gestures speak volumes about your work ethic and attitude.

Shirly adds, "Everyone is pretty good at their job. You're not going to stand out by just doing your job well. If you can find a way to enrich your team and working space, go for it." "Performance currency" – defined by an article in the Harvard Business Review as credibility that one builds through their work – is no longer enough to be recognised in the workplace. One has to prepare to commit to "extra-curriculars" to be indispensable and a valuable contribution to the team. Shirly walked the talk by starting a women's support network in her workplace, scheduling monthly calls with them although they are working on different projects.

Lastly, we want to make sure that we are standing out...for the **right** reasons. Stephanie advised to steer clear of office gossip, especially when you are only an intern or in the early stages of your career. "Personality eventually goes a longer way than your output."

"The emotional temperature that you bring into the organisation will permeate everything that you do, and punctuality and preparation are foundational attributes for anyone looking to be successful."

Dilemma #6: I'm at a stage where I've shown results and I'm ready to take on new responsibilities. How do I pitch myself for a promotion effectively, without coming across as pushy?

First off, it is amazing that you are confident to take the next step forward in your career! Prior to pitching yourself, make sure that you have actually positioned yourself as a great candidate for the role. According to Stephanie, your pitch should contain the following elements - "How much you have excelled in your current role; your desire for something more challenging; and how your abilities align with the new role." Rehearse and perfect your pitch, before requesting for a meeting with your supervisor.



Peggy introduced interesting terminology for thinking about putting ourselves forward. One effective way to speak about your successes at meetings or in conversations is in the form of a "Braggalogue", a short, pithy and entertaining story with facts and figures to support your claims. At key junctures, we should have a "Brag Bag" ready - a compilation of successes, accomplishments, testimonials by colleagues and employees from which you can pull out "Brag Nuggets" to support your pitch for a promotion at performance reviews. When it comes to salary negotiation for your new position, Shirly suggests to "do your research and see what other companies are paying employees" to get a benchmark.



This piece is a collaboration with Cherwell to celebrate the launch of their Business & Finance section.

Dilemma #7: I'm passionate about creating an inclusive and supportive organisational culture. How do I deal with inclusivity in the workplace?

Fostering a healthy and inclusive organisational culture takes a lot of work. Those at the top can do far more, and more quickly, than you can when you are at the beginning of your career. However, as Shirly said, "Try to act like we are a bit more senior than we actually are. Even if you may hold a junior position, take note of who is speaking less and try to include him or her in the discussion." Stephanie advised the same - being sincere, having high emotional intelligence and being mindful of the language that we use, will go a very long way.

"One effective way to speak about your successes at meetings or in conversations is in the form of a "Braggalogue", a short, pithy and entertaining story with facts and figures to support your claims."

On a more systemic level, though, Peggy reiterated that diversity and inclusion programmes should be "strategic, sustained and evidence-based". Many of these programmes fail because far too many organisations do not have a real interest in fixing the lack of representation. Gender quotas, for one, are effective because they increase the competency in the workplace. "While quotas are a good way of increasing numbers, it is not an immediate fix as it overlooks [important indicators like] retention rates and the types of roles into which minorities are recruited."

Which dilemma did you resonate with? This new chapter in our lives brings not only excitement but also new challenges and uncertainty. I hope these bits of wisdom from Shirly, Stephanie and Peggy, all at different stages of their careers, have given you greater insight into navigating the world of the workplace. It's less scary than it seems, we promise.



Peggy Klaus, Bestselling Author, Communication and Leadership Coach, and Political Consultant

Peggy has spent more than two decades helping thousands of professionals from Fortune 500s, mid-size and start-ups succeed in their jobs. She has also dedicated much of her career to empowering women of all ages. And, once again, she brings her passion and expertise into the spotlight with the launch of "Unstoppable!" — her new, cutting-edge program designed to address the key issues critical for women's success: confidence, fearlessness, and purpose, among others. Peggy is the author of two best-selling books, 'BRAG! The Art of Tooting Your Own Horn Without Blowing It' and 'The Hard Truth About Soft Skills: Workplace Lessons Smart People Wish They'd Learned Sooner'.



Shirly Piperno, Trainee at Emerging Technologies at a Financial Institution

Shirly graduated in 2020 with her Master's, where she focused on digital ethics around the UK census. Her previous experience lies in fashion and real estate, where she also focused on the digital aspect of these industries.



Stephanie Onukwugha, Pharmaceutical Scientist and Business Development Expert

Stephanie Onukwugha is a Pharmaceutical Scientist and Business Development expert whose skills and experiences have been utilized by major healthcare, petroleum parastatals, telecom infrastructure, tech, and luxury clothing brands both in the USA and in Nigeria. Stephanie left the corporate world to focus on her passion, Entrepreneurship, and is now the proud founder of Premier Capacity Development Network (Nigeria's premier Training Network) and UnveiledSkin (an Organic Skincare Brand) and the proud co-founder of Iruka Holistics (offering Inventive Wellness Products).

How I Built The UK's Number One Female Empowerment Organisation

Scarlett V Clark
CEO, Smart Girl Tribe



these were not the conversations me and my friends were having. Young women desperately needed a hub which would focus on important subject matters, such as social issues affecting young women across the globe and mental health. Someone had to change the system, someone had to do something. Quickly, I realised – I was someone. I used the deep, nervous feeling in the pit of my stomach as an indication that Smart Girl Tribe had to exist. Having no financial backing didn't unnerve me. Having few friends and zero contacts didn't, either – only the fear that nobody other than my mother would read it. Smart Girl Tribe has grown to become the UK's number one female empowerment organisations. We boast a top-rated podcast and a bestselling book, 'The Smart Girls Handbook'. I have personally worked with Harvard University,

Women for Women International, UN Women, the British Council, 50:50 and HeforShe alongside Emma Watson. The success of Smart Girl Tribe, outside of my perseverance and refusal to give in when the journey would get tough, is purely a result of our thriving community. Here is how, with no business experience or economics degree, I built a loyal and flourishing 'tribe'.

Yearning to be a writer, it was at 19-years-old I felt I had no other option than to create my very own digital magazine. Throughout the 2000s, major publications only seemed to concentrate on the opposite sex and losing weight –



Keep Inclusivity at the Centre

Fundamentally understanding my responsibility to represent every girl from the start, I set out to cultivate a space on the internet every woman could feel a sense of belonging. Thus, it was vitally important to develop a team which mirrored the diversity of our audience. It became a policy that no SGT writer would write about a topic which she had not experienced personally. This ultimately cemented our credibility. Rather than have an in-house team, we outsourced. Over the years, dynamic and powerful black contributors have written about living with mental health disorders as black women. Equally, we have published first-hand accounts of anorexia survivors and open letters from women who have been sexually assaulted.

Our "differences", more often than not, are framed around ethnicity and orientation and are used as a wedge to divide rather than unite us. Creating a business is very similar to building a house – a strong foundation is a necessity. This can only be achieved through investing in and actively listening to people from all different backgrounds. At Smart Girl Tribe, all women are seen, represented, and valued. Human beings primarily have an innate desire to belong. When the internet eliminates geographical constraints, everyone has an opportunity to transform a shared interest into a desire for change and to build a community of purpose. Ensuring the diversity of Smart Girl Tribe has also meant that we have collaborated with various foreign brands and inspired women from all over the world. COVID-permitting, our next event will be in Sydney, and I have worked as a female empowerment expert for Harvard University in the United States.

"Creating a business is very similar to building a house – a strong foundation is a necessity."

Offer different mediums

The catalyst for Smart Girl Tribe's success was the digital magazine. It began as a website and, as a result of our personal pieces and accounts, we started to get noticed. Smart Girl Tribe stood as a finalist in the Mental Health Awards and was shortlisted for a Shorty Award the same year, two big milestones for any publication. Not long after that, our readers were telling us via social media they also wanted audio content. I, along with the team, recognised that our community would thrive exponentially by creating more accessible material. We created our podcast for audio-friendly content and then, in the same year,



for the 'tribers' who wanted to meet us IRL and on a more personal level we put together the Smart Girl Tribe event series. Smart Girl Tribe has conquered each channel of media because we have remained true to ourselves and have let the audience guide us. During my speaking tour, I started to apprehend how many women would queue often for hours just to ask me one question. Enough still wasn't being done – it was apparent women needed a tangible source to turn to once I had left. Cue 'The Smart Girls Handbook'. Truth be told, I didn't lead our audience toward anything. I let them guide me, which in turn enabled us to connect more deeply and effectively.

Be trustworthy

A click carries a lot of responsibility. I have always kept my primary values of grace and transparency at the forefront. Our mission to empower young women to be their most authentic selves has never been compromised. I have always encouraged contribution over consumption and collaboration over competition. At times, it has meant the journey has been a little slower and tougher. However, it has been thanks to our authenticity that our readers, listeners and event attendees connect with one another. The business is rooted in purpose. Our members understand what the organisation wants to achieve and they are as committed as we are to living by our values.



I took it seriously

From the writing to the language we use, down to what times we deliver content, everything is incredibly thought-out. We engage in a 365-days-a-year conversation with our audience – that is how we have been able to create such high-quality content in a myriad of different forms. The audience is aware of the value being provided to them, from our newsletter to our Facebook group, The Smart Girl Tribe Society, and everything in between. Taking it seriously has meant not only listening to our audience but noticing gaps in the market. That is how our event series began. I was being invited to beautiful events for influencers and then stuffy events for career-minded women. I thought, how can we merge the two? Every idea really starts as an answer to a question at Smart Girl Tribe HQ – that wouldn't be the case however if we hadn't taken it so seriously from day one. Community doesn't have to translate into a million followers: a community at its core consists of people who understand your message. At the beginning, we weren't selling at all: we just wanted to be that big-sister figure. Providing the value upfront is what made us so valuable. Thinking about your community in a micro sense rather than macro will help a lot over time, because it is those loyalists who will help you grow.

Community sensibility

Getting to grips with your ethos and message is non-negotiable. Our mission is to have a positive impact on the world: to help women realise a life free from mental health struggles, lack of confidence, and a lack of fulfilment. The brands we collaborate with reflect the same values, too.

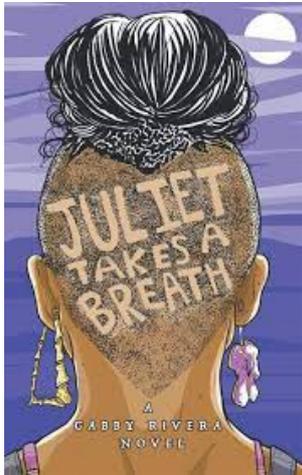


Smart Girl Tribe is a human creation, rather than an artificial construct. I always wanted people to feel that they belong and can contribute something greater than themselves. The Smart Girl Tribe has proven that the power of a passionate community has no limits.

**What began as a digital magazine now stands as a rallying cry
for women everywhere.**

UNITE READING LIST

Compiled by Zahra Grieve



'Juliet Takes a Breath'

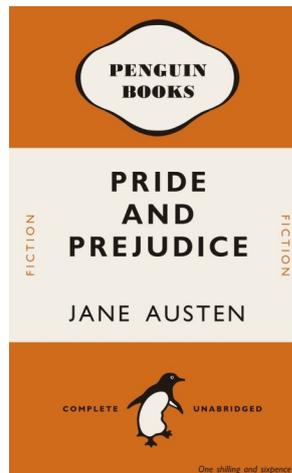
- *Gabby Rivera*

Juliet comes out to her Puerto Rican family the night before flying to Portland for an internship with Harlowe Brisbane, her favourite feminist writer. For Juliet, Harlow is the ultimate authority on feminism, women's bodies, and being queer. I first read this not long after reading Florence Given's *Women Don't Owe You Pretty*, around the time of Given's public dispute with Chidera Eggerue/*The Slumflower* (*What a Time To Be Alone*). Easy comparisons can be made between Brisbane and Given. Exploring vital questions of intersectional feminism, how unity can best be achieved, and talking honestly about sexuality, this book is a must-read. Classified as Young Adult fiction, this novel proves that YA is a genre to be enjoyed by everyone.

'Pride and Prejudice'

- *Jane Austen*

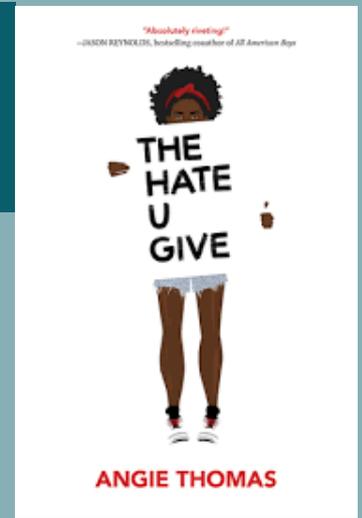
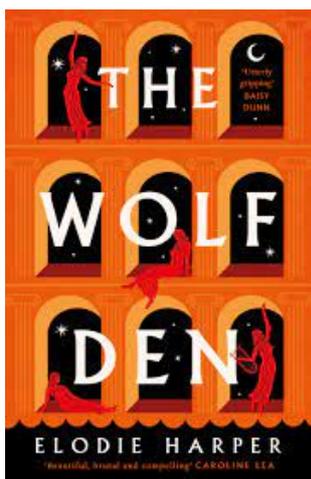
Before *Bridget Jones* there was *Pride and Prejudice*. The original romantic-comedy, *Pride and Prejudice* asks whether it's main characters Elizabeth Bennet and Mr Darcy can overcome their... you've guessed it, pride and prejudice. I read this classic novel for the first time this summer and was utterly engrossed. There is unity to be found in Elizabeth's relationship with her sister Jane. Unity is also explored more literally through the institution of marriage, as Austen asks what a woman must forfeit to fulfil the expectations of a patriarchal society, as well as how unified a society stratified by wealth and class can really be.



'The Wolf Den'

- *Elodie Harper*

This brilliant book was gifted to me as a birthday present from a friend. Recently released in paperback, *The Wolf Den* follows Amara, once a beloved daughter but now enslaved in Pompeii's brothel. Although living an incredibly difficult existence, clever and resourceful Amara dares to seek freedom, all the while finding comfort in the laughter and dreams she shares with her friends. One of the things I really liked about this book was the way it interweaved quotations of Latin prose and poetry in translation, like Ovid and Catullus, between chapters. Harper unites ancient texts with new audiences, simultaneously grounding her narrative in plausibility and encouraging people to discover the primary texts for themselves. I'm incredibly passionate about access to education, especially in Classics - having been a beneficiary turned student ambassador on programmes like UNIQ - so it's really pleasing to see Ancient Rome promoted alongside values like friendship, courage and ambition. *The Wolf Den* is the first in a trilogy of novels reimagining the lives of women who have long been overlooked.



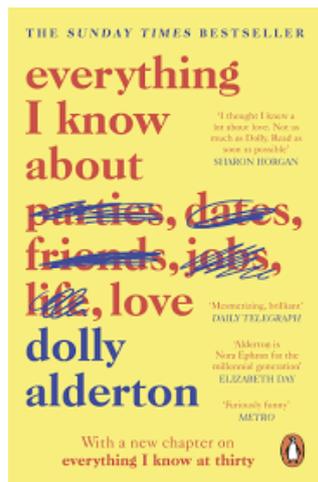
'The Hate U Give'

- *Angie Thomas*

Another YA recommendation, *The Hate U Give* is a book which will stay with you for a very long time. Thomas' debut novel, it was expanded from a short story she wrote in college in reaction to the police shooting of Oscar Grant. Narrated by Starr Carter, a black teenager, the novel explores how she navigates racial boundaries at an elite, predominately white school. Issues of race are amplified tenfold by the murder of her childhood friend, Khalil, by a white police officer, which Starr is witness to. Named in reference to Tupac's assertion that Thug Life stood for "The Hate U Give Little Infants Fucks Everybody", Angie Thomas tackles damaging questions of segregation, bias, and racism. Adapted into an excellent film starring Amandla Stenberg (*The Hunger Games*) in 2018, it's gratifying to see this essential read getting the attention it deserves. *The Hate U Give* belongs on every anti-racist reading list.

'Everything I Know About Love'

- *Dolly Alderton*



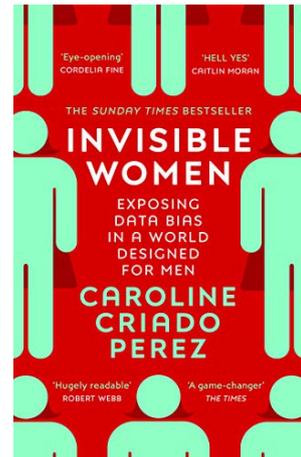
I absolutely adore this book. A must-read for women of all ages, but especially of those in their twenties. Dolly Alderton's autobiographical novel is a love-letter to female friendship, and will quickly become a pass-around-your-friend-group book. Everything I Know About Love is a funny, endearing, and insightful read about the highs and

lows of the relationships and love we encounter as we grow up. Written by a millennial, all readers will relate to the difficult moments experienced by Alderton, and the essential support of her friends which carries her through. Heartbreaking in places, this best-selling memoir recounts a varied career in media and journalism, including roles such as Story Producer for Made in Chelsea, Script Assistant for Fresh Meat, and columnist and agony aunt for The Sunday Times. Everything I Know About Love is currently being adapted for television by the BBC.

'Invisible Women: Exposing Data Bias in a World Designed for Men'

- *Caroline Criado Perez*

My jaw dropped countless times reading Invisible Women. Did you know that gender bias affects everything from snow ploughing schedules, to car seat safety, to essential medical procedures? And that's just the first chapter. I'm a firm believer that knowledge is power; what Criado Perez offers is just that. Through extensive research, she argues that the lack of "big data" on women is equivalent to rendering half of the world's population invisible. The cumulative effect of such deficiency is an issue which demands urgent social action. An accessible read, this intelligent account makes it startlingly clear just how much unity is impeded by gender inequality, and how we might overcome it going forward.



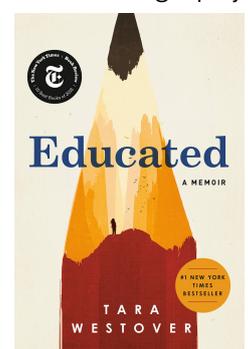
'Educated'

- *Tara Westover*

Tara Westover's memoir recounts her unconventional upbringing by Mormon fundamentalist parents in Idaho. The youngest of seven, her birth went unregistered until the age of 9, and she never received formal schooling. Educated is the story of

Westover's efforts to study herself away from her tough early years, and read herself into a better future (spoiler alert: she ends up studying for a PhD at Cambridge). I was completely blown away when I read this book, both by admiration for Westover's perseverance, especially in the face of her

family's discouragement, and shock at the amazing number of freak accidents that befell the Westovers. Tara is an inspiration, and I am awe-stuck by the number of people willing to help her on her journey: an estranged older brother; a local boy; a Cambridge don. You've never read an autobiography like this.

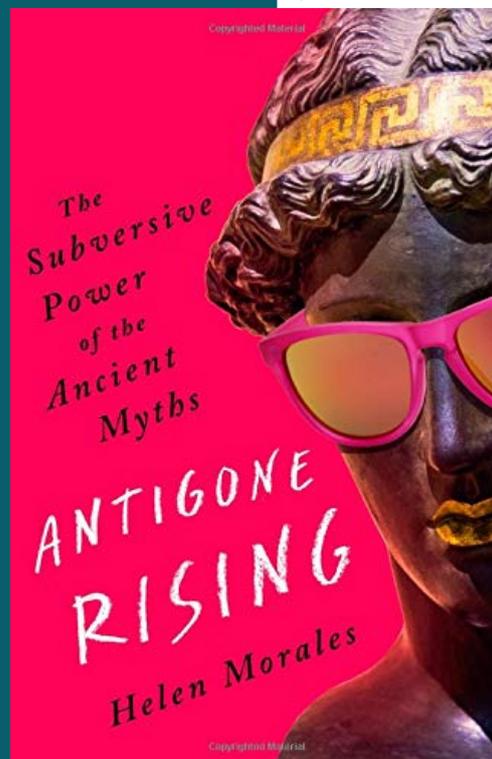


'Antigone Rising: The Subversive Power of the Ancient Myths'

- *Helen Morales*

This book will challenge everything you think you know about

Classics. A witty, inspiring, and essential read, classicist Helen Morales shows how many damaging practices, like school dress codes, exploitation of the environment, and rape culture, have their roots in the ancient world. Morales reminds us that myths have subversive power because they are told - and read - in different ways. By doing this, she successfully shows us how these stories, like Antigone's stand against tyranny, can be reclaimed - relying upon relevant examples like Beyoncé to do so. A very contemporary take on the ancient myths, this exciting text not only affirms that Classics belongs to everyone, but shows how mythology is constantly reinvigorated by the modern world to challenge the status quo, spark resistance and unite people to rail against unjust regimes. Antigone Rising is an extremely accessible book, with no prior knowledge of the ancient myths required to enjoy it.



Virtual Unity

Covid-19 and the Future of Virtual Tools in the Workplace

by Elena Vermeer

In a recent sketch (1) by the comedy trio Foil Arms and Hog, an in-person work meeting is repeatedly disrupted when attendees are unable to shake the aftereffects of video conferencing. Hilarity ensues as one employee turns up in a bathrobe, another forgets their 'camera is on' and unwittingly pulls rude faces, and an employee's wife gate-crashes the meeting. Comedy aside, the sketch raises a pertinent question: as the world gradually moves back to the office, what is the future of virtual meetings in the workplace?

Covid-19 and emerging virtual tools

It's not news that the global pandemic has brought about a boom in the use of virtual platforms. Traditional video conferencing tools, such as Zoom, Google Meets, and Microsoft Teams, are now ubiquitous – Zoom even experienced a 30-times growth in usership following Covid-19 (2). Businesses are also increasingly turning to apps like Airtable, Notion, and Figma: in a similar manner to Google Docs, these software facilitate both synchronous and asynchronous cloud collaboration, but in more sophisticated ways. Some workplaces have embraced sites like Gathertown, which allows organizations to build a virtual 'office' in which users, represented by avatars, can move between different 'rooms' and interact in clusters, mimicking an in-person office environment. The emergence and popularization of these various forms of virtual software attest to the continual evolution of methods to stay connected through these unprecedented times.

The accelerated uptake of virtual technologies that Covid-19 prompted has undoubtedly made business more efficient by normalizing virtual communications, thereby reducing the need for work-related travel. But this comes at a cost. Less face-to-face contact drastically decreases the social element of the workplace, and 'Zoom fatigue' has become a prevalent issue: according to a recent report (3), 49% of professionals surveyed reported exhaustion due to non-stop video calls. As is the case with any new technology, the effects of virtual conferencing tools are a mixed bag.

New horizons: the hybrid workplace

The ambivalent effects of virtual conferencing, as well as a gradual return to offices as the pandemic eases, has



given credence to the concept of the 'hybrid' workplace: a business model that integrates and accommodates both in-person and remote workers. This trend demands that virtual conferencing companies tweak their models and tailor to the specific needs of such mixed-modal functioning.

This shift is already evident in the pandemic's leading virtual conference tool, Zoom. At its virtual conference 'Zoomtopia', held from September 13-14 2021, the company announced a suite of new business plans and apps designed to support the hybrid workplace (4). For example, a hot-desking feature will be added that allows employees to book their desks for in-person work days. This is accompanied by software that facilitates customization of office desks to replicate workers' home office settings. A new digital whiteboard software is also in the works, which allows simultaneous collaboration across in-person and remote settings, and which will further be accessible through writing on the physical surfaces in offices to simulate the tactile sensations of a 'real' whiteboard.

As the office increasingly blends the 'real' and the virtual, major companies have begun to embrace the possibility of employing virtual reality technologies in the workplace. Facebook, for example, has begun to run betas on their new Horizon workrooms (5), which applies virtual reality technology in office meetings: users are represented by avatars and immersed in a

virtual metaverse. As Zuckerberg states, virtual reality is ideal for the mixed office as it allows a 'fusion of digital objects and physical ones'. And it's not just Facebook, either: Microsoft has also begun to conduct meetings through holographic chats (6), and VR companies are catching on to this trend and developing provisions for use in the workplace.

'Never be the same': returning to work post-pandemic

These exciting projects point to new horizons for 'virtual unity' in the future workplace. More presently and tangibly, we can observe how virtual meetings have impacted workplace communications as employees across the world gradually return to work.



A popular 2020 meme featured a cat photobombing a Zoom meeting, with a bored, existential expression and the caption: 'This could have been an email'. The crux of this joke has significant repercussions for workplaces resuming in-person meetings. During the pandemic, scheduling video conferences was often an onerous task, and attending a virtual meeting from home was, for most, much more effort than strolling up to a co-worker for a quick word. This has prompted a reconsideration of how and when meetings are scheduled, and has led to a greater reliance on modes of communication that are not instant nor in-person (e.g. messages or emails rather than 'a quick chat'). In the 'post-pandemic age', in-person meetings tend to be more structured and spontaneous chats with colleagues are less common. Furthermore, given the extensive precedents set during the pandemic, video conferences have become a more legitimized option for meetings even when an in-person option might be available: a report has shown that full-time employees attend video meetings 50% more now than before COVID-19 (7).

All these developments point to the reality that the widespread adoption of virtual technologies in the workplace is not a makeshift solution to the pandemic, but a 'new normal' that is here to stay. Not only have we become more attuned to the mutability of circumstances and more open to hybrid models,

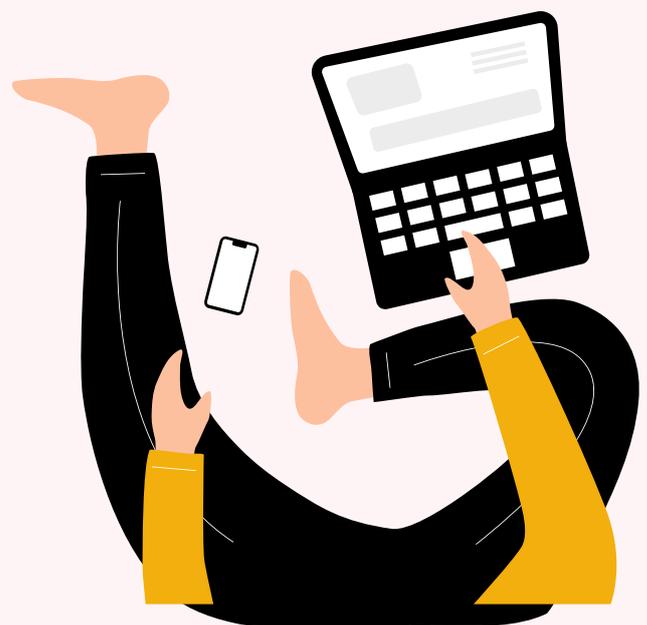
people are also keen to embrace flexible work styles. According to an Ipsos survey for the World Economic Forum, two-thirds of respondents from around the world prefer a hybrid work arrangement post-pandemic (8). Within this landscape, virtual meetings and remote work will become increasingly widespread, a prediction that is supported by a recent McKinsey report (9).

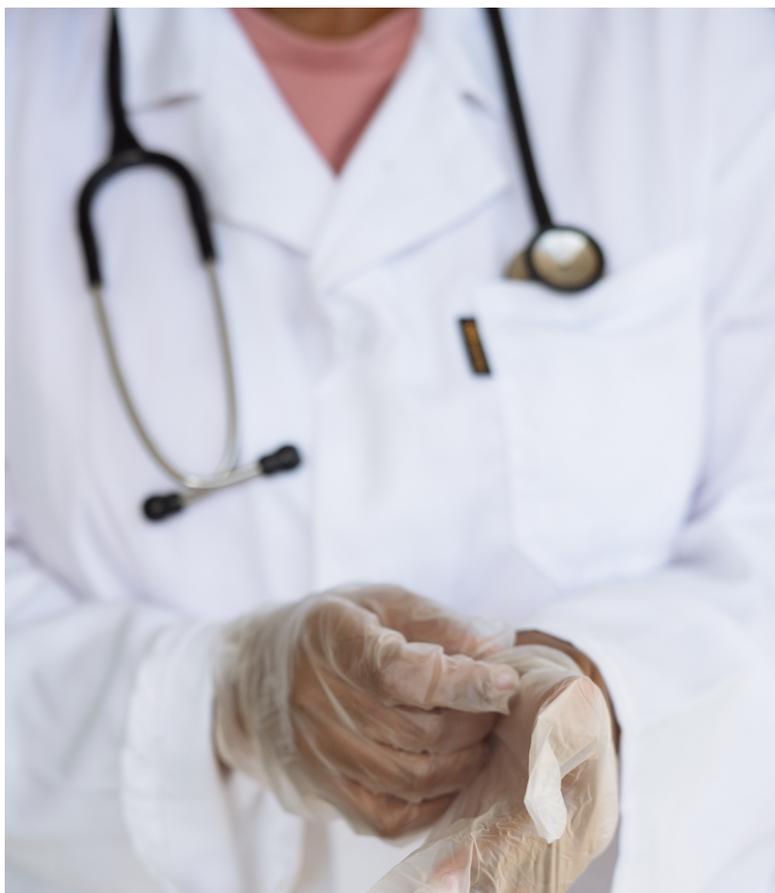
Conclusion

The applications of video conferencing are wide, but they cannot fully replace in-person models – the key is moderation and adaptation. Yet the surge of virtual conferencing has undoubtedly accelerated the uptake of modern technology in the workplace, and has prompted a paradigm shift in our conceptualization of 'workplace environments'. What is clear is that virtual forms of workplace communication will become ever more prevalent. This opens up new horizons: a mixed-reality, hybrid workplace seems to be the future.

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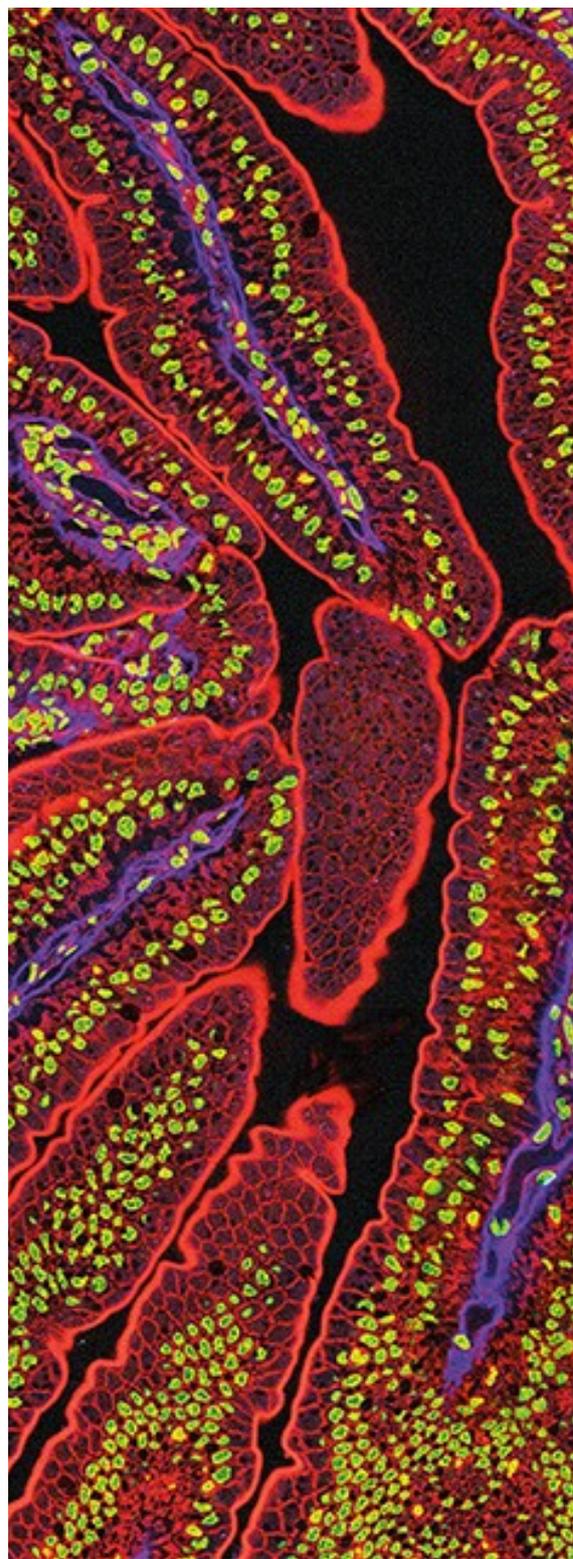
LIFE IN SYMBIOSIS:

The effect of Covid-19 on our microbiome

by Caitlin MacClay

Prior to December 31st 2019, when the first case of coronavirus was reported, phrases such as 'social distancing' and 'quarantine' were at the very bottom of the average person's vocabulary list. Yet, in a matter of months, these quickly became common phrases across the world, as well as being the main methods of protecting ourselves. Suddenly everyone was constantly using hand sanitiser, wearing face masks, and never getting closer than 6ft to anyone not in our 'bubbles'. Whilst this improvement in hygiene helped alleviate the risk of many people catching the common cold, the cleanliness could potentially be damaging to the trillions of bacteria that live in symbiosis with our bodies.

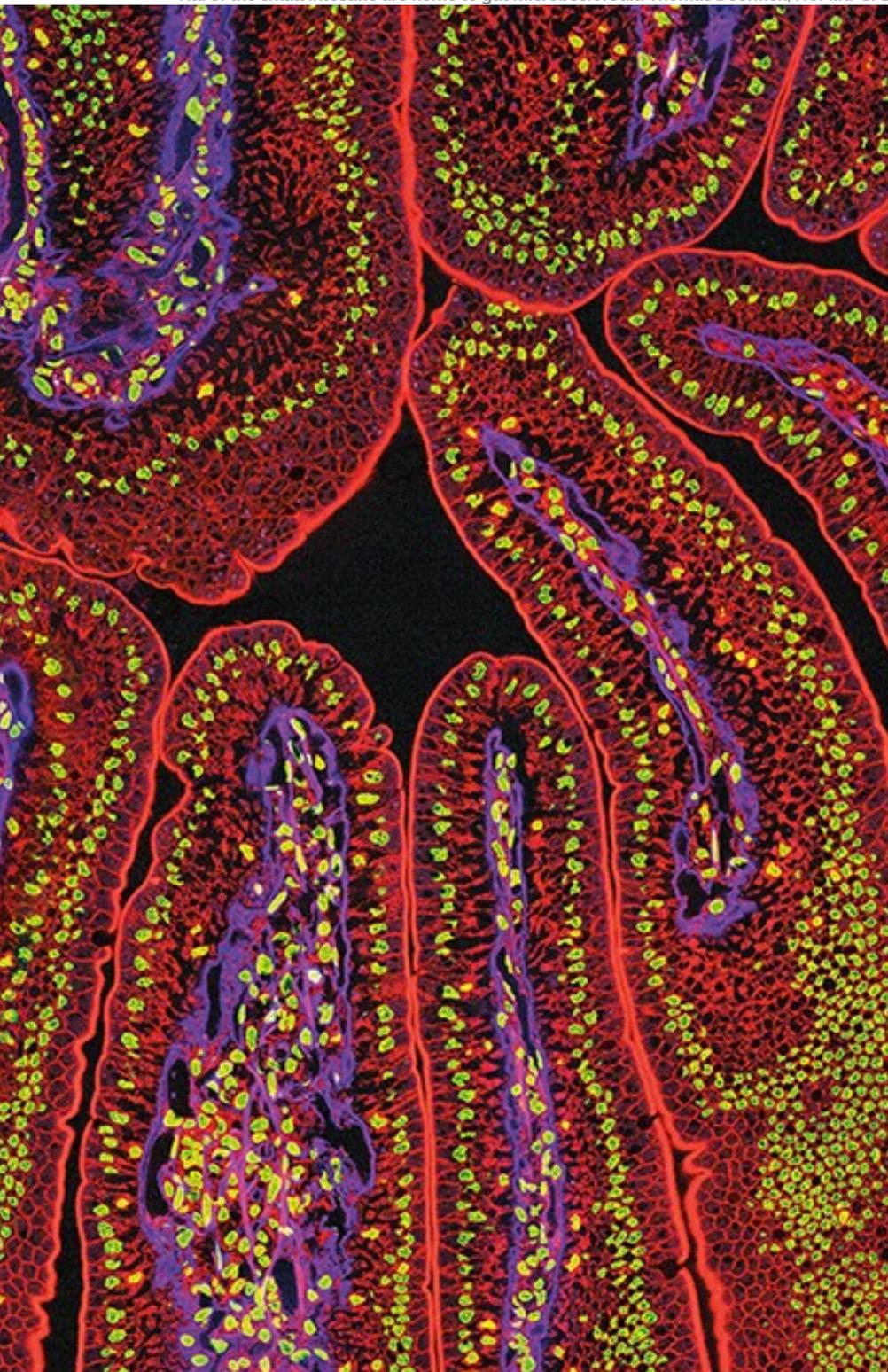
The microbiome is defined as the genomes of all microbial organisms that live within and on our bodies. These bacteria help digest our food, regulate our immune system, protect us against other bacteria that cause diseases, and the list goes on. Researchers are especially interested in the relationship formed between our microbiome and our mental health, with communications occurring via the gut-brain axis, leading researchers to believe that the state of our gut, which stems from the health of our microbiome, can directly affect the state of our mental health.



It is, therefore, no wonder that as we isolate ourselves from all other humans, scientists are now considering how the lack of interaction could be diminishing our microbiome and the causes that this could be having on us in the long term.

Take, for example, a newborn baby.

Villi of the small intestine are home to gut microbes. Credit: Thomas Deerinck, NCMIR/SPL



Ordinarily that baby would be exposed to friends and family when they meet at coffees and dinners. They may go to the nursery with other babies and interact with them. They'll likely be taken around shops in their pram. All of these seemingly trivial moments are actually key in the development of a good microbiome due to the diversity of bacteria that will be picked up from all the different environments and contacts that baby has. Now, take a baby born in the middle of the pandemic. Due to social distancing, the baby can't be cuddled by other family members. It is also likely that nurseries are shut. Even going to shops in prams is less likely because parents are increasingly concerned about the risk of exposing a newborn to the potential of catching coronavirus. All of the normal interactions have been removed from this baby and its microbiome.

When we start to consider the implications that social distancing is then likely to have on us, it raises the question of how we should be preparing for these long term effects?

The 'Daycare Test' was a study conducted in Finland, where, for four weeks, young children played on segments of forest floor that were placed on top of existing gravel. Instructors at the school also engaged the children in activities such as gardening, resulting in an average daily exposure of 90 minutes per day. The results from this study showed an increase in microbe diversity, corresponding to a rise in immune system function, simply due to the exposure to bacteria that lived in nature.

Animals and food can also help increase our microbiome diversity. Rob Knight from the University of California, and co-founder of the American Gut Project, said "the most evidence-based strategy for improving your microbiome from an immunity land asthma perspective is to get a cow". Whilst this isn't practical for the majority, it does symbolise the helpful interactions we can have with animals, such as our pets that go outside, as they will also have a different microbiome that we can then be exposed to.

Finally, a diet that promotes microbiome diversity is vital. Research shows the best way to increase our good bacteria is to increase our plant-based food intake. We can additionally add in fermented foods, such as kombucha and kefir, but it's thought that these aren't going to have as large an impact as compared to eating more fruit, vegetables, and other plant-based foods such as nuts and legumes.

So, what seemed to be yet another item on the long list of side effects caused by the spread of the coronavirus, may perhaps be avoidable provided we start to do what we've been told to do for years: look after our bodies, so our bodies can look after us. Or, in the world of the microbiome, protect our microbiome, so our microbiome can protect us.

female health: finally at the forefront?

For decades, women's health has been side-lined as a 'niche' issue. However we are increasingly seeing females unite to address what has become known as the gender health gap.

Specifically, women's health has started to be addressed through 'FemTech', referring to products, services, diagnostics and software that use technology to cater to the needs of women's health. The term was coined in 2016 by Ida Tin, cofounder and CEO of Danish menstrual tracking app Clue. FemTech includes a wide range of platforms, software, apps, wearable and clinical devices, dedicated to the improvement of women's health and wellbeing.

Women have specific health issues, ranging from fertility, pregnancy and menstruation to menopause and pelvic health, and this gender specific healthcare is under researched and underinvested. Despite representing 51% of the global population, women tend to be significantly underrepresented in clinical trials and research. Only 4% of pharmaceutical R&D spending is on female-specific drugs and devices, and just 3% of digital health deals since 2011 have focused on women's health, according to Healthware Systems. In fact, 5 times more research is conducted into erectile dysfunction (affecting 19% of men) than into premenstrual syndrome (PMS) affecting 90% of women.

In part, this substantial gap can be attributed to the fact it was not considered necessary to include women in federally funded clinical

trials in the US until 1993. Even today, as new rules only apply to government funded trials, 1 in 5 drug manufacturers in the US do not recruit representative numbers of women as participants in drug trials. The UK is particularly poor, with the main drug funders making no substantive requirement for the consideration of gender in research, according to the Journal of Obstetric, Gynaecologic and Neonatal nursing.

So clearly, not only is there a fundamental need for improved women's health research and products, there is great demand too, with 66% of women reporting feeling misunderstood by the healthcare market (Oliver Wyman Health, 2019).

"5 times more research is conducted into erectile dysfunction...than into premenstrual syndrome"

FemTech solutions are predominantly being developed by female-founded startups, and can be broadly categorised into innovations addressing reproductive health, fertility, diagnostics and

screening, wellness, and menopause. An example is Ava, a fertility tracking sensor bracelet with an accompanying app, founded by Lea von Bidder. The company has raised \$42 million since 2014, and has FDA clearance as the first wearable, machine learning device to aid women in ovulation prediction and facilitation of conception.

The innovations on offer ultimately provide women with more control over their health. This is achieved via a direct to consumer approach, providing women directly with the information they need to understand their health. For example, Jubel, a fertility app, provides a personal fertility education platform, with 24/7 access to access to personalised programmes, education, coaches and experts. FemTech also provides women with more choice, making better health a possibility for more women. Bea Fertility aims to 'democratise' access to fertility care, by providing alternatives to traditional fertility methods. It offers simple technologies from the lab for women to use at home, enabling users to track their cycle, when ovulation occurs and perform intracervical insemination at home. Over the past few years, and accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic, we are seeing change driven by a number of factors,



supporting the growth of FemTech. Most significantly, we see a rising demand for digital health, and reducing social stigma surrounding women's health.

Health and Fitness app downloads in Europe have grown at a +17.8% CAGR between 2015 and 2020, to 405 million downloads, according to Sensortower data. Furthermore, the Covid-19 pandemic has intensified such digitalisation trends in the healthcare sector, with remote practices necessarily adopted due to lockdowns. This supports FemTech's proposition, with investors better understanding the value of remote health offerings. In addition, the internet is the primary source of healthcare information for women, with 9 in 10 initially seeking advice via the web, and being 75% more likely to use digital healthcare than men, according to the National Marketing institute, thus further supporting the case for FemTech.

Historically, conversations surrounding women's health have been surrounded by stigma, embarrassment and misinformation, resulting in a stale marketplace with a limited range of products on offer. However these conversations are increasingly being addressed, and are supported by the wider fourth wave feminism movement. This has resulted in names such as Primark releasing its own range of 'period

pants', further lifting the taboo in the industry, and proving that women's health is not a niche issue.

Despite the FemTech industry's increasing success, many start-ups still face significant barriers, with securing adequate funding being by far the most widespread. Women raise less venture capital than men, with 90% of venture capitalists in the UK and US being male, according to Axios. FemTech founders have reported that male investors often do not seek to understand women's health issues, or recognise the investment opportunity. In fact, in many cases, meetings can feel more like educating than pitching. Additionally, certain FemTech solutions require approval from key regulatory bodies such as the FDA, in order to enter the market and gain consumer confidence. This approval can be difficult to gain due to the lack of research on female specific health issues, and relies upon large amounts of research and development, which requires sufficient funding.

Nonetheless, the future of FemTech looks promising. Around \$201 million has been invested in venture capital in the first quarter of 2021 alone, suggesting a strong trajectory for the rest of the year. In addition, a significant increase on 2019 and 2020 investment levels is likely, with

total investment at c.\$580 million and c.\$500 million in these years respectively (according to Analytics DVK global). We are also seeing a proliferation in the number of female-focused venture capital funds such as the Bumble fund, thus working to overcome the barrier of male dominated investors who are less understanding of FemTech. FemTech accelerator programmes, such as 'FemTech lab', are further helping to support the development of startups in this space.

Almost all women are united in facing the repercussions of the many neglected aspects of women's health. But equally, we are seeing many women come together to develop solutions for these problems.

For more detail on the gender health gap, read 'Invisible Women' by Caroline Criado Perez', and for further information on the innovations and how to get involved, femtechfocus.org and femtechinsider.com are great starting points.

- Adahna Ekoku

Am I the Bird?

by Meg Beech

Am I the bird?
If I'm the bird then which one of us is the cage?
Does my anger burn you?
Should I stifle this impossible rage?

Do I make you uncomfortable?
Is there a point to that awkward smirk?
Is it my body you fear,
Or my liberated work?

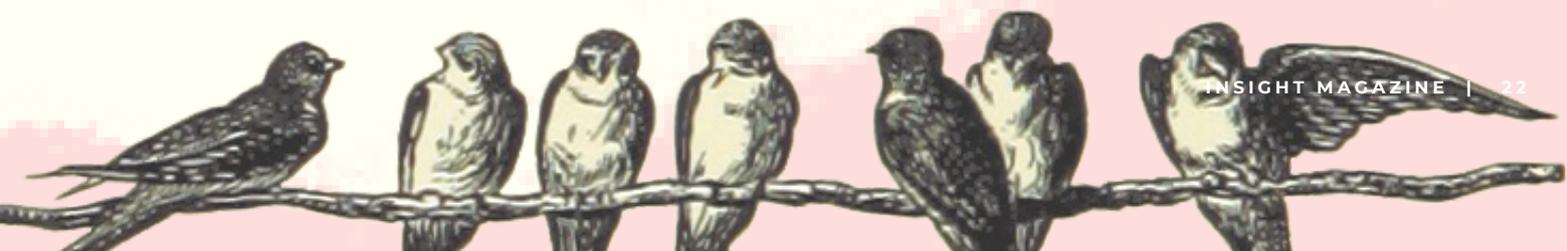
Why is my innocence a prize?
How much of your time is it worth?
Will you replace me because I hunger
for what I actually deserve?

Do you want to mark me?
Brand me? Burn? Or bruise?
Do you bring me pleasure or pain?
Is my pleasure just for your own sake?
Are you letting me choose?

I'm not your sister or your lover,
will you still fight for me?
Why must you imagine my scare on your mother's arms?
How close does a woman have to stand for you to see?

Do my angry words mar my pretty face?
If my delicate voice sounds hoarse
It's because your violence lost its silence
And did it ever have any grace?

If instead, we both were birds,
Would we even be inside a cage?
But until my anger burns you,
You'll never share my rage



INTERVIEW WITH CLAIRE DAVENPORT

Claire Davenport is the Chief Executive Officer at notonthehighstreet. She has worked in investment banking, digital companies, and several e-commerce firms.

By Elena
Vicario Santos

"My principal value is fairness and I think there is a lack of women in leadership. It's much better than it was but it is still very much a minority."

Claire is inspiring in so many ways. She is always looking to use her achievements and success to empower others and help them uncover their potential. She has a passion for mentorship and is the founder of WITSEND, a network that aims to inspire and support women in tech companies, but also more generally to aspire to senior roles, to run companies, start-ups, and be a bigger part of the future. It was a great honour to welcome her as part of our Inspirational Women Series.

Could you share a little bit about your background and how you got to where you are today?

I studied Natural Sciences at Cambridge and I specialised in Physiology. I grew up in a small town where not many people went into careers in the city. After an investment banking internship in the summer of my second year of university, I got an offer to work at Deutsche Bank. I later worked at Goldman Sachs for three years and did an MBA with INSEAD to learn more about finance and economics. I then went on to work at JP Morgan for 7 years. After marrying and having a child, we moved to Luxembourg where I worked at RTL Group, a global TV company. My husband gave up work to look after the baby and he has been a stay-at-home dad for the last 16 and a half years.

We later moved back to the UK where I worked at Skype, but I realised I wanted to be the CEO of a company. I therefore started to work as the Chief Commercial Officer at a gaming company where I learned all about marketing and leadership. I then helped launch an Edtech company called Future Learn and later got headhunted to run vouchercodes.co.uk. After this, I got offered a job to run HelloFresh, which is a meal kit delivery company in the UK. I finally joined notonthehighstreet (an online marketplace which is home to over 5,000 small creative businesses) as CEO and I've been doing that for a couple of years.



You started your career in investment banking. What made you change your career path?

I met my husband during my time at JP Morgan Chase & Co. I realised it was really stressful to be an investment banker - with its long hours and unplannable travel - and have a relationship and, if I wanted to have kids, actually see them. So, I left banking and went to work in operating companies.

You've worked in big banking companies and in smaller digital firms. What would you say is the distinction between working in different sized companies?

If you start working for a start-up, you can have a very broad, expansive job and be part of a high growth story. It is likely you will get more breadth of exposure. If you go to a big established company like Google or Amazon, you will follow a much more structured track, and will have to make your way up through your department by gaining expertise. In a start-up, you might learn by trial and error. In a big company, you will not get as much exposure early on, but you will get really well trained, learn your craft and learn from very experienced people. Consulting and banking are also a great way of getting exposure to many companies, cultures, countries, and deals.

You are the founder of WITSEND which aims to inspire and support women. What led you to do this, and what does it mean to you?

My principal value is fairness and I think there is a lack of women in leadership. It's much better than it was but it is still very much a minority. Women more than men tend to be the primary carers of their children and they might not take the more senior career path because they have other responsibilities. I've always felt that a lot more could be done to help women continue to navigate a more senior career track and the family.

A couple of years ago, I invited a group of female business leaders that I thought would like each other to dinner. Originally, we were going around companies doing panel discussions on growth and innovation, but we ended up turning our meetings into events. We all found it very uplifting to have a group of women friends that had kids and were running companies at the same time. I thought we should expand it to give everyone the chance to

"Now, my WITSEND friends inspire me every day. They're funny, they keep me going, they all have kids and they run companies. It's great to have a network like that."

have this network of women where they could talk and ask questions, and that's when WITSEND was born. Our network now includes around 150 senior women running digital companies or on their way up.

Who are your own inspirational women and why?

I was very inspired by Dawn Airey when I worked at RTL. She ran Channel 5 and is currently Chair of the Women's Football Association, National Youth Theatre, and non-executive member of several boards. She was totally herself in meetings, she took time for people, and was a very creative and confident leader. She was a great person and ran a company very successfully, which really inspired me at the time.

Now, my WITSEND friends inspire me every day. They're funny, they keep me going, they all have kids and they run companies. It's great to have a network like that. They're my other inspiration that definitely helps me aspire to more things.

What advice would you give young women who are starting their careers now?

I would tell them not to get pigeonholed. Try and get a really broad base to your career and don't specialise too early on because that can limit your opportunities. Another piece of advice I would give would be to keep a network of good friends that can keep you grounded and can help you laugh at a bad day.

I would also say that doing an internship during your time at university is a really good way, not only to get some experience of what the workplace is like, but also to understand if it is a job you would want to do. I would also like to highlight that there are always roles in software development. Lots of companies train people with no background in software engineering. This area is going to be understaffed for the next few years so it is something you could consider.



“Life may not be the party we hoped for, but while we’re here, we should dance”

EVENT PLANNING IN TIMES OF COVID DISRUPTION

By Larissa Koerber

We have all dreamt about the ‘Oxford Experience’. Wearing sub fusc, exploring medieval colleges and modern coffee shops, and, of course, attending an Oxford Ball. I have admittedly already planned out many different ball gown options during my time as an Undergrad.

This vision was undeniably affected by Covid – events were prohibited. In a world where students wished to gather and celebrate the city of Dreaming Spires, buzzing between tutorials, libraries, coffee shops and college bops, everything had to pause.

In that context, Mansfield Ball Committee, over which I am presiding, had to organize an event for 800 guests. And now, this is our story: on February 5th 2022, the Committee is inviting Oxford students to embark on a

poetic journey across Mansfield College's Garden of Eden, creating Paradise Lost, an ode to Milton's poem.

Luckily, the event was not too caught up in the lockdown turmoil the UK has experienced in the past year. Many restrictions have now been lifted as the vaccine rollout gives a new hope that the pandemic will be over soon. Nevertheless, with the threat of new variants, event planners are still navigating uncharted waters.

The event planning industry and event contracts underwent a crucial change last year. As a law student, I was always fascinated by ‘force majeure’ clauses. Any Act of God’ or incident beyond one’s reasonable control could discharge the parties from their obligations. In March 2020, force

majeure could easily be claimed – but event suppliers learned from their mistakes.

By September 2021, they had hedged themselves behind rigid contracts, where deposits, postponements and cancellations suffer from inflexible clauses. This was difficulty number one.

How can the Ball Committee protect itself in case of cancellation? The most natural response would be to purchase an insurance policy. But there goes difficulty number two – Covid is no longer a force majeure or an unpredictable event; it isn't a storm that may suddenly fall upon Oxford. Now that we have signed our insurance contract, I can confirm to you that a covid insurance will most likely not be provided.

“ COVID-19 has been a disruption for the event planning industry. This experience, admittedly very challenging for the Committee, has however taught us amazing skills. ”

COVID-19 has been a disruption for the event planning industry. This experience, admittedly very challenging for the Committee, has however taught us amazing skills. We are trying our best to be contract lawyers and have developed a special attention to detail. Every word counts, especially if it is the Deposit, Cancellation or Postponement clause of a contract.

While the Mansfield College Ball Committee continues to plan a magical night in Oxford's Garden of Eden, I can tell you that this has been an immense learning experience.

The Ball will be an entertaining immersion into Milton's Paradise Lost world. And yet, the Ball has never been so connected to global events and, perhaps, the “adult world” that us students pretend to comprehend.

Committee Members have faced new tasks and challenges; from opening a bank account, to learning about the noise levels permitted in the City of Oxford or negotiating the best photo booth and artist deals. Did you know that an insurance company can protect event organisers from the consequences of the Monarch's passing? As an international student from Switzerland, this is one of the most British things I have ever heard.

Planning an event in Covid times is hard, I will be honest. Nevertheless, despite being faced with stiff contracts and the Damocles' Sword of another lockdown, I was pleasantly surprised and touched by the kindness of many suppliers, but also the patience of my wonderful Committee and Mansfield College. Marquee companies, musicians, and photographers have all been affected by the pandemic. All we wish is to be reunited and enjoy a night of fun. I cannot stress enough how helpful and accommodating many of the Ball's partners have been. After all, the Ball Committee is comprised of students, trying to navigate the adult world, united by the wish to transform Mansfield College into the Garden of Eden for one night only.

February 5th is a long way away and much can change in this time frame. In the meantime, the Ball Committee continue to channel our inner-city lawyer and trust our lucky stars.

Doesn't the saying go: work hard, (play) party hard?



THE NEW WORLD

eulalia marie | @greetingsextraterrestrials

what does it mean to be a woman?
forget finding one single silhouette
no two souls are the same
women, like men, were created
in God's name on the sixth day

in the image of God she created them...
well, an image is a reflection of light
you could only discover her likeness
by looking through a kaleidoscope:
Marilyn to Munroe, Marsha, Malala and
Michelle

i am building a world where
a woman's value is not determined by
her background or body count
Mary holds Rahab's hand and
Sarah befriends Hagar
won't you join me?

i am building a world where
jealousy has no place
all rivalries are fuelled by friendly fire
all talents affectionately embraced
won't you join me?

i am building a world where
women are unafraid to be three dimensional
man won't dare patronise his equal
nor reprimand her for being 'overly emotional'
won't you join me?

close your eyes and imagine
the kind of world we'll fashion
if woman worked united
and woman worked with passion

imagine the air we'll breathe
imagine what beauty we'll birth
when boundaries forget their names
when greed and violence choke on earth

i am building a world where
we'll stop second guessing every synapse
and suppressing sharp edges for safety
we'll stop swallowing softness for skepticism
and silencing our identities for desirability
won't you join me?

i am building a world where
'women supporting women'
creates a powerhouse of unity
rather than cosmetic coalitions
playground gossip and competition
won't you join me?

we'll exist unapologetically
liberated in true diversity
encouraging each other with pleasure
we won't have to take the path of least resistance
if we're fighting the fight together



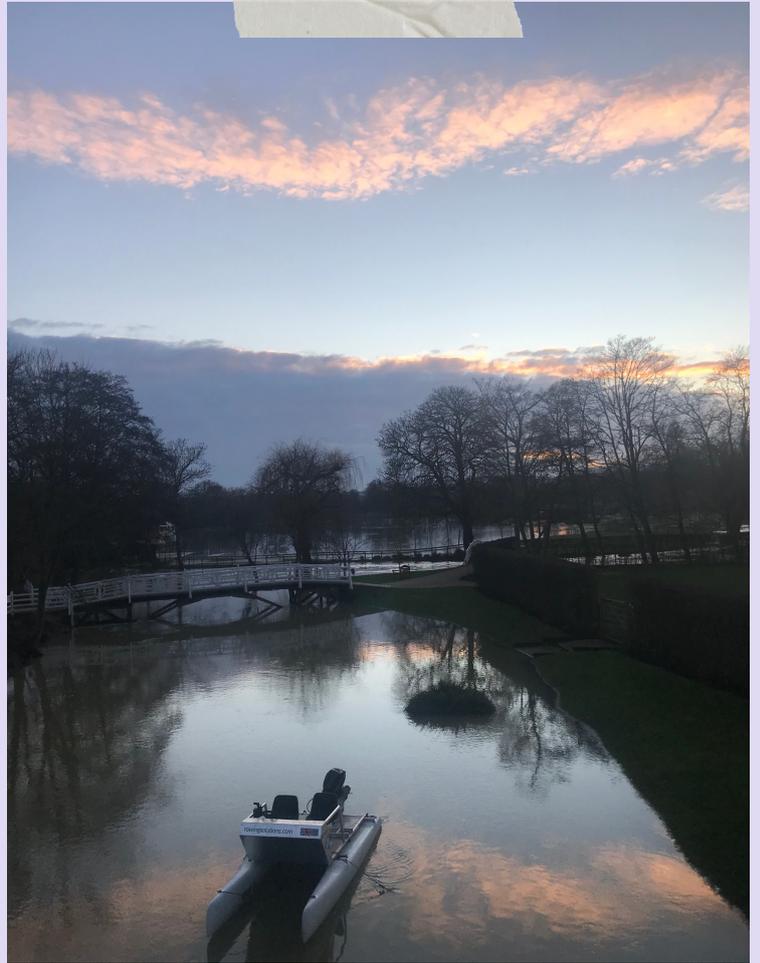


Yingsu Mao, Oxford in the Snow, 2021



Photography Competition

Yingsu Mao, Canal Sunset, 2021

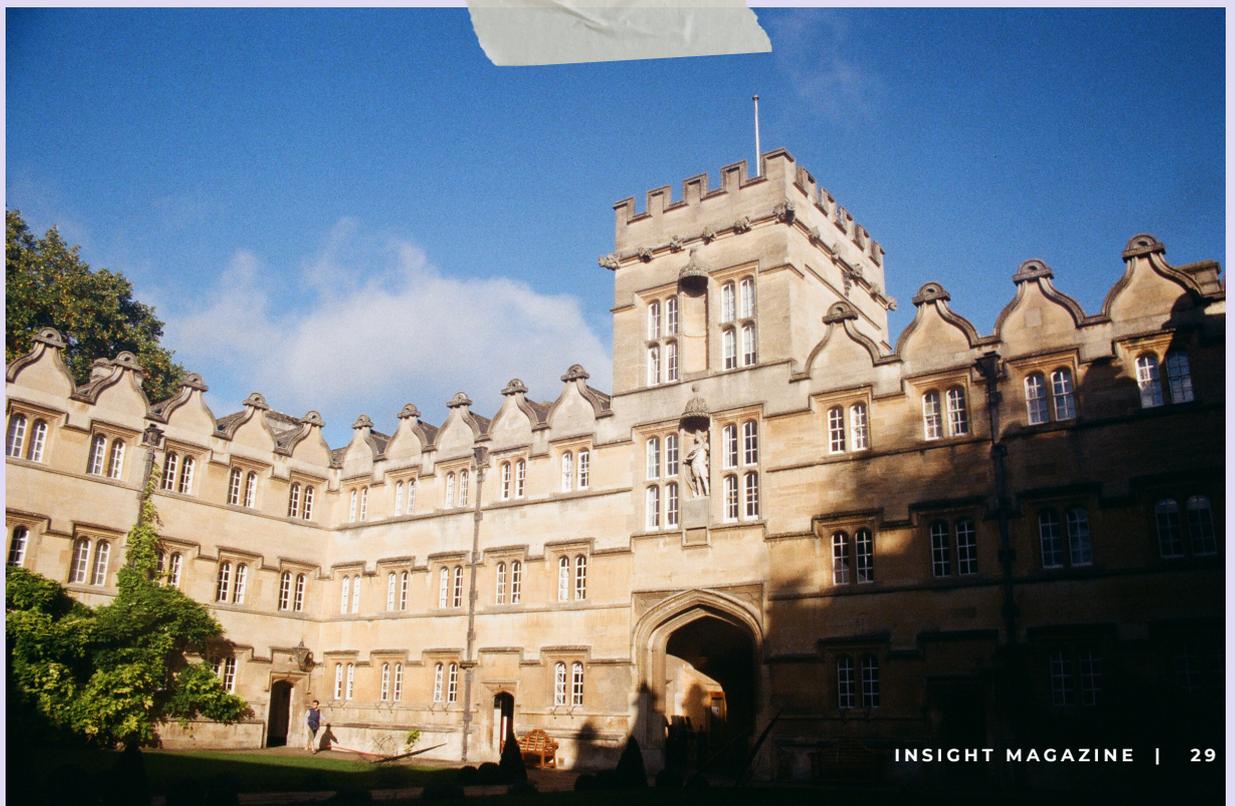


*Clara Marks,
Cherry Blossoms,
2021*

*Taken on an
iPhone 12 camera.*



*Darcey Bowling, University College, 2021
Taken on a Minolta camera*





Chinese Mid-Autumn Festival

by Jada Fong

The COVID-19 pandemic may have disrupted many of our plans this year, but it sure hasn't dimmed the delight of those who celebrated the traditional Chinese Mid-Autumn Festival on the 21st of September. As the famous Song Dynasty poem about the occasion goes, "May we live long and share the beauty of the moon together, even if we are thousands of miles apart", the Mid-Autumn Festival has always been a time for people of Chinese descent to gather and share the joy of reuniting with family and friends.

Also known as the Moon Festival, this event takes place every year on the 15th day of the 8th month in the Chinese Lunar Calendar — the night where people believe that the moon is the fullest and the brightest. As colourful lanterns light up the sky, and the sweet smell of freshly-baked mooncakes fill the air, people rejoice in admiring the beauty of the full moon while celebrating themes of unity, hope, thanksgiving and blessings.

Origin and History

Historians generally agree that the Mid-Autumn Festival originated in the early Tang Dynasty (618-907 CE), where it gradually gained popularity and developed into the widely-celebrated folk festival that we see today. It is now one of the most significant festivals and holidays in Chinese culture — its popularity is almost on par with the prominent Chinese New Year. As with many other traditional Chinese festivals, the Mid-Autumn Festival is surrounded by myths and folktales of its kind. Legend has

it that a long, long time ago, there were ten suns in the sky. The overwhelming heat emitted by the suns caused a terrible drought and rendered many people hungry and homeless. Hou Yi, a warrior with immense strength and power, felt a deep sense of empathy for the people who were suffering. Using his impeccable archery skills, he was able to shoot down nine of the suns and restore peace to the Earth. People were extremely grateful for his help, and an elixir of immortality was bestowed upon him by the Queen of Heaven. Reluctant to become immortal and be forced to leave his beloved wife Chang'e, Hou Yi asked her to hide the elixir in their house. However, one day when Hou Yi was away hunting, his evil apprentice Feng Meng tried to steal the elixir. Desperate to prevent it from falling into the wrong hands, Chang'e drank all of the elixir and ascended to the heavens. She chose the closest satellite from Earth, the moon, as her new home, so she could still look after her husband whom she loved dearly. From then on, people worshipped the moon and prayed to the Moon Goddess Chang'e for unity, health and prosperity. This moon-worshipping tradition became particularly prevalent on the Mid-Autumn Festival, a night where the moon is celebrated in its full glory.



Customs and Traditions

With time, the Mid-Autumn Festival has been attributed with broader and deeper meanings for people of Chinese ethnicity. Nowadays, it has become more of a cultural than a religious event. Though some continue the tradition of worship and giving offerings to the moon, most people use this occasion as a chance to reconnect with their family and friends through dinner gatherings. During the Mid-Autumn Festival, Chinese people from all around the world will try their best to return to their home cities to enjoy a meal with their family. These are warm and happy occasions where family members that may not have seen each other for a long time exchange lively conversations and update each other on what they have been up to. Those that can't return home will usually engage in moon-gazing activities, hoping to connect with and send well wishes to their family members who will be admiring the same full moon that night. It is worth noting that the Chinese character "圓" which describes the "fullness" of the moon, is also used in "團圓", the Chinese expression for "unite". This form of wordplay alluding to themes of unity and family, as well as the legend of the Moon Goddess Chang'e hoping to be reunited with her husband, all contribute to the symbolic meaning of the Mid-Autumn Festival as a time where we can be united with those we love.



Other than moon-gazing, one of the most well-known customs of the Mid-Autumn Festival is probably eating mooncakes. Mooncakes are round pastries with a dense rich filling traditionally made of lotus seed paste and salted duck egg yolk, but they are now available in almost every flavour you can think of — be it matcha, caviar or even beef wellington. Mooncakes made in different parts of China usually have different fillings and flavours that emphasise particular local specialities. Every year as the Festival approaches, people flock to pastry stores to purchase these beautifully-packaged mooncakes as gifts for their family and friends when they visit.



The Mid-Autumn Festival is also a night of fun and excitement, especially for children because they can run around and play with their festive lanterns. Chinese lanterns are traditionally made from bamboo sticks and rice paper, and lit up by a small candle; but nowadays, LED lanterns constructed by wires and plastic sheets seem to be the more popular choice. These lanterns all come in different shapes and sizes- from rabbits to star fruits- and are a symbol of hope and goodwill for the future.



To this day, it still amazes me how such a traditional festival has the capacity to bring so many people together for generations and generations. In this modern society where science is almost becoming a new religion, it is all the more important that we don't lose touch with all these enchanting folktales and the vivid imaginations that were once so dear to us. I hope that traditions such as celebrating the Mid-Autumn Festival will never be forgotten, and just like an invisible string, it can connect us all together for a joyous occasion in this constantly evolving world.

UNITING

Tech and Contract:

Legal **STARTUP** Life

This summer gave me the opportunity to spend two months as an intern at an Oxford legal tech startup called Legislate. Legislate is a contract management platform that allows users to create easy, customised contracts online. During this internship, I was lucky to get involved in many areas of the company, whilst primarily managing the company's social media and building up my marketing skills.

Legal tech has been rising in popularity and causing colossal changes within the legal scene for the last 10 years. During my internship, I was amazed to see firsthand the ways in which legal tech can support the needs of small businesses or organisations which do not have legal departments or a budget for legal support. Applying technology towards contract management benefits small businesses by providing increased efficiency, productivity and growth, reduced costs and better outcomes.

What makes Legislate special is that it is an end-to-end contracting platform built for the unlaywered, a term used to describe small businesses or people without in-house or retained legal support. Legislate empowers the unlaywered with its reliable and easy to understand contract creation and management process.

Creating contracts online requires automating the steps required to generate a document. While document automation through algorithms is difficult due to the unstructured nature and lack of consistent patterns in text, Legislate uses its patented knowledge graph technology, a type of database that is highly suited to unstructured yet connected information because it stores data as relations, as opposed to in tables. Legislate's technology allows individual documents to know what terms they contain and how they interconnect, generating complex contracts that can be negotiated and signed by multiple parties automatically and, most importantly, reliably.

I was lucky to be able to gain work experience at the company and reflect on some of the unique aspects of working at a legal tech startup.



So what is it really like working at a legal tech startup?

Working at a startup is a uniquely fast-paced and fun daily reality where productivity and fast turnovers are essential to the success of the business. One of the best aspects about my experience working at Legislate was the opportunity to get involved in many aspects of the business at once. I started my internship working on a new social media strategy and was given full responsibility and freedom to carry this task from start to finish. The team helped me settle in and encouraged me early on to suggest ideas and immediately start working on them. This meant that I had the opportunity to revamp the company's Youtube channel and get involved in areas I'd previously not considered, such as sales. For instance, in my last week, I was able to assist the sales team with email campaigns by putting together a spreadsheet of contacts that would then be used in email campaigns.

Another benefit of working in a startup is that it offers amazing career development opportunities due to the variety of business areas you are exposed to, and the breadth of transferable skills you can develop. At Legislate, each member of the team had monthly one-to-one catchups with the CEO to ensure everything was going well in terms of their personal development and satisfaction with their work, as well as to discuss any opportunities to delve into other areas of the business. This allowed for there to be a regular feedback system and healthy communication between the CEO and the company's employees.

What's more, startups are known for exciting work environments where individual successes are celebrated as the success of the entire team. It's a unique experience to work so closely with such talented and interesting people, in an environment where creativity and individualism are encouraged. Every morning, the team has a call (a 'standup') to go through what each member did the day before and what they are planning to do on that day. On this call, everyone made a huge effort to engage with each other's lives through inside jokes and daily fun facts, which meant that the two offices, Seville and Oxford, felt very connected. At Legislate, I was lucky to be part of a team with a superb collective sense of humour, which made for some incredibly amusing midday chats. There are also other company culture benefits, like daily team coffee trips and a social on the last Friday of each month.

Aside from the social benefits, the hard work you put into startups also pays off. You will often immediately see the effects of the work you do. At Legislate, I was able to see this firsthand while working on contacting nano-influencers to post about the platform to increase exposure. After contacting many influencers about partnership opportunities, receiving replies and observing a tangible increase in the follower count and signups to the platform was real proof of my lasting impact. This also gives you a heightened sense of responsibility as there is a great deal of ownership over the work you do. I really felt that my work contributed to the company's growth, and seeing every achievement and success within a two month period was incredibly rewarding.

In this new world of work, it might seem that the role of the office is diminishing and company culture is weakening. Legislate showed me that the office can play a major role in uniting team members and providing a sense of connection that I believe is almost impossible to imitate over Zoom. Legislate has succeeded in creating a unified company culture that allows for its employees to feel part of a small community. I personally find nothing better than joining a group of young professionals who are excited to go to work and make things happen every day.

by Melissa Terzi





Researchers at Oxford University's very own Smith School of Enterprise and the Environment are united in working towards the common purpose of creating a healthy planet and a fairer, more prosperous world. Their world-class research aims to equip enterprises with the information they need to achieve net zero emissions and meet their sustainable development goals. With climate change on the rise and corporations playing a huge part in this, their research is instrumental in understanding how we can evolve sustainably. I interviewed Dr. Xiaoyan Zhou to find out more about the work they do there and her personal motivations.

Please could you introduce yourself and how you got to where you are today?

My name is Xiaoyan Zhou, and I have been working as a Research Associate/Lead on Performance at the Sustainable Finance Programme at the Smith School of Enterprise and the Environment for 4+ years. I completed my Ph.D. in Finance at Henley Business School in 2017. Four years of systematic training in teaching, independent research and the development of academic activities allow me to continue my research in sustainable finance at the University of Oxford.

What motivated you to focus your research on sustainable finance?

I decided to start research in responsible investment (today this refers to sustainable finance) at the age of 30 when my daughter Mary was born in 2010. Ten years ago, neither the concept nor the importance of sustainable finance drew much attention in society. Luckily, I got to know this area through a lecture at the University of St. Andrews,

where I did my first-year Ph.D. Sustainable finance is an effective way to direct funding to low-carbon business activities and help transition to a more sustainable and greener economy. I wanted to contribute to this area and do my bit for the good of the next generation.

What does leading the Sustainable Finance Performance theme at the Smith School of Enterprise and the Environment's Sustainable Finance Programme involve?

At the heart of sustainable finance are questions related to financial performance. This research theme explores empirically how sustainable finance is changing financial markets, altering risk preferences, and impacting the real economy.

Research topics include:

- Firm-level ESG performance and its relationship with macro-economic performance



- Changing risk preferences across the financial system as a result of the energy transition
- Analysing performances of (un)sustainable investments in different asset classes using novel datasets
- Measuring changes in sustainable finance practice across the financial system and what that means for performance
- The efficacy of sustainable finance-related policies and regulations

Why, in your opinion, is sustainable investment important?

To transition to a more sustainable and greener economy, a significant scaling-up of low-carbon investment is required. Sustainable Investment is important as it integrates environmental, social and governance factors into investment decisions and directs capital flow towards climate-resilient business sectors.

Please tell us about a current research project that you would like to share.

We have been undertaking a research project on the Energy Transition Risk and Cost of Capital Project (ETRC). The primary objectives of our work is to understand the pricing of transition risk and how it affects the costs of capital and thus the economics of energy projects.

In Phase 1 on the ETRC project, we analysed historical transaction data to identify trends in the cost of capital in the loan market. Our core findings were that:

- The cost of capital for coal power and coal mining has risen sharply over the past decade, with the biggest increases occurring in developed markets.
- The cost of capital for oil & gas power and production has remained more stable.
- The cost of capital for renewable energy has fallen sharply over the past decade.
- In both high-carbon and low-carbon power, there is significant geographic variation in the cost of capital, with developing markets facing higher financing costs.

What advice would you give to young women who are interested in a career in academia?

Many think that research is creative work. However, before making any amazing discovery or contribution, it often involves many repetitive tasks and a long process of trial and error. I would suggest that you think twice before deciding to go into academia. It is important to consider carefully:

Whether you get long-term family assistance. Whether you accept that you probably have a relatively lower income for the next ten years compared with your peers working in the industry. Women researchers, in particular, must learn to balance work and family life regarding pregnancy and childcare. Sometimes, there are no clear boundaries between work life and home life when an unsolved research question hangs in your mind day and night. It would be helpful to leave research behind when you spend time with family in the evening or at the weekends. And mental health is at the top of the priority list – seek support from your colleagues or institutions when necessary.

After interviewing Dr. Xiaoyan Zhou, I've learnt that academia isn't an easy path to go down, but I think that makes the work that researchers do all the more inspirational. If you find you're considering a career in academia, you might be rewarded with the opportunity to answer some of the most important questions of our generation.



Female entrepreneurship is on the rise. In the US, women-owned firms are growing at more than double the rate of all other firms (1). In developing countries, there are 8 to 10 million small and medium enterprises (SMEs) with at least one female owner (2). There are now more female CEOs in the Fortune 500 list than ever before (3). However, significant gender disparities remain in the entrepreneurship ecosystem. To ensure that the momentum generated by the increased representation of women and marginalised communities in entrepreneurship and the heightened focus on ESG considerations result in more gender balance and effectuate systemic change, we need to examine the current constraints that female entrepreneurs face.

HOW CAN WE EMPOWER FEMALE ENTREPRENEURS?

Firstly, it's important to note that whilst female participation in entrepreneurship is rising, women are still strongly underrepresented in the field. In spite of the fact that women account for roughly 52% of Europe's population, they constitute only 30% of its start-up entrepreneurs (4), and only 15.5% of founders or co-founders are female (5). In entrepreneurial hubs like London or Berlin, less than one in five founders are female (6).

One factor contributing to these disparities is the difficulty female-led businesses often face in securing external financing for their ventures, a phenomenon related to the gender funding gap. The numbers reveal a shocking tendency. In Europe, venture capital backed tech companies with all-male founders receive 93% of the capital, whereas only 2% goes to all-female teams, and the proportion of capital allocated to mixed teams amounts to 5% (7). Similarly, in the US, about 3% of venture capital funding goes to all female-founded companies (8). Moreover, women-led start-ups tend to join accelerator programmes one to two years later than their male peers, typically raising significantly less funding in early stages (9).

To create a more inclusive business ecosystem we must therefore address the dysfunctions in the venture capital funding process.

The gender gap in start-up fundraising is likely caused by a confluence of factors, one of them being the stark underrepresentation of women in the venture capital industry. Men occupy 91% of the executive positions in venture capital, and in the US, roughly four out of five venture capital firms have never employed a woman in a senior investment role (10). Research also suggests that women are less likely to pursue external financing and seek investment in the first place, as they often exhibit a higher degree of risk aversion (11).

In their Harvard Business Review article, Hassan, Varadan, and Zeisberger also discuss the persistence of gender biases in different stages of the pitching process. They point to studies that have documented differences in the way male and female entrepreneurs are questioned during a pitch. For example, at the TechCrunch competition, the questions directed at male

entrepreneurs tended to be "promotion-based", which are those that focus on the potential gains of the venture, whereas those directed at their female counterparts were of a "preventive" nature, i.e. associated with risk mitigation and potential losses (12). They suggest that a metric-driven approach to the VC investment process could contribute to more gender balance, and they therefore encourage investors to "ditch the pitch" (13). In addition to channelling more capital to female-founded enterprises, they highlight that this might also help investors better identify valuable investment opportunities, as there appear to be "far more important predictors of venture success than the CEO's ability to deliver a pitch" (14).

Whilst the unequal access to venture capital funding can be a significant impediment to female-led businesses, particularly in their early stages, there are certain factors that prevent women from pursuing their entrepreneurial endeavours and starting their own businesses in the first place.

In some developing countries, lack of access to basic financial services can considerably constrain female entrepreneurship. An OECD paper established a positive correlation between women entrepreneurship and financial inclusion in Mexico, a country with the highest financial exclusion rate amongst all OECD countries (15). However, the authors point out that this positive correlation does not hold in the informal sector and rural areas. This can be attributed to the lack of financial literacy amongst women in these market segments, suggesting that financial empowerment initiatives must first address the lack of financial knowledge, in order to ensure that women subsequently benefit from financial inclusion (16). The importance of providing women and marginalised communities with economic opportunities by building a truly inclusive financial system that works for everyone remains a pressing issue, and the provision of microloans and access to credit facilities are good ways of supporting female business ventures.

As suggested above, the gender financial literacy gap might also explain the underrepresentation of women in entrepreneurship. Running a company requires a good understanding of fundamental economic and accounting concepts as it involves a lot of complex financial decision-making. Training programmes and educational courses aimed at helping women develop the necessary skill set and business acumen are therefore important for advancing female entrepreneurship.

"The importance of providing women and marginalised communities with economic opportunities by building a truly inclusive financial system that works for everyone remains a pressing issue"

Whilst the availability of capital as well as access to traditional banking services and training resources are likely to correlate significantly with the level of economic development of a given country, there are certain ubiquitous factors that adversely affect female entrepreneurship and partly account for the persistence of systematic gender disparities on a global level. One of them is the prevalence of gendered stereotypes. Several economic studies have documented the widespread persistence of social norms that link success in entrepreneurial endeavours to stereotypically male traits of assertiveness and self-assurance(17).

Moreover, in more traditionalist cultural settings of some developing countries, starting a business is regarded as a men's job which prevents women from becoming entrepreneurs in the first place.

Whilst it will hardly be surprising to hear that gendered norms and stereotypes can and do affect the confidence levels and career aspirations of women, it is often overlooked that this has significant implications for the approach we adopt to the financial empowerment of women.

Thus, whilst skill-centric interventions and the provision of capital remain important policies for female economic empowerment, empirical studies have revealed that they often fall short of producing systematic improvements in female entrepreneurial activity in developing countries, e.g. due to high drop-out rates, and low cost efficiency (19). Siba argues that such micro-interventions, whilst remaining an important policy tool, are most effective when they are supplemented by programmes that address the mindset constraints and aspirational barriers that women face (20). Women, and marginalised communities in general, often internalise culturally and socially engendered norms that can act as significant psychological constraints. Thus, the fact that women typically exhibit a higher degree of risk-aversion or appear to be less confident, and therefore less likely to seek external funding, might itself be something that can be addressed by challenging these internal barriers produced by inhibitive gender norms.

It therefore becomes clear that institutions and initiatives committed to female economic empowerment must go beyond the provision of business skills and financial capital. Soft skills, mindset, and confidence workshops, as well as broader interventions aimed at challenging the culturally defined gender roles are necessary for empowering women in a meaningful and systematic way (21).

There appear to be a lot of different factors that currently constrain female entrepreneurs, and those mentioned by no means constitute an exhaustive list. These barriers call for a range of different solutions which must be tailored to address the regional and cultural specificities of the contexts in which female-led businesses operate. When implementing policies aimed at supporting female entrepreneurs, we must appreciate the fact that gender is not the only aspect on the basis of which women are discriminated. The intersectionality of race, ethnicity, class and sexual orientation, to name but a few, must be taken into account to ensure that these policies don't end up benefiting only one subset of women.

The path towards a truly inclusive society and business ecosystem is a long and arduous one, however, it seems like we are on the right track. There is increased awareness of the gender disparities in venture capital funding, financial inclusion, and educational opportunities. However, to achieve true female financial empowerment we must also collectively address the deeper structural issues that affect women's self-perception and aspirations.

- Sofija Petrovic

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UNITING WOMEN IN BUSINESS

BY IMOGEN DUKE

Oxford Women in Business interviewed five committee members of women in business societies in the UK and the US, to hear about their experiences and share the impact that university organisations can have.

What drove you to join your university's Women in Business society?

Milly, CamWIB There were a couple of reasons. Firstly, the events: as a fresher coming in, I saw the amazing speakers and topics that we had. One of the first talks I attended was Lady Barbara Judge's "Little Lessons from a Big Life" interview - that kind of exposure to really senior people was such a unique experience and something I felt incredibly lucky to be involved in. Secondly, when I started at university I definitely struggled with impostor syndrome, and the thought of having to adapt to living alone, studying, as well as start thinking about careers was terrifying and really overwhelming. People started talking about Spring Weeks and LinkedIn, and I just didn't have the first clue about careers whatsoever, like I had never written a CV. So I went round the freshers' fair and saw the CamWIB stall, and thought I should join to figure out what I should be doing. It became a safe space where I could figure out what I wanted to do with my career and how to get started.

Audrey, Northeastern WIB I joined in my second year, because in my first year I was getting adjusted and was studying abroad. In my first semester of my second year, I wanted to get more involved and find a community of people who could guide me in



MILLY
is a third year Land Economy student at Cambridge and President of Cambridge Women in Business (CamWIB).



AUDREY
is a senior at Northeastern, pursuing a Bachelor Science in International Business, concentrating in Finance and Marketing. She is the Officer of Diversity and Inclusion at Northeastern Women in Business (WIB).



**SAMAYA
& KAREN**

are both seniors studying Finance and Computer Science. They are Co-Presidents at the Duke Association for Business Oriented Women (DukeBOW).



JIN
is a sophomore thinking of majoring in Economics or Policy, and possibly minoring in Data Science at Stanford. She is Director of National Alliances at Stanford Women in Business (SWIB).

the business path - I'm a first generation college student, so my parents don't really have the guidance to give me, because they don't work in business. I found out about Women in Business and thought it was perfect. They have Smart Seminars and Executive Speakers, so I got to talk with women in the field, some who just started and some who have worked for decades, and getting to talk to them was so useful to know how many different paths there are in the business world. I also got to meet female students who were really interesting to talk to and it was a community I needed during that time.

Karen, DukeBOW I joined BOW in my freshman fall and knew it was the organisation I wanted to be most involved with. When I joined, I was a part of the High School Mentorship committee and the Finance Committee. That taught me how easy it was to take leadership in BOW, so I was VP Membership in my sophomore year. In my junior year, I was VP of Events Finance, so I was in charge of helping underclassmen recruiting for anything in the finance division. I'm now Co-President with Samaya. We're so excited to grow and bring everything back to in-person after COVID.

How would you describe your society in three words?

Milly, CamWIB Supportive. Inspiring. Ambitious.

Audrey, Northeastern WIB Empowering. Inspiring. Intelligent.

Jin, SWIB Uplifting. Bold. Mission-driven.

Samaya, DukeBOW Self-reflective. Empowering. Ambitious.

Karen, DukeBOW Innovative. Supportive. Driven.

How has it impacted your university or career journey so far?

Milly, CamWIB It has given me so much confidence, both at university, with applications for Spring Weeks and Internships as well as in everyday life. It's instilled in me this belief that

I'm capable of going after my goals, and has also provided me with the skills needed to achieve these. When I first started, because I didn't have any industry experience, starting to think about a career felt so overwhelming. But having a network of people that I have been able to talk to and support me has been incredible. I can credit the internship that I just finished at an investment bank to CamWIB: they not only helped with applications and CVs but also the informal advice and mentoring that CamWIB members give to each other was invaluable. Those little pushes and support the whole way through my university experience has been amazing.

Jin, SWIB The impact on my journey has manifested in a lot of different ways. First, definitely the strong sense of community. Second, the idea that there isn't a limit to how much we can achieve when we actually put our minds to it, because we see the extracurriculars that people are doing - that they started from nothing and have been able to build exceptional projects. It's inspiring because I know that if I'm willing to put my mind to something there is no limit to what I can achieve. It's led me to think about the role I can play in public interest technology - a field I care deeply about - and has encouraged me to join the Public Interest Technology Lab at Stanford, where I hope to scale the organisation and transform it into a hub for conversations on how we can use tech ethically, and for the public good.

Do you have a role model you've met through your society who inspires you?

Audrey, Northeastern WIB My first mentor was the President of the Women in Business club at the time. Seeing her as President and my mentor was such a big figure to have, and she was always willing to help if I had problems with classes or anything. She and the Co-President were amazing in re-shaping the club, growing the number of people involved and bringing it back after a period when it wasn't doing as well.

Samaya, DukeBOW There have been so many. Last year when I was VP of Professional Development, I brought in a lot of speakers who talked about their career trajectory.

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The best piece of advice is to not put too much pressure on yourself and to try everything.

Do as much as you possibly can in your first year and figure out what is going to make your time at university enjoyable, without overwhelming yourself with goals like internships or getting a specific grade.

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One in particular I really connected with was Itir Keskiner, who is a life coach. She talked about how she's had a successful career, working at Unilever and Samsung, and has been all over the world. She gave us a raw and honest take of what it means to be a woman in the corp world and even in the apex of her career, with personal and professional success, she still didn't feel fulfilled. It was helpful to hear someone so perfect on paper say that career success is not the end all be all. At places like Duke and in BOW it's easy to get caught up in those types of things. We also had Emily White come speak at our General Body Meeting. She has had a major role in many social media companies, including Snapchat and Instagram, and started at Google. She's now a tech venture capitalist. Hearing her speak about her roles and standing her ground as a young woman was really inspiring.

What's your best advice for female students just starting at university?

Milly, CamWIB The best piece of advice is to not put too much pressure on yourself and to try everything. Do as much as you possibly can in your first year and figure out what is going to make your time at university enjoyable, without overwhelming yourself with goals like internships or getting a specific grade.

Jin, SWIB Definitely don't be afraid to reach out to people who are participating in activities or have taken career paths that resonate with you. There are so many resources out there, through alumni directory or LinkedIn, and it's such a powerful way to learn more about their careers and identify if a certain career path is actually a good fit for you.

Samaya, DukeBOW I would say that it's really important to seek out mentors, whether through formal channels or through less formal ways, like people you work with who are a few years older. Reach out to them and set up a time to talk. My best mentorships have grown organically. The other thing is to find your community and peers you trust, who are going through the same struggles you are. It can get really difficult, so having a close support system who can relate to what you're going through is beyond helpful.



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OXFORD WOMEN IN BUSINESS

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS



Practical
Workshops,
Case Studies
and Interview
Help



A community
of ambitious,
talented
members



Inspiring
speakers
and
panellists



Access to
great firms
and
opportunities



Best of all?
Membership
is completely
free

HOW DOES MEMBERSHIP WORK?

Simply sign up with your email address, full name and year of graduation.

By becoming an OxWIB member, you agree to receiving emails with our Termcard and society updates. You may also receive selected promotional updates from our sponsors and partners.

WHY SHOULD I JOIN?

Members get access to our workshops, networking events and speaker series. Members also have priority for sales of our socials, including our termly Welcome Drinks.

DO I NEED TO BE A STUDENT?

Any current or former student of the University of Oxford can join. If you have graduated, simply select 'Alumni' under 'Degree Type' and you will receive updates about what OxWIB is up to.

DO I NEED TO BE A WOMAN?

Absolutely not! Members who do not identify as female are welcome to our socials and speaker series, which aim to highlight prominent women across a range of industries. You can also receive tailored career opportunities for which you are eligible.

DOES MEMBERSHIP COST ANYTHING?

No, membership is completely free. All of our events are hosted with the generosity of our sponsors. You can read more about them here.

OXWIB TERMCARD

WEEK 1 10TH-16TH

MONDAY

Collab Workshop with
Oxford Alpha Fund

TUESDAY

Coffee Morning with
Parthenon

WEDNESDAY

Amex Coffee Chats

THURSDAY

HSBC Networking Event
(online)

WEEK 2 17TH-23RD

MONDAY

Advancy Recruitment
Event

WEDNESDAY

Online Dating Panel
(online)

President's Drinks

THURSDAY

Jefferies Event

FRIDAY

Karaoke Night x Women's
Societies

WEEK 3 24TH-30TH

MONDAY

Orbis Coffee Chat
(online)

WEDNESDAY

E-Commerce Panel
(online)

THURSDAY

Marakon Event

WEEK 4 31ST-6TH

TUESDAY

Orbis Campus Event

WEDNESDAY

OxWIB Trading Academy
x Amplify Trading (online)

THURSDAY

Inspirational Women talk
(provisional)

HSBC Recruitment Event

WEEK 5 7TH-13TH

MONDAY

Vovi Sponsorship Event

TUESDAY

Introduction to
Blockchain Workshop x
Oxford Blockchain
Society

WEDNESDAY

Introduction to
Mindfulness Workshop x
Oxford Mindfulness
Centre

THURSDAY

Newton Event

WEEK 6 14TH-20TH

MONDAY

Strategy & Consulting
Workshop

WEDNESDAY

In Conversation with
André Borschberg, Co-
Founder of Solar Impulse
(online)

THURSDAY

Business of Beauty Panel

FRIDAY

Revolut Event

WEEK 7 21ST-27TH

MONDAY

Confidence & Leadership
Workshop

WEDNESDAY

Introduction to Investing
Panel

FRIDAY

Revolut Event

INSIGHT
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TENTH EDITION