



Hertford College
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD



OUR COMMUNITY

HERTFORD EQUALITIES WEEK
GALLERY 2019



FENELLA SENTANCE

EQUALITIES WEEK
EXHIBITION CURATOR

JCR EQUAL
OPPORTUNITIES
REPRESENTATIVE
(2018-19)

BA ENGLISH
LANGUAGE &
LITERATURE

This project began last summer as a brief suggestion and spiralled upwards and outwards from there. In the months since, it's come together bit by bit through the hard work of everyone involved – Ebruba, our photographer, the outreach team, and all of the sitters that took part.

In a very broad sense, this exhibition was about showcasing the wide range of people that make up the college community – students, porters, welfare staff, fellows, outreach officers, and so many others. We wanted to emphasise that the functionality of that community depends on the efforts of an expansive number of students and staff within the college. People like Dave, Martyn and Derek, who seem to manage to do almost everything at once; students on the JCR's Executive (Exec) or Equal Opportunities committees, who work hard to support other students; and academics like Claire and Delia, who devote a great deal of energy to opening up the University.

From that vantage point, we also wanted to highlight the indispensable roles played by women, people of colour, LGBT+, disabled, and working-class staff and students at college. We wanted to celebrate their role in academia, in extracurricular life at Oxford (Shan's work in radio and Lou Lou's in drama), in outreach work (people like Alicia, Katie, Lynn, Nathan, Kathryn and Caitlin), in mental health support (Ranja and Chloe's roles as MCR welfare reps), and in the day to day working of college (Izabela, one of three female butlers across the University).

The criteria for what each of them wrote for this book were deliberately loose: it was just about hearing what people had to say about living and being at Oxford; what they like about it, what aspects of it they struggle with. We didn't want to pretend that Oxford is an easy place to be if you're a member of any kind of minority, but what we did want to bring out were the inventive and inspiring ways that women, people of colour, LGBT+, disabled, and working-class people at Oxford figure out how to thrive here.

The project forms one part of Hertford's Equalities Week, which took place in 5th week of Michaelmas in 2019. What felt most important to it was providing a space for people at college where they can feel that their experiences and concerns can take centre stage. We heard from three poets: Will Harris, a past student at Hertford, Rachel Long, the founder of Octavia, a poetry collective for womxn of colour, and Jay Hulme, a trans activist and performance poet. We also heard a talk on Oxford's colonial legacy, its systemic problems with access, and what we can try to do about those things on a day-to-day basis. There were women's meetings, dinners, film nights and bar nights.

The process of organising the gallery ended up demonstrating lots of the things I was hoping it would show and advocate. The willingness with which staff members and students extended their enthusiasm says a lot about the sense of community you can find here. More than that, hearing about what everyone has done at Hertford, and the different things Hertford means to them, really did show just how wide the community here is. I got to hear from Ayoush, one of my first ever tutors at Hertford, about what motivated her to go into academia; from people that I didn't know so well in the MCR or SCR like Alycia or Simon about their diligent commitment to equality and representation;



and from Alicia about why she applied to Hertford, which turned out to be for exactly the same reason that I did. For both myself and Ebruba - our wonderful student photographer - listening to those stories was a privilege.

When I first started this project my main worry was that no one would want to take part: it was funny to see that turn into the realisation that fifteen photographs wouldn't be enough. As it went on, it became very clear that I wouldn't be able to do justice to all of the people and experiences at Hertford in such a small space. There are a lot more things that could have been said and shown. Regardless, I hope that the gallery works to show different versions of success, different models of how to be at Oxford, and the different and exciting people who are here: this is just a few of them.

RANJAMRITIKA BHOWMIK

MCR WELFARE OFFICER (2018-19)
DPhil ORIENTAL STUDIES

ALYCIA LEONARD

MCR EQUALITIES REP (2018-19)
DPhil ENGINEERING SCIENCE

CHLOE SUN

MCR WELFARE OFFICER (2019-20)
DPhil ORIENTAL STUDIES

RB: This portrait series is representative of a creative space for a cause. I took part in it because it strives to tell stories of people coming from different backgrounds through photos. It's a celebration of diversity.

As a part of my role as the MCR Welfare Officer, I strived to create a space for equal representation. My aim was to make sure that the international students, and every underrepresented group is treated fairly, represented equally and do not suffer from discrimination on the basis of sex, race, sexual orientation, disability, age, or religious beliefs etc. Hertford is doing well and can do even better for the representation and inclusion of underrepresented groups.

AL: It really is true that if you can't see yourself somewhere, you'll never get there. That's why participating in initiatives like this is so important to me - I want young queer women to know they are welcome in college, in Oxford, in academia as a whole! That said, I recognise that I hold a lot of privilege in this space. As a white, cisgender woman with a middle-class upbringing in Canada, I have had such a leg up to get where I am. Presenting feminine-of-center allows my queerness to be made visible or invisible at my own discretion. So, while amplifying more visibly marginalized voices wherever possible, I try to use my own relative privilege to begin necessary conversations about inclusivity and diversity.

Serving last year as Equalities Rep for the MCR was an eye-opening experience, particularly in terms of financial and class inclusivity at college. While efforts are being made to make this a more accessible place for folks of all backgrounds, there is so much work to be done. From fee structures to housing allocation and design, physical and institutional changes are needed. College staff thankfully recognise this and are willing to put in the work. However, it is really students that push the needle and make college prioritise these issues.

CS: Being an ethnic minority in Oxford is definitely an odd experience. It has been making me extremely cautious about my actions and my speech. Not that I want to mimic the locals and try to be as 'white' as possible - I do not want to reinforce the stereotype towards Asian students that has been existing and which is not true in many cases. That has exhausted me. And I am not the only one. I know quite a few international students who have drifted away from the college because of similar reasons. It saddens me: changes have to be made.

My goal as the MCR Welfare Officer is to make our graduate community one where everybody feels welcomed and comfortable. Short as it has been since I have taken up the place on the committee, I have been making efforts to fulfil the aim. Meanwhile, I am working to raise awareness of unconscious bias with other committee members. I am grateful for the understanding and support I gained from the MCR and the college. I am eager to get the message across to the MCR members, and I am genuinely looking forward to the changes we could make.





IMAD MOHAMMED NAZAR & LOU LOU CURRY

JCR BME REPS (2019-20)
BA JURISPRUDENCE
BA ENGLISH LANGUAGE &
LITERATURE

IMN: Yo, I'm Imad, a second-year Law student at Hertford College. I try and get involved in life at college as much as possible, in a variety of different spheres. I have represented Hertford in a variety of sports and am currently on the exec for both football and rugby. I am also one of the two JCR BME reps (alongside ma gal Lou Lou) which is something which I take immense pride in. I am also on the Entz committee, mostly helping to come up with theme ideas for bops.



I also am the best at FIFA in college, despite what others might claim. I'm always down to prove it, so just hit me up whenever. Hertford's community is truly one of the best across the university, being so friendly and welcoming. It still has a long way to go in becoming more diverse, but it is great to see celebrations of the diversity that already exists.

LC: I'm Lou Lou, a finalist studying English Language and Literature at Hertford College. When I'm not stressing over medieval manuscripts and mystery plays, I try to stay as involved in college life as possible. During my first year I became Entz President and loved putting on bops and events for the JCR: creating an inclusive space for all, dancing terribly and raising money for Hertford for the Homeless!

Nowadays, as a tired third year, my partying days are done but I'm still the JCR BME rep which is the most fulfilling and rewarding job and something I'm especially passionate about. Oxford can seem really inaccessible but, even though I am quite aware I'm one of a relatively small number of BME students, I have always felt accepted and able to be involved here. As one half of the dynamic duo that are the BME reps (alongside ma boi Imad) it is our job to make sure Hertford is a space where people of all ethnicities feel the same sense of welcome, belonging and comfort that I have.

This year I'm also the college's drama rep and have been working especially on promoting access and diversity within the scene for the last year. I'm so, so proud of the community and environment we have all built at Hertford but know we still have a long way to go. I'm also this year's recipient of the prestigious BNOC of the Year award ('Big Name on Campus') but y' know... I don't really like to talk about it.

PROF. FERNANDA DUARTE

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR
IN COMPUTATIONAL
ORGANIC CHEMISTRY
& TUTORIAL FELLOW IN
CHEMISTRY

PROF. CLAIRE VALLANCE

PROFESSOR OF PHYSICAL
CHEMISTRY & TUTORIAL
FELLOW IN CHEMISTRY

FD: Today, I have a great job - one I could not have even imagined a decade ago, far from the UK. Looking back, I recognise how important it was to move away from one comfort zone and live new experiences without prejudices: meet new people, move places, learn new languages. Being part of diverse and inclusive communities has shaped who I am today, personally and academically.

At Herford, we may take diversity for granted, but we should remember it depends on us. We must ensure that we celebrate and encourage it in our daily activities. When looking back in a few years, you will see how much an environment like this one has shaped you too.

I am thankful and proud to be part of this diverse community of students, staff, fellows, and alumni, and happy to celebrate it in this gallery. We have done amazing things over the years and I hope this project will celebrate them, reminding us at the same time how much is still needed.

CV: I have put a great deal of time and effort over the years into access and outreach work, both for Hertford College and for the Department of Chemistry. During visits to schools I have often been surprised and disappointed at the impressions on the part of both teachers and students regarding the 'type' of person who can be found in an Oxford college. These stereotypes are very difficult to overcome, and they persist even after I have been as convincing as I can in assuring a roomful of potential applicants that if they think they have any chance of making the entry grades then they should seriously consider applying - that the only entry criteria are academic ability and intellectual curiosity.

The assumption is always that I went to a top private school and have sailed my way into Oxford, when in fact I went to a state school in New Zealand and am proud of having worked very, very hard to get to where I am today. I am delighted to be a member of Hertford College, and to be able to play a part both in making an Oxford education accessible to students from all walks of life, and in making the college a welcoming place for our increasingly diverse community of students, staff, fellows, and alumni. Following on from Hertford's photo galleries celebrating access in the form of Hertford Women and Tanner Scholars, I am very pleased to support this new photo project celebrating diversity within the college.



DAN McKAVANAGH

JCR SECRETARY
BA ECONOMICS & MANAGEMENT

Northern Irish students are under-represented in Oxford.

Less than 1% of UK students in Oxford are Northern Irish, despite the country accounting for nearly 3% of the population and accounting for 4.4% of UK students achieving at least AAA+ at A-Level. Of the 11 regions in the UK, Northern Ireland ranks 2nd highest in terms of A-Level results.

The problem with access is not ability – it is systemic in terms of low application rates. I went to one of the best grammar schools in the country, with almost everyone going to university after finishing, yet only one person per year max went to Oxbridge. For one of the best schools in the country, this figure is extremely low.

And it wasn't just my school. This problem of not having belief or knowledge about going to Oxford is particularly prevalent in the Catholic community of Northern Ireland, who send a lot of pupils to Irish universities. There are large cultural differences between the Spires of Oxford and the Glens of Antrim and many students can't imagine bridging that gap. This is where both the University and Northern Irish schools should do better: encouraging the crossing of the Irish Sea to Oxbridge.

With this photo, I hope to raise awareness that everyone from Northern Ireland can achieve a place and deserves to be here.





AARON OMOTOSHO

MCompSci COMPUTER SCIENCE

AO: I decided to be a part of this project celebrating diversity and equality at Hertford because I strongly believe promoting diversity and equality is an aspect of college life that members of staff and students work so hard towards and unfortunately isn't highlighted enough. Sadly, this means a lot of their hard work and dedication towards the matter goes unnoticed. In my short time here, I've received life-changing amounts of support from both the staff and students of the college to overcome personal obstacles posing threats to the continuation of my studies. I believe without this support from the college, I would have found it incredibly difficult, if not impossible, to get this far in my degree. So, Hertford College holds a special place in my heart and I remain ever so grateful to the team of staff members and students that have been so committed to supporting me through a difficult period. I'm very happy to have Hertford as my college and I look forward to my future here and to more opportunities to be a part of the college's mission of promoting diversity and equality here in Oxford.

ASHLEY SINGH

MCompSciPhil COMPUTER SCIENCE & PHILOSOPHY

AS: We all experience life differently - I don't simply mean that we have different experiences but also that no person thinks in the same way as another. Due to these differences, it is vital to listen to one another because it is vital to try to understand. It is not enough to believe and say that we care. Be curious, learn more, and love people. Champion those people who experience injustices. To do so, we must participate, avoid being a bystander, even (or perhaps most importantly) in everyday life. Validate people - your peers, your mentors, the people who serve you, the people who rarely feel valued. Fight ignorance - the rights given to all people (freedom, safety, equality) protected by law are not just given. They are duties for us all.

Preparing and serving over 1,000 meals across three dining halls day in, day out, requires teamwork, positivity and mutual respect by the ladleful. We cook breakfast, lunch and dinner for students, academics, staff and visitors, not to mention serving all-day coffee and late-night drinks in the café and bar. Whenever you happen to be awake at Hertford (and most likely when you are asleep too) there'll be at least one member of the catering team in college, making sure the veg is chopped for lunch or wiping down the bar after a long night of celebrations.

We value each other's insights and experiences. Some of our staff have been here for decades,

while others are embarking on their first jobs after school.

Everyone is a valued member of the team, from the Kitchen Porters all the way up to the Head Chef. We're particularly proud of Iza – Hertford's first female Butler and one of only three women to hold this position across the collegiate University.

We face different challenges every day but know that we can power through anything thanks to the strength of our team.

CATERING TEAM



From back row, left to right: Simon Robinson, Head of Catering Services | Carl Isham, Head Chef | Tomasz Zielinski, Catering Supervisor | Alex Falla-Gonzales, Commis Chef | Jamie Tong, Front of House Manager | Daniel Da Costa, Kitchen Porter | Zac Ximenes, Kitchen Porter | Ilhani Holmes, Catering Assistant | Izabela Dziadosz, College Butler | Tanika Croysdale, Catering Assistant | Mark Bolger, Senior Chef de Partie | Leo Da Costa Martins, Chef de Partie.

SHANET MEHARI

BA HUMAN SCIENCES

Before I came to Oxford, I was always aware of the lack of representation for black people here. This didn't put me off, but there were people I knew who were either put off applying for themselves, or didn't understand why I would — most commonly for fear of not fitting in. Nevertheless, it was definitely a culture shock to see first hand.

I think my biggest concern was feeling like because I didn't write or talk in a certain way, it might affect me academically. I think many people try to be encouraging and say things like "don't focus on it and it won't be a big deal" and "you should be more open-minded, you never know what will happen," and whilst this is somewhat true, it sort of romanticises the experience in a way that doesn't reflect what it's actually like to study here. But it's not all doom and gloom - it's been an incredible preparatory and learning experience, especially given that issues surrounding black representation seem to exist across the board. Beyond that, I think it's important for everyone to remember that we each have our own personal lives to deal with alongside studying and so the advice I was given to be careful where I focus my energy is valid.

I've found a lovely group of friends, I'm involved with student radio and, thankfully, my studies are going well. I think that any young black person who comes to study here should tailor their experience to their own needs and goals, try to have some fun and, where possible, be there for one another on the basis of this shared experience.



KW: Growing up in a single parent family in a council house, my background sometimes made it seem like studying at Oxford wasn't a place for 'people like me'. I think it's why access schemes and changing the narrative on what it means to be a person who studies here is so important. You need to see yourself represented: in your reading lists, in the faculty that teach you, and in the careers that people go on to have. Being a working-class woman who identifies as queer in academia has its challenges, both materially in access to resources for study, but also in the attitudes that you can be met with. At times it can feel isolating, as other people's life experiences are often so far from your own.

It's difficult knowing I come from a very different background to many others in the graduate community, but it has made me more determined and passionate about access to education. We need to continue widening participation projects in the colleges for what it means to live and learn here. Projects like this exhibition help in showing that Oxford is for a diverse range of people, and that it values this as an asset. By continuing to redefine the kinds of people we think Oxford is for, we're making both our communities and scholarship stronger.

KUSH WESTWOOD

MPhil POLITICAL THEORY

NIKITA ARORA

MSc MODERN SOUTH
ASIAN STUDIES



NA: Are you a tourist? I wish I could recount the number of times people have asked me this – not necessarily even in a demeaning way. In fact, sometimes they ask it to help me order a drink at a club I have been going to for a year. Belonging is a precarious concept but an essential practice to survive in a place that does not extend itself to you and your body effortlessly. You have to adjust the contours of your body to fit such spaces - in vain. Can a space like Oxford extend itself to a brown woman's body? It's hard, very hard - but not impossible. For me, participating in this exhibition is an attempt to reach out to Oxford and try to belong to its white walls and giant halls subversively. It's an effort to start a conversation about existence, belonging, and diversity in my college - my safe space.

Diversity in Oxford cannot just be inclusion, I believe; it needs to encompass constant introspection into Oxford's quite problematic past and its legacy today. Providing safe spaces is not enough; we must do better. We need spaces where people of colour, womxn, non-heteronormative identities, and non-able-bodied people do not merely feel safe, but feel welcome, encouraged, and stimulated to fulfil their dreams and desires. Far from being a racial and colonial amnesia, we need constructive and nurturing spaces where our pasts can guide our present and yet liberate us from the traumas of our past.

HN: Power dynamics are fascinating. At the core of my research into atypical monarchy in Ancient Egypt are questions of intersectionality, questions which are inherent in power structures across time and culture. There are few symbolic figures of power more recognisable than the Egyptian Pharaoh. The Pharaoh was warrior king, supreme justice, high priest, the apex of Egyptian society. Yet in any hereditary monarchy, there is always the potential that an individual who by virtue of birth is the symbol of the society, may also be someone who - were it not for that same accident of birth - would fall outside that society's ideals. Pharaonic history is interspersed with kings who were female, who were queer, who were disabled. These individuals helped shape history.

In my time at Hertford, I have been inspired by the diversity in leadership of the MCR. As a queer woman, I was particularly honored to succeed another woman, Liisa Parts, as President of the MCR. I am still honored to continue serving on a committee wherein the majority of members are respectively women, queer, and people of colour. We are proud that the graduate community at Hertford is a diverse one, and this diversity is evident in the students who are elected to represent us. Of course, I have greatly benefited from the privilege I hold as a white Australian. It is essential that we continue to address systematic inequalities, and ensure that there are opportunities and spaces for diversity in power structures, so that all have a voice in shaping our future.



HELEN NEALE

MCR PRESIDENT (2018-19)

MCR FOOD & HOUSING OFFICER (2019-20)

DPhil ORIENTAL STUDIES

LYNN FEATHERSTONE

REGISTRAR & DIRECTOR OF ADMISSIONS

CAITLIN KENNEDY

ADMISSIONS OFFICER

DR KATHRYN BOAST

STEM OUTREACH OFFICER

NATHAN STAZICKER

OUTREACH & COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

Hertford's access and outreach work exists to engage, encourage and enable potential students from all backgrounds to fulfil their potential. Working mainly with pupils from our University link regions of Essex, Medway and Camden, we meet thousands of young people every year - some of them dream of studying at Oxford but don't know where to start, while others have never even considered applying here. Our job is to make the whole process as simple as possible and to provide the support and guidance a student might need in order to make the most of their ambition. All four of us have first-hand experience of being the educational outsider and know the difference that targeted support can make.

From a Norwich comprehensive with minimal experience of Oxford to a seat at the table of the University's Admissions Executive, Lynn knows what it's like to experience Oxford for the first time. She was a first-generation student at Oxford, reading Modern Languages and Linguistics. Lynn built her career in outreach and admissions at multiple Oxford colleges and established the successful Oxford Pathways programme for schools with little history of Oxford engagement.

Likewise, Caitlin knows what it's like to come to Oxford and be thrown into a brand-new environment where you don't know anybody. She studied at an inner-city comprehensive in Glasgow and read History at Oxford before working here at Hertford and the University's Law Faculty.

Nathan also started his education at a comprehensive school among the 'rugby league towns' of England's north west. His path to reading History of Art at Oxford came via the University's UNIQ summer schools, which offer state-school students the opportunity to experience Oxford life free of charge. One of the highlights of outreach work is watching programmes like UNIQ go from strength to strength, seeing them from the point of view of participant, student ambassador and eventually staff.

For Kathryn, educated at a state school in Buckinghamshire, the ongoing challenge is the promotion and support of diversity among scientists, past, present and future. Male-dominated subjects like Physics – which Kathryn studied alongside Philosophy at Oxford – continue to be unrepresentative at every level, and many science, engineering and mathematical subjects still lack diversity in many ways.

We all owe a great deal to Oxford and take our roles in its future seriously, creating more of those opportunities which helped us to get here in the first place.



FIRST FLOOR
GRASSHOPPER
GROUND FLOOR

BURSARY
THE BURSARY FUND WAS ESTABLISHED
FROM THE BEQUEST OF MRS. WIFE
OF THE REV. DR. HENRY
Mrs. R. GOOLD
Mrs. J. FAGER
Mrs. T. DAVIES
Mrs. E. GLUZA

Hello! My name is Ayoush. I teach Old English, and when I am not teaching I research medieval devotional literature. Being a quiet and shy woman in academia has definitely had its challenges, but I love my subject and teaching it so much that it's all worth it!

My mum was the person who inspired me to go down this path. She was originally from Syria and had taught Arabic literature there. She found living in the UK a struggle, as the language and the culture felt very unfamiliar to her. But despite this, she used to spend hours teaching herself English from my textbooks so that she could help me with schoolwork.

She had wanted so much to do a PhD in literature, but she passed away before she could. So it meant a lot when I got my PhD years later, because it felt like I had done it for both of us.

In my research now, I'm comparing English and Arabic devotional texts from the medieval period. Both languages are a fundamental part of me, and I really hope to be able to put the texts in dialogue with one another.



DR AYOUSH LAZIKANI

COLLEGE LECTURER
IN OLD & MIDDLE
ENGLISH

DEREK LEAR, DAVID HAXELL & MARTYN BOULTON

PORTERS & LODGE MANAGER



Hertford, dear old Hertford...

Hertford to me is just like your favourite old scarf. Warm, comfortable, the odd hole here and there, a bit threadbare but never failing in giving you a nice cosy feeling.

I feel we all wear Hertford around our necks and wrap ourselves within its loving embrace, keeping the cold and frosty feelings of the outside world at bay. True, there may be more colourful scarves - and of course there will be ones that are more expensive - but in the end what we want is something we can be at peace with, happy with, and glad to grab and wrap.

The Hertford scarf is all encompassing, whatever the size of your neck or regardless of the size of the neck it hangs around. Our scarf is made up of many components, different colours of thread, multiple yarns, a multitude of sizes and is stitched together with love over many years. The scarf is as long as eternity and one that you can wear for the whole of your life.

You should all try it, it's wonderful.

David Haxell
Lodge Manager

KATIE CHESTER

ALICIA FISHER

JCR ACCESS REPS (2018 & 2019)
MBiochem BIOCHEMISTRY
BA HISTORY

KC: When my grandparents asked me what my favourite part of the last three years at uni was, I immediately thought of access work.

I kind of fell into access work in first year, so when someone suggested to me that I should run for Access Rep in second year I was actually really surprised. It is a multi-faceted role: I got to talk to everyone from prospective students to senior figures at Hertford and the University in conversations about what we can do to improve access. I enjoyed the social media side, creating an Instagram account and revamping the Hertford access blog. It was really rewarding to help offer-holders make their transition to Oxford.

Even though the role was only for a year, I'm incredibly proud of how much I managed to achieve. It gives you the chance to make it what you want it to be.

It's easy to think there's nothing we can do to make a significant difference. But that's lazy. Access work is easy to fit around your schedule and is honestly so fulfilling. We all fundamentally believe in equality. So, step away from the fence, get involved, and help make the world a better place.

AF: When I was asked to contribute to this photo wall, I got a great sense of nostalgia; learning about Hertford's hall filled with female portraits in celebration of its female alumni was what originally inspired me to apply.

Having benefitted greatly from outreach initiatives such as UNIQ summer school and visits to Oxford, I was keen to repay the favour to prospective students through volunteering my time towards access and outreach. I have absolutely loved the role of Access Rep and would encourage everyone to get involved as much as they can. If it wasn't for a Hertford Student telling me that everyone is (surprisingly) normal, then I don't think I would have seen myself studying here, and it's crazy how such a small interaction can make a world of difference to someone's entire perspective.

Studying in a place which is entirely alien to my home background was a challenge, but now that I'm coming to the end of my time here, I can say that I definitely chose the right college for me. The atmosphere is undoubtedly friendly, and with a high population-density you're guaranteed to get to know everyone pretty quickly. We might be small in size, but the sense of community is certainly mighty at Hertford.

I may have been told by teachers that I wouldn't ever get into Oxford, let alone fit in somewhere like this, but I'm grateful to be able to say I proved them wrong.





DR DELIA O'ROURKE

COLLEGE LECTURER IN
BIOCHEMISTRY

PROF. MARTIN MAIDEN

PROFESSOR OF
MOLECULAR
EPIDEMIOLOGY,
TUTORIAL FELLOW
IN BIOLOGY AND
SENIOR PROCTOR
(2019-2020)

DO: I have over 30 years experience as a research scientist and 7 years as a lecturer. My family background was neither diverse nor privileged; I grew up in a large working class immigrant family in the Midlands. Many of my siblings and cousins attended my state primary and secondary schools. It was a fun, safe and loving environment, but as a child during the 70s I witnessed both racism against minorities and discrimination against women.

I am the eldest of five children, the first in my family - and one of only handful from my school - to go to university. It was difficult to find out how to even apply to university. My science teachers helped persuade my parents that university was a good idea. I will never forget the excitement of starting my degree in Biochemistry, being able to learn more about the science I loved and meeting people from all over the world, some with very different life experiences. I am extremely grateful for the opportunity to widen my horizons and gain the knowledge that higher education has brought.

The barriers I encountered in accessing higher education have

informed my commitment to furthering equal access to STEM. When interviewing prospective Biochemistry undergraduates I strive to make the process as fair and inclusive as possible. I know from experience that inclusion enriches, improves and leads to excellence in all fields of endeavor. We are superior to no one but equal to everyone.

MM: I put myself forward as a representative of those who have attained academic posts from an English working-class state-school background. This is a demographic that remains under-represented in higher education, a situation which is not always apparent.

Over 40 years ago, I attended a secondary modern school and then sixth form college in the Borough of Havant, Hampshire, which in 2013 was still in the bottom 20 areas for university participation across the country. I was in the last school year before the introduction of the comprehensive system and secondary modern pupils were not expected to attend any

university (let alone Oxbridge). Indeed, my sixth form college (a former grammar school) refused to support me applying to Oxford, on the basis that it would give the college bad reputation. This was despite the fact that during a college trip to Oxford I had been very much encouraged to apply by Prof. Ray Dweck (who is still in Oxford) in the Biochemistry Department.

I was very fortunate in having supportive parents (both of whom had left school without formal qualifications) and a full grant enabled me to attend the University of Reading. From there I went to Cambridge for a PhD. After a Medical Research Council fellowship, I worked in the NHS for nine years before coming to Oxford in 1997 as Wellcome Trust Senior Fellow. I became a faculty member in 2004 and in 2019 Hertford nominated me as Senior Proctor. One of the roles of the Proctors is to officiate at degree ceremonies and the first of these that I attended corresponded, almost to the day, to the 40th anniversary of my first visit to the University.

Martin pictured with Hertford Principal Will Hutton during his induction as the University of Oxford's Senior Proctor, March 2019





ELEANOR FREW

MChem CHEMISTRY

In Year 2 I was told girls don't play football and in Year 13 I was one of two girls in an A-level physics class. So, when I arrived at Hertford to find myself the only woman in my chemistry group, I thought history was repeating itself – but I couldn't have been more wrong. I was welcomed to the college by two female tutors, immediately taught to actually talk about women's issues by the Women* at Hertford group, and I have found the most inspiring, powerful and supportive group of friends I could have wished for. And, importantly for me, women could play football.

Playing for the college women's football team as an excited fresher, then being its captain for two years, has been one of the highlights of my time here. I've met like-minded women in my year, older years and across the University who've helped my confidence to grow exponentially. Hertble's (that's Hertford & Keble's joint football team) magical matches in the inter-college cup fostered a sense of team spirit and camaraderie I'd only ever seen in men's teams. With what felt like the entire college coming to watch the women's football cuppers final, Hertford is a great place to be.

Now in 4th year, I am, yet again, the only woman in my research group, I know that I have a safe space in Hertford to talk about these issues. Women were only admitted to Hertford in 1974, and I know that in another 40 years' time, not only will we have won cuppers many many more times, but the women*'s community in Hertford will only go from strength to strength.

SB: I feel honoured to contribute to the Hertford Equalities Week Festival. I have had the pleasure of teaching the medical students at Hertford since 2002 and was made a Fellow here in 2011. I was brought up in East Sussex, educated in state primary and comprehensive schools between 1968-1980. I wanted to become a doctor since aged 11 but received little encouragement from my school because nobody had successfully applied for medicine in recent decades. In the year below me one boy applied but went 'off the rails' due to drug-taking and didn't attend his interview.

Luckily, I got an interview, answering questions about punk rock and working as a volunteer hospital porter. I made the grades and studied medicine in London, before spending 10 years as a junior doctor in Bristol, where I became interested in teaching and training others. In 1998 I took my post as a consultant surgeon here in Oxford.

MR SIMON BREWSTER

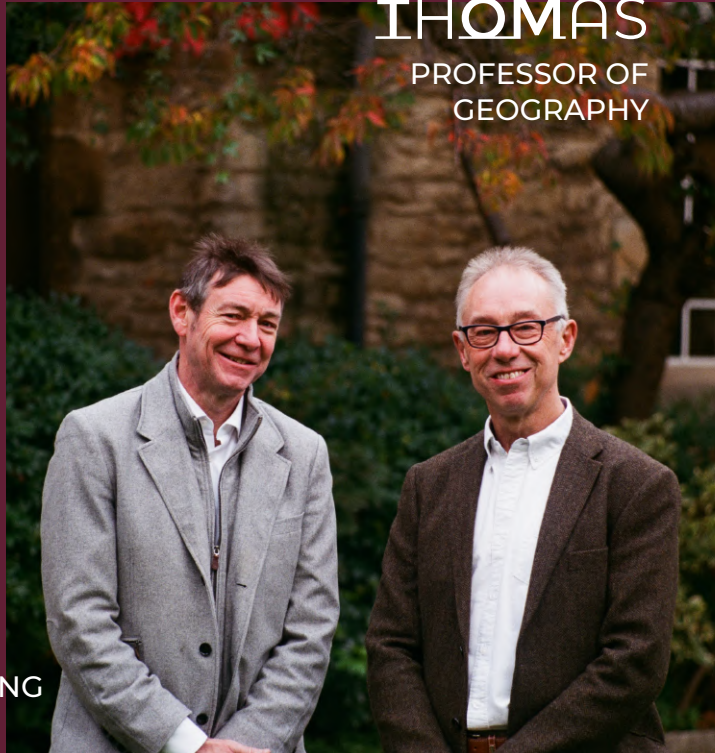
SENIOR RESEARCH
FELLOW & COORDINATING
TUTOR OF CLINICAL
MEDICINE

DT: Hertford College opened doors for me. I've been here twice. First as a nervous state school kid from a non-uni background, thanks to the mid-70s policy of giving people like me a chance got me through the door. I stayed for 7 years: BA, Cert. Ed. and DPhil. Hertford, my geography tutors and peers gave me the confidence to dream and succeed. And the opportunity to discover. I left in 1984 to a lectureship, starting the day before my DPhil viva, able to carry on with my appetite for research and teaching ignited.

Then, after exactly 20 years at Sheffield University, getting my chair age 34 and becoming a desert environments specialist and expert, I came back. Since 2004 I've held the University Statutory Chair of Geography and, because this is the college where the post's association has always been, a Professorial Fellowship at Hertford. Coincidence! Seeing people like me getting the break, taking it, and using the opportunity, is what Hertford is about. Hertford geography undergrads from state schools, Hertford DPhils from Africa, India, Poland, all now working with me: that is equality, having the chance, and taking it with both hands.

PROF. DAVE THOMAS

PROFESSOR OF
GEOGRAPHY







EBRUBA OGHENE AYOVUNEFE

PHOTOGRAPHER

BA ENGLISH LANGUAGE
& LITERATURE, THE
QUEEN'S COLLEGE

When Fenella initially approached me about my possible involvement in this project, I was terrified, largely because the extent of my photography hitherto then had been messing about with my film camera at house parties and the like.

I tentatively agreed, thinking to myself that, if nothing else, the experience would prove an opportunity to cut my teeth. But as we worked our way through the first few subjects, listening to the stories of their lives before and at Oxford, I began to realise the sheer breadth of experiences that have brought us all to this city at this time. Rich and unique, and each with a distinct hue, the circumstances that brought all of the subjects of these portraits to Oxford (and, indeed, you and I) all constitute the true character of this university, more than any library or institutional building could ever represent it.

The phrase "I too am Oxford" might be, as a celebration of diversity here, a tad trite, but it captures the more insubstantial, elemental essence of what the University actually is. It is all of us, the personal histories of our triumphs and our despair, the migratory patterns we traced across this country and this planet to get to where we are now, and the boundless potential each of us carries to go forward into the world and do good with the education we have been given. I'm honoured to have had each of these brilliant people sit for my portraiture.





OUR COMMUNITY

HERTFORD EQUALITIES WEEK
GALLERY 2019

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