

# VARSITY

Friday October 31 2008

The Independent Cambridge Student Newspaper since 1947

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*Halloween-themed comic strip*

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*American Election Special Preview*

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*Legendary writer Simon Barnes*



## '1 in 2' admits to plagiarism



LEZLIE ROBINSON

» *Varsity survey reveals that 49% per cent of Cambridge students have committed some form of plagiaristic act whilst at the University*  
» *Students criticise unrealistic plagiarism guidelines; others blame rigour of Cambridge degrees*

*Michael Stothard*  
Chief News Editor

Half of Cambridge students have committed plagiarism as defined by the university, according to a *Varsity* survey.

49 per cent of students admitted that they have plagiarised work, although this differed radically between subjects and colleges. Ironically, students of the Law faculty plagiarised the most out of any subject, with 62 per cent of them breaking the university rules. The sec-

ond highest was the Archaeology and Anthropology department with 59 per cent.

"It is a depressing set of statistics," said Robert Foley, a Professor in Biological Anthropology at King's College.

The college at the bottom of the Tompkins Table, St Edmund's, had the highest proportion of plagiarising students, with 67 per cent admitting to breaking the university rules. Selwyn, at the top of the Tompkins table, had the fewest number of plagiarising students.

"It stands to reason that those students who are performing less well will resort to more underhand means to get by," said a member of the University Council, the principal executive and policy making body of the university.

It is perhaps not surprising that 80 per cent of students said that the university is doing enough to punish plagiarism. "You can see why students, a great number of whom are frequently breaking the rules to their own benefit, would be keen to uphold the impression that the system is working," said

a member of the General Board, the body responsible education policy at the University.

"Sometimes when I am really fed up," said Land Economy student at Pembroke, "I Google the essay title, copy and throw everything on to a blank word document and jiggle the order a bit. They usually end up being the best essays." 100 per cent of Land Economy students admitted to plagiarism, but the results should be taken lightly because less than five per cent of the student population replied to the survey.

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### 49%

Percentage of survey respondents who admitted to some form of plagiarism

### 62%

Percentage of respondents studying Law who admitted to plagiarism

## Cambridge application levels hit record high of 15,000

*Vicky Woolley*  
News Reporter

The University has announced that the number of applicants for undergraduate courses has reached a record high this year. For the past four years,

around 13,500 students have applied to study at Cambridge, whereas this year the figure is set to be closer to 15,000. This equates to an increase of around 12 per cent, compared with an average rise of only 6.5 per cent across all UK universities.

Some subjects have fared better than others. Computer Science has seen a 53 per cent rise in applications, with the next biggest rise being in Philosophy which is up by 43 per cent. Theology and ASNaC saw applications drop by 18.5 and 10 per cent respectively.

This rise in applicant numbers comes at the end of a year in which many changes have been made to the admissions process. The requirement for a foreign language GCSE has been removed because of fears it disadvantaged applicants from state schools,

where foreign language teaching has declined rapidly in recent years. The Cambridge Application Form was also abolished: the form, which students had to fill in alongside their UCAS application, was felt to be off-putting for some students.

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# VARSITY

Applications are invited to edit the 2009 Mays Anthology.  
Interested candidates should contact [business@varsity.co.uk](mailto:business@varsity.co.uk).



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## Copycats (1)

Plagiarism arouses strong emotions. "People who plagiarise should be kicked out, no second chances," argued one respondent to our survey. "Were I to have my way," wrote another, "the cheating bastards would be strung up. By their genitalia."

Both have a point. In an institution which is defined by its academic integrity, plagiarism undermines everything. It casts doubt on our exams, our degrees and our scholastic reputation. Fundamentally, it rocks our very raison d'être as students. What, the argument goes, is the point of being here if we're simply handing in someone else's essays?

But here lies ambiguity. Whilst many students admitted to some form of plagiarism in our survey, the vast majority of those were guilty only of failing to credit borrowed ideas to their original owners. This, surely, is not comparable to copying a neighbour's essay word for word. The University, however, begs to differ. Cambridge's statement on copycats states that "using ideas taken from someone else without reference to the originator" is an "example of plagiarism". But this argument perhaps undermines the very nature of education. What's the point of attending supervisions if we can't use our supervisors' ideas to enhance our own? Originality is one thing, but the idea that we should have to footnote every idea inspired by our DoS is ludicrous.

## Copycats (2)

This newspaper is supporting Barack Obama in next week's American presidential election. In the current political climate, such a sentiment is definitely derivative and possibly plagiaristic. This is, however, probably a good thing.

## Varsity Television

Varsity will shortly be launching a new online feature: Varsity Television.

VTV will produce weekly video reports and interviews.

To watch the first programme, an interview with the new Fitzwilliam Director, please visit [varsity.co.uk/tv](http://varsity.co.uk/tv)

[letters@varsity.co.uk](mailto:letters@varsity.co.uk) Submit your letter for the chance to win a bottle of wine from the Cambridge Wine Merchants. This week's winner is David Lowry of Jesus College. It should, however, be noted that Varsity staunchly supports the cycling fraternity in their hour of need.

### Psycho cyclists

Sir,

I hate to use Facebook as the touchstone with which to begin, but it must be so. I have just been directed a group entitled 'Police bike stops this week. Be warned', which protests that cyclists who are riding without lights or going the wrong way down a one-way street are 'having their money stolen' during this week's police crackdown.

Will anybody join me in saying, "About bloody time"? I appreciate that the loss of £30 is probably not a wonderful experience, but neither is the danger I face daily from irresponsible cyclists. The clocks go-

ing back meant that yesterday was the first time I undertook my walk back from the UL in the dark. Garret Hostel Lane had been transformed into a gauntlet of bullet-like bike riders, seemingly intent on killing both themselves and me. Those cycling



without lights had no way of seeing me and, without helmets, no way of preventing brain damage in the event of a crash. It was a truly terrifying trek, made worse only by the female cyclist (tallish, blonde hair, laugh sounded RP; you know who you are) who stopped after I had dived out of her

path and into a railing. I assumed she was offering assistance, but no; she was merely pointing and laughing. For the protection of all of us (for cyclists are not immortal), we should welcome the police crackdown. However, if neither compassion nor law enforcement makes you want to follow the bloody rules, then I offer a further deterrent. The next cyclist to nearly slaughter me by recklessly breaking the law will soon be wearing their beloved bicycle, wrapped around their head, after I shove the frame into their stupid, helmetless face.

Yours threateningly,

David Lowry  
Jesus College

Varsity has been Cambridge's independent student newspaper since 1947 and distributes 10,000 free copies to every Cambridge college and to ARU each week.

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MICHAEL DERRINGER



The event took place in Christ's Hall

## Sidney retain title in chefs' competition

» *Sidney chefs have their cake and eat it too*

Robert Peal  
Food and Drink Critic

Sidney Sussex have once again swept the board at the College Chefs' competition. Yesterday, chefs from half of the Colleges entered the running to win the prestigious Steward's Cup for catering.

Sidney won all four of the savoury categories, with Emmanuel winning the tea-cakes category and St John's winning desserts. The pick of the competition went to Sidney's Miguel Serrano who prepared a main course of venison, locally sourced from the internationally renowned Denham Estate.

The chefs looked fatigued after a

sleepless night spent preparing a dazzling array of *haute cuisine* dishes. Most of the competitors finished serving Formal Hall at 10.30pm on Wednesday before staying up all night to perfect their competition entries for Thursday morning. The entries were displayed in the Christ's Hall for public viewing.

The holiday-time conference trade is a strong incentive for Colleges to provide a level of dining which can compete with hotels and restaurant. The College head chefs are all encouraging their staff to earn their MVQ2, an industry standard qualification for catering. Cambridge catering is riding a wave of success after Steven Mather of Sidney Sussex won gold at the inter-universities competition, beating off

competition from Nottingham, Warwick and Oxford.

Amongst the six judges was Peter Griffiths, an international judge of culinary competitions who has previously been on the panel at the Hotel Olympia Culinary Salon. As well as taste and presentation, the chefs were judged according to the environmental sustainability of their dishes. This demonstrates a growing concern amongst caterers about the environmental impact of their work. The Catering Managers' Environmental Committee was recently established at the University to ensure high levels of recycling and the sourcing of organic and local food.

The competition began in 1961, but

dropped off in 1985. Ken Smith, the head chef at Pembroke, was reminiscing to Steven Mather of Sidney Sussex about the competition a few years ago, and Mather found the trophy stacked away in his college. They revived the Stewards' Cup three years ago.

New this year was a front-of-house competition which allowed the waiting staff to display their skills in twenty-minute heats of table-setting. One of the main organisers, Keith Willox, says that the competition is a "fantastic event for pumping up the skills set for catering staff." He is hoping that, with increased exposure, the competition could attract the sponsorship money to perform live cooking events in the coming years.

## University jubilation as applications rise

» *Number of applicants increases after months of new access measures*

» *Admissions Director: Cambridge "serious about attracting applicants from a wide variety of backgrounds"*

Continued from front page

On top of this, the Cambridge Bursaries Scheme has been extended to allow more students to claim financial assistance when they have been awarded a place, and the £10 application fee has been scrapped.

Geoff Parks, Director of Admissions for the Colleges, spoke to *Varsity* about these changes. He said that announcements of the measures had

been deliberately spaced throughout the year in order to create a sense of momentum. This was intended to "provide a message greater than the individual messages that Cambridge is serious about attracting applicants from a wide variety of backgrounds."

Dr Parks noted that there is not yet any way of telling whether this strategy has been responsible for the

rise in applicants, but he was very hopeful that it has had an impact. He pointed to the fact that Cambridge has seen an increase greater than the national average as a sign that the efforts have been successful. Of all of the measures taken, he suspected that removing the foreign language GCSE requirement was most likely to have increased the number of state school applicants.

Oxford has also reported a very similar rise in applications after scrapping their version of the CAF and making deliberate efforts to attract less advantaged applicants. A spokesperson for Oxford said that the university believes its outreach work has been a major factor in attracting new applicants, and in raising aspirations to attend university in general.

### In Brief

#### Spence graduates

The girl at the centre of a 2000 admissions row has graduated from Cambridge. Laura Spence hit the headlines when she was rejected by Oxford despite achieving top grades, with Gordon Brown weighing in and criticising Oxford's admissions policy, criticism fiercely combated by British universities. Spence subsequently studied at Harvard before coming to Cambridge to qualify in clinical medicine. Along with other students, she graduated from Wolfson as a Bachelor of Medicine in a ceremony last Saturday. After the ceremony, Spence said, "I'm starting work as a doctor now but I don't want to say anything more than that."

#### Derek Brewer dies aged 85

A former Master of Emmanuel and Professor of English died last Thursday. Derek Brewer was a foremost expert on Chaucer and other mediaeval English literature. He was born in Cardiff in 1923, and studied at Magdalen College, Oxford as an undergraduate, although his study was interrupted by military service from 1942 to 1945. Upon graduation he taught at Birmingham, as well as a short stint at a Japanese university. He came to Cambridge in 1965, was elected Master of Emmanuel in 1977, and Professor of English in 1983. After retiring in 1990 he was made a Life Fellow of the College, and continued to write poetry. He was married with five children. His funeral is being held today in Emmanuel College Chapel.

#### Peterhouse Ball to go ahead

Peterhouse will be holding a May Ball in 2009. It will take place on Saturday June 13, the first day of May Week. It had been scheduled to take place in June 2008, but was postponed by the College authorities, apparently in order to improve students' exam results. Peterhouse rose seven places in the Tompkins Table this year. Ben Margerison, President of the Ball, describes the forthcoming event as "a phoenix rising from the ashes", promising that the College's 725th anniversary will be celebrated in style. He adds: "No-one really knows Peterhouse, so it's going to be a pretty huge surprise what we've got planned." The Ball's website is going live within a few days, with a special preview video promoting the event. The theme of the Ball will be 'British'. Other May Balls have so far been tight-lipped on their plans.

FITZBILLIES

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Cambridge CB2 1RG

FREE CHELSEA BUN

With every purchase over £2.00 in the shop

OR

FREE MORNING  
COFFEE/TEA

(9am-12pm)

With any cake or pastry in the restaurant

on presentation of this voucher  
and proof of student status

## In Brief

### Station development greenlit

A new development is close to being greenlit by the City Council. CB1, a planned development comprising living, retail and business space, came one step closer to gaining planning permission last week as the Planning Committee passed a Resolution to Grant. The planned enterprise, located south-east of the town centre, will transform 26 acres of brownfield land by Cambridge railway station. The development by Ashwell Homes will incorporate student accommodation for Anglia Ruskin University. The Resolution to Grant was passed on October 15; all that remains is for planning permission for the individual buildings to be granted.

Aditi Rao

### Ward closes at Brookfields

Brookfields Hospital in Cambridge is set to close a ward. Admissions to the ten-bed Lord Byron Continuing Care Ward will stop from October 31. The closure of the ward, which caters to patients with long-term medical conditions, has sparked concern. Following a campaign by the Cambridge Older People's Enterprise (COPE), the NHS Primary Care Trust has agreed to increase funding on care in the community. Robert Boorman, spokesperson for COPE, told *Varsity* that he didn't necessarily see this as a victory for their campaign. "Clearly some people do want to be looked after at home, but it depends on the quality of care," he said. A spokesperson from the Primary Care Trust said, "No patients will be adversely affected by these moves."

Laura Jones

### New image for Vikings

An afternoon entitled 'Vikings, Celts and Anglo-Saxons: Busting the Myths' was one of the opening events of Cambridge Festival of Ideas last Saturday. The afternoon distinguished itself by its motivation to re-educate those with a misguided view of the Vikings. Held at the Faculty of English, the event involved making paper-model Viking ships, reading poetry and drumming workshops. Elizabeth Rowe, Cambridge's expert in Scandinavian medieval history says that "it's damaging to think that they were simply a violent society, and easy to undermine them as a people who have no redeeming qualities."

Lizzie Homersham

### King's Formal formalised

King's has introduced new restrictions on Formal Hall. As of last week, Formal includes High Table, grace, and a requirement to remain seated from the beginning of meal to the main course. According to the Dean, the moves are due to excessive drunkenness and bad behaviour, such as toilets being vandalised, after King's Formals last year. In contrast to most other Colleges, at King's the meals happen only on Wednesdays, and students attending them have no dress code. King's students regard their Formals as a hallmark of the College's relaxed reputation. According to some, these changes go against that spirit.

Cathy Bueker

## PLAGIARISM INVESTIGATION

### Survey in detail

Percentage of respondents who had, whilst at Cambridge, handed in someone else's essay; copied and pasted from the internet; copied statistics, code or field-work; made up statistics, code or field-work; handed in previously submitted work; used someone else's ideas without acknowledgement; bought an essay, or had an essay edited by Oxbridge Essays	49%
Percentage of respondents who have used someone else's ideas without acknowledgement	37%
Percentage of respondents who had copied and pasted sections of their essays from the internet	10%
Percentage of respondents who had copied someone else's code, statistics or field work	7%
Percentage of respondents who had made up quotations, code, statistics or field work	14%
Percentage of respondents who had handed in already submitted work	7%
Percentage of respondents who had been caught plagiarising	5%
Percentage of respondents who felt the university was proactive enough about defining and punishing plagiarism	81%
Percentage of respondents who had handed in someone else's essay and passed it off as their own	4%
Percentage of respondents who felt that there was nothing wrong with stealing ideas	16%
Percentage of respondents who didn't know that failing to cite sources could be considered as plagiarism	13%
Percentage of respondents who have written for Oxbridge Essays or a similar organization	4%
Percentage of respondents who have bought essays from Oxbridge Essays or similar	2%
Percentage of plagiarist respondents who had used Wikipedia for researching essays	82%
Percentage of non-plagiarist respondents who had used Wikipedia for researching essays	75%

### Colleges

	% saying yes to plagiarism
St Edmund's	67%
Corpus	63%
Robinson	62%
Murray Edwards	61%
Magdalene	60%
Downing	59%
Queens'	56%
Christ's	55%
Emmanuel	54%
Trinity	54%
Fitzwilliam	53%
Jesus	53%
John's	51%
Catharine's	50%
Girton	50%
Caius	49%
Sidney	47%
Clare	44%
Churchill	43%
Trinity Hall	42%
Homerton	39%
Pembroke	38%
King's	36%
Newnham	35%
Peterhouse	31%
Selwyn	26%

\*Hughes Hall, Clare Hall, Lucy Cavendish, Wolfson, Darwin have been removed from the survey because less than 5% of their respective student bodies responded to the survey.

### Subjects

	% saying yes to plagiarism
Law	62%
Archaeology and Anthropology	59%
MML	57%
SPS	56%
Computer Science	55%
Economics	54%
Architecture	50%
NatSci	48%
Geography	47%
English	47%
Classics	46%
History	45%
Maths	44%
History of Art	44%
Music	44%
Medicine	43%
Engineering	43%
Philosophy	42%
Theology	42%
Management	41%
Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic	35%

\*Land economy, Oriental Studies, Vet Medicine and Education were removed from the table because less than 5% of their respective student bodies responded.

## Plagiaristic opinions



Spark Notes has provided the bulk of my essays for both my first and my second years at Cambridge, and I don't believe that this is a problem. Whenever I have an essay, I just copy and paste reams and reams of critical text from Spark notes into a word document, normally without changing a word, and hand that in. It has never been noticed by anyone. In fact, they are always quite impressed by my essays. Alternatively I will just ring up someone in the year above and get their essay. I don't

do it because I am lazy; I do it because I don't have time. To me Cambridge is not just about work. It's about meeting great people, joining interesting societies, participating in sport, theatre and student journalism. Most extra-curricular activities I take part in would be impossible for me if I didn't cut corners with my academic work. The quantity of work supervisors expect us to do is unrealistic anyway, and everyone has to cut some corners to stop them spending every waking moment in

the library. I do more things than most people so I cut more corners.

In the end I still have exams and supervisions which I have to perform in. I learn from the material in Spark notes when I am copying it so I can perform in the supervisions. When it comes to exams I work hard and treat my essays as revision notes. In the end I did fine in my prelims last year, as well as getting to experience many aspects of Cambridge life outside the library; the best of both worlds in my opinion.

### Wilma, Queens', 2nd Year



It's pretty stupid that people are coming here and cheating their way through their degrees. Studying at Cambridge is an incredible privilege, and people should see it as an honour. If you can't be bothered to work towards your degree – and everyone has moments like that – then you should just have the courage to tell your supervisor that you haven't done the work. No-one thinks it's OK to lie to your friends or family, so why is it fine to lie to the people

who are responsible for your academic welfare? I understand that people get stressed out, especially science students, but it's still better to face up to the fact that you feel overwhelmed than try to pretend to a supervisor or DoS that you're on top of everything. If you're overworked then it might not be your fault, and papering over the cracks isn't going to help anyone.

I am surprised that so many people admit to plagiarism, but I think that's prob-

ably because the University's definition of plagiarism is so broad. They've got to draw a distinction between failing to cite references properly and actual cheating; one of them is usually an innocent mistake, the other is downright dishonest. I wouldn't necessarily agree that cheats should just be thrown out, but they should be dealt with seriously. For the University to throw all these offences into the same bag is really unhelpful.

### Aaron, Trinity, 3rd Year



In my subject, as I suspect in many others, low level plagiarism is fairly institutionalised, and I go along with it up to a point. For example, all Part One lab reports are copied off the elder years, including mine. Presumably at some point someone did these lab reports by themselves, but that was probably about 100 years ago, and we have been copying it ever since. I don't really have a problem with this because they are just for standard credit, and so it's just about getting the work done.

I try not to do it too much. Firstly, I think that it is dishonest, akin to lying and cheating which I disapprove of. Secondly, I am afraid of getting caught by my supervisor, and the embarrassment that would cause. Thirdly, and most importantly, I feel that if I don't do the work now, I will not be able to catch up for my exams. As my school teachers used to say; "you're only cheating yourself". For these reasons I try and do all the work I am set without outside help.

Having said that there are times where the work really builds up and gets out of control, and then I occasionally use an older friend's work to help me with my own. Similarly, when I am writing essays, I try and acknowledge every idea like we are told to, but if I am pushed for time I often won't bother, because frankly, it's not that important. I know the university say that not acknowledging ideas counts as plagiarism, but in reality I don't think my supervisor or anyone really cares that much.

### Paul, Emmanuel, 3rd Year

## PLAGIARISM INVESTIGATION

# '49%' of students plagiarise

» Survey suggests correlation between college plagiarism levels and position in Tompkins Table  
» Law faculty "surprised" at 62% figure

Continued from front page

82% of plagiarists use Wikipedia for their essays, compared to only 75% of non-plagiarists.

Over 1000 students responded to the Varsity survey, answering whether they have ever done any of the following, all of which are defined as plagiarism by the university: handing in someone's else's essay; copying pasting from internet; copying statistics, code or field-work; making up statistics, code or field-work; handing in previously submitted work; using someone else's ideas without acknowledgement; buying an essay, or having an essay edited by Oxbridge Essays.

CUSU Education Officer Ant Bagshaw said the university was largely to blame for the high rate of plagiarism. "If the university is not going to take teaching people about avoiding plagiarism seriously, which it manifestly isn't, then it has to expect headline figures like these," he said.

Many students were surprised when filling out the survey to find out that they were technically plagiarists. They were unaware what the university defined as plagiarism. "Of course I use other people's ideas without acknowledging them, but I didn't think that this made me a plagiarist," said an Oriental Studies student at Girton.

Other students did know the university's definition of plagiarism, but disagreed with it. "To say that using any idea which is not entirely your own is plagiarism is absurd," said a historian at Murray Edwards.

Some students, well aware they were plagiarising, were simply not afraid of the consequences. "I have used the same essay three times in two years for three different supervisors... I wasn't particularly worried about being caught," said an English student at Homerton.

"In one term I handed in 12 essays, nine of which were other peoples... Even if I did get caught, I'm not convinced anything would happen," said a Management student at Girton.

Only five per cent of students say that they have ever been caught plagiarising. There is some doubt over whether the university can do a great deal if students are caught, since the recent attempts by the university to make their definition of plagiarism official have stalled.

"They claim that they can punish you for plagiarism, but how can they punish

someone for something they haven't officially defined?" asked Bagshaw.

The university denied that they were impotent to punish students. A statement by the university said: "the university regards deliberate acts of plagiarism as a serious and potentially disciplinary offence which can lead to failure to obtain, or withdrawal of a degree. Disciplinary regulations and the penalty framework are under review to ensure that they are appropriate and clear to ensure that disciplinary action can be taken as necessary." The university is also introducing 'Turnitin' plagiarism detection software into many of the faculties.

To justify their plagiarism, many students in the survey commented that it was simply impossible to do as much work as they were expected to do at Cambridge, and so cutting corners was the only solution. "I plagiarise when I am late with an essay or finding it difficult, which is very often for Law as we have a massive amount of work. I ask someone in the year above if you can use their work from the previous year. I've done this three or four times," said a Law student at King's.

The law faculty said that they were "surprised" by the results, and pointed out that the plagiarism would have taken place for supervision essays, rather than coursework, and so students would have got no advantage from this in the long run.

Comments left by Engineering students suggested that plagiarism was common in the department. "Second and third year labs are always the same, so lab reports are always passed down through the years," said an Engineering student at Emmanuel.

"Part One Engineering lab reports are largely copied off lab partners and older students, but they're for standard credit so it's not about doing a good job but just getting it done and getting four out of six," said an Engineering student at Jesus.

Four per cent of students have written for Oxbridge essays, which provide essays to university students all over the country. A History of Art student from Downing College, who admitted to writing for them said; "I find it damn satisfying writing essays riddled with errors and having them accepted by public school students."

Some students expressed anger at the high proportion of plagiarising students. "Were I to have my way, the cheating bastards would be strung up by their genitalia," said one Law student at Jesus.

# 1014

Number of respondents to Varsity's plagiarism survey

# 82%

Percentage of confessed plagiarists who use Wikipedia to research essays. The equivalent figure for non-plagiarists is 75%

# 81%

Percentage of respondents who feel the university is doing enough to define and punish plagiarism

# 26%

Percentage of Selwyn students who admitted to plagiarism, making it the least plagiaristic college in the university. Selwyn came top of the Tompkins Table earlier this year

# 16%

Percentage of Cambridge students who think that stealing ideas should not count as plagiarism

# 5%

Percentage of plagiarists who have been caught

# 4%

Percentage of respondents who have written for Oxbridge Essays

## Alternatives to plagiarism

If you don't like the idea of plagiarism, don't fret, there are plenty of other ways to buy more time in the academic week.

The twenty-first century equivalent of "the dog ate my homework" is the e-mail with a missing attachment. This can buy you up to 24 hours. It is lame, granted, but remember that no one knows how a computer works, everyone knows they are erratic, and so your supervisor will never be totally sure who is to blame. Just look them in the eye. Stay strong. There is nothing they can do. If you have already done this three times in four weeks, then you might want to think about going

for the upgrade, which is more akin to "miss, someone passed a magnet over my floppy disk" than the homework eating dog excuse. This time you actually send an attachment, but send an encrypted file. When they open the document, there will just be computer gibberish in the document. This can, I repeat can, happen normally. So stand strong under questioning. If you have to hand in a hard copy of your essay, do not fret. Your ability play off humanities' inherent mistrust of technology might be limited, but don't resort to plagiarism. Just write a plausible first page of your essay or calculations

and staple them to six other blank sheets. Then tear off the empty sheets from the front page so the staple remains with the little bits of torn paper in it. Hand that in. Abracadabra. They just fell off, sir.

This next tip is the Varsity favourite, and works for those times when you have actually written your essay, only it's about 1500 words too short. Increase the font size to about 13 or 13.5, double the line spacing, and decrease the margins until you can fit about 200 words to each page. Combined with a huge title in bold, you will be well on your way to a stress-free first. Plagiarism is for chumps.



**In Brief****New store for Tesco**

Tesco is planning to open a new store in Cambridge. The supermarket giant already has four branches in the area, and is fighting hard for planning permission for an outlet on Mill Road. The proposed new store will be located in the Cambridge Leisure complex, off Cherry Hinton Road in the south-east of the city. A former city councillor, Tariq Sadiq, condemned the plans in the *Cambridge Evening News*. Tesco denied that they hoped to open a new shop, but later performed a U-turn, saying "Tesco apologises for misleading comments which was down to an internal miscommunication."

**Don attacks database plans**

A Cambridge academic has criticised Government plans to create Contact Point, a database of all UK children. Speaking on *Panorama*, Ross Anderson, Professor of Security Engineering, said he feared that criminals or incompetence could place the data at risk. The database will contain the names, addresses, dates of birth, schools and doctors' details of all children in the country. Anderson says that "you only need one of the hundreds of thousands of users to be careless, corrupt or downright criminal and then things can start to go wrong."

**King's attacker jailed****» Chezney Christie gets four-year sentence**Lizzy Tyler  
News Reporter

The man responsible for sexually assaulting a King's student has been jailed for four years.

Chezney Christie appeared at Cambridge Crown Court on Monday and pleaded guilty to the charges of sexual assault and robbery. He was described as a "highly dangerous and somewhat manipulative young man" by the judge.

The court heard how Christie visited the College's bar on the night of the assault in October of last year. He waited in the bar before following the victim into the ladies' lavatory. Once inside Christie launched his attack, grabbing the victim from behind and pulling a shoelace around her neck. He then dragged her in to the cubicle, threatening that he had a knife in his pocket, and sexually assaulted her. The victim tried to fight Christie off and managed to escape, running from the cubicle. Christie then took the victim's bag and fled the scene.

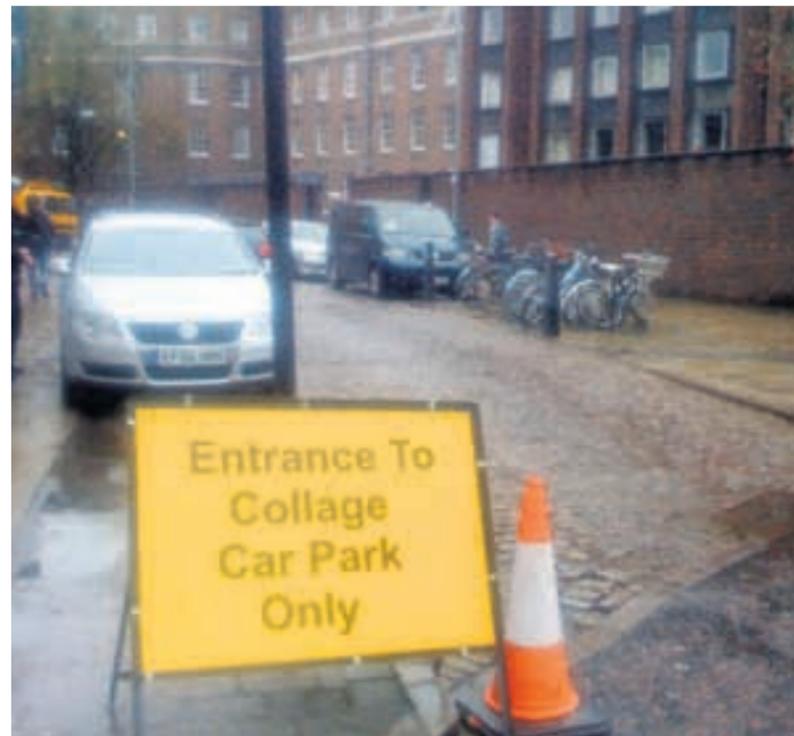
Christie is not a first time offender, as judge Gareth Hawkesworth commented in his statement to the court: "These offences mark a significant escalation in offending. You [Christie] have been assessed as a high risk of similar offending...there is a significant risk of serious harm to the public."

His most recent court appearance was for a series of burglaries from Cambridge student accommodation, for which he was given eighteen months in a young offenders' institute. Christie has also been charged for an attempted knife assault on a man in Cambridge in 2006 and for possession of a knife, as well as breaking an Anti-Social Behaviour Order.

It is unclear what drove Christie to commit such a damaging attack on College property, in the vicinity of numerous students. This escalation in violence perhaps adds to the body of evidence to suggest weaknesses in the sentencing and rehabilitation of young offenders.

The Dean of King's, Ian Thompson, remarked, "This dreadful attack on one of our members caused distress to the whole College community. We are glad that the Court has seen fit to deal with the perpetrator in this way, and hope that the sentencing will enable the victim to begin to move on towards a time when she is able to leave the horrific memories of that day behind her."

Cambridge has experienced relatively low rates of similar crimes in the past. Whilst this attack, occurring on College property, is particularly shocking, it does not seem to mark a general increase in such crimes in the area.



FIL SCHIANNINI

**Sidney Sussex Collage in sign blunder**

Sidney Sussex has been left red-faced after the above sign appeared outside their College. The misspelt sign was put up in King Street, at the back of the College, by contractors working in nearby Hobson Street. Anglian Water, which is working in the area over the next month, was responsible for the error. Sidney has been home to such literary luminaries as Carol Vorderman and Oliver Cromwell; it is unclear what their reactions to the sign would have been. College students were amused by the mistake: one philosophy student said, "I'm pleased that Sidney is finally recognising the blossoming art scene in the College." The sign now appears to have been removed.

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## Paradise Lost recited in epic twelve-hour reading

Christos Lavidas  
News Reporter

Christ's organised a twelve-hour reading of *Paradise Lost* last Thursday. John Milton's epic poem was performed by English Faculty lecturers, students and other University members to celebrate the 400th anniversary of his birth.

"It is the greatest epic poem written in English," said Gavin Alexander, University Senior Lecturer in English and Fellow of Christ's. The poem en-

compasses the Creation, the defeat of Satan and the rebel angels, as well as the fall of Adam and Eve.

The fact that the poem was originally dictated by the blind Milton added to the effect of the performance, according to listeners. "Words on the page are one thing; words read out have a music," commented Alexander. "Milton's words are in this respect as powerful as any ever written – listening to him on Thursday was an eye-opening and moving experience."

All twelve books of the poem were read out on October 23 in the Judith E. Wilson Drama Studio, while a live video relay was played in a lecture room for those who did not want to listen to whole books. Moreover, a live internet broadcast of the performance was available through the Milton 400 website. A podcast of the reading will be available at a later date.

The average number of listeners throughout the day was over 100, while in the evening there were more

than 200 people present in the lecture room and studio. 4,716 listeners tuned in online to follow parts of the poem. "The reaction was incredibly positive. People attending the readings and listening online were excited and moved by what they heard," said Alexander.

The performance complemented a programme of events to mark the quadricentenary, including a talk by the poet Geoffrey Hill on 'Milton as Muse' last Wednesday.

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## Cambridge Spies



Christ's

### One flew over the cuckold's nest

A sporty gent was lucky enough to receive a visit from a home-town old flame, who happens to be a) a glamour model and b) engaged. You can imagine his team-mates' surprise when he turned up to his match holding hands with this betrothed bride, and started to boast of the damage his fangs had done to her mammary glands. He's now known as 'home-wrecker' by all and sundry; we can only hope that her irate hubby-to-be doesn't catch wind of the whole affair, and that this Casanova can draw on his degree to manage his own secrets.

Durham

### Cheats never prosper

What with all this talk of plagiarism in the air, we've had to come to the conclusion that guidelines must not be quite so stringent in the north. Why? Because when we scoured our sister publication from the uni on the hill, we noticed marked similarities between their design and ours. Surely we can't have another example of second-tier universities ripping off Oxbridge? "All designs are properties of P\*\*\*\*\* and may not be reproduced without the owner's permission," indeed.

Clare

### A spot of confusion?

One golden-tongued man-about-town was attending a festival of libations in his faculty, and made a beeline straight for his subject's *éminence grise*. The youngster and the greybeard were getting on swimmingly – we even heard that the don "seemed to be tolerating him very well" – and eventually our Mediterranean hero moved on to schmooze in pastures new. In his absence, the venerable seniors took to analysing his idiosyncrasies, with one suggesting that, perhaps, our lothario might be batting for a side other than that to which he was assigned. The faculty big-dog looked incredulous, and exclaimed "OH DON'T BE RIDICULOUS. OF COURSE HE'S GAY!" So why was our protagonist trying so hard to enter a certain lady's 'endzone' that night?

## Varsity Profile

» Week 4: Malcolm Guite, Girton College Chaplain

Rocker, easy rider, poet and Girton College Chaplain. Revd Malcolm Guite is certainly not a man to be pigeon-holed. Coming up to Pembroke as an atheist in the 70s to read English, it was only in his final year he began to develop religiously – citing “truly great poetry” as one of the main influences in his conversion.

A lifelong Harley-Davidson motorcyclist, Revd Guite even turned up

# 30

Leather-clad bikers attended his ordination

to interviews with his Deacon in full leathers, an approach that ruffled more than a few clerical feathers.

He insists, however, that we should put appearances to one side – a message he often delivers to his students at Girton. “We don’t look to the things that are seen but the things that are unseen, as Paul said in the Bible. I think

it’s incredibly damaging to be put in a particular box – especially for undergraduates.”

Revd Guite sees no conflict with his role as Chaplain and as a biker who once supervised a Firewatch at a Hell’s Angels rally. “Biking carries its own cultural values. Freedom especially, and that’s a key gospel theme.”

Despite having published two books of his own poetry and several theological tomes, Revd Guite still receives outraged letters about his album *The Green Man*. “They accuse me of ‘propagating neo-pagan beliefs’. They obviously haven’t listened to any of the lyrics!”

Pubs, clubs and festivals have all served as venues for Revd Guite, his R’n’B/Blues band Mystery Train and other jazz collaborations over the past few years: the highlight was an appearance on Radio 2 (though not, he adds with a wry smile, on Russell Brand’s show). His band has also played Christ’s, Churchill, Darwin and Girton May Balls, as well as venues across the US.

Revd Guite started work as a chap-

lain at Girton in 2002. Although he deals with a fair few broken hearts and exam crises, the most common issue he sees raised is students coming to an existential crisis as a result of their studies. “Students just reach a point in Science or Philosophy and they’re just not able to reconcile their faith anymore. That’s when I get the port out and have a fascinating conversation with them.”

All are welcome in Revd Guite’s office. The chaplain has seen a rise in spirituality amongst students over the past several years: “I’m all in favour of anything that leads people towards spirituality, though the marriage with western consumerism and the emphasis upon the self amongst authors like Paulo Coelho leaves me a little uneasy.”

Though a Glastonbury headliner may still be a while away, the Reverend is planning a tour of all the Green Man pubs in the country next summer. Those who wish to support can go along to his appearance in Granchester, and keep in touch with his blog on Myspace, his Facebook page or his website in the meantime. *Martin McQuade*



MATTHEW SINCLAIR-THOMSON

## Cambridge pubs back beer proposals

Andrew Bellis  
News Reporter

A parliamentary proposal to cut beer taxes to help the ailing pub industry has been backed by Cambridge publicans. A spokesman for the local branch of the Campaign for Real Ale, a lobby group for drinks retailers, called the level of tax on beer “punitive” and warned that “the three-pound pint is very common in Cambridge.”

Paul Ainsworth, CAMRA’s pubs officer in Cambridge, told *Varsity* that pub closures have increased rapidly in the past year. “Cambridge is suffering as badly as anywhere else, but it’s all over the country,” he said. “It certainly has gathered pace in the last twelve months.” CAMRA estimates that eight pubs are currently closed in Cambridge, with many not expected to re-open. Some pubs, like the Royal Standard on Mill Road, have been converted into restaurants, while others, such as the Duke of Argyle on Argyle Street, have stood empty for months.

A report published last week by the All-Party Parliamentary Beer Group was the culmination of two years of research and investigation into the industry’s decline. It proposed cutting taxes on draught beer, reducing red tape for pubs and simplifying licensing procedures.

The report also concluded that supermarkets are damaging the pub industry by selling alcohol through the use of “aggressive price promotions”. The cost of alcohol in a supermarket is estimated to be roughly seven times less than buying it in a pub. “Supermarkets are able to sell beer cheaper than water, which is just absurd, and that has a serious effect on pubs because they can’t compete with Sainsbury’s and Tesco on price,” said Ainsworth. “The competition’s unfair and the government could take action to require minimum pricing.”

But a spokesman for the British Retail Consortium, the trade body that repre-

sents supermarkets and other retailers, called minimum pricing a “mistaken idea”. Richard Dodd, the group’s head of media, said: “People have a straightforward choice about whether they drink at pubs, whether they drink at home or whether they don’t drink at all. Clearly there can be no justification for the idea that you should ring the market or somehow force supermarkets to charge more than they want to because of some mistaken belief that they’re going to help pubs.” Supermarkets are “the most responsible outlet for alcohol and have the best record of any type of outlet on preventing under-age sales”, he said.

The pubs worst affected by falling trade, typically those in residential areas outside the city centre, are the pubs most worth saving, Ainsworth argues. “From a student point of view, if you want to see a slice of life in Cambridge they’re the best places to go because they’re full of real people in a real environment, whereas a lot of the bars and city centre pubs are just ‘beer barns’ – they haven’t got a local flavour at all.”

The pub industry is not optimistic that the government will act. “Their track record is not good,” said Ainsworth. “They ought to recognise that pubs do play an important part in community cohesion and they need to be supported. They’re different from a lot of other businesses in that they’re not just about making money: they’re providing a social service.” Government action is particularly unlikely given the current financial downturn, he suggests. “With all the other pressures – having bailed out the banks and everything else – there probably isn’t the money left to do anything anyway!”

Students have also expressed concerns. One second-year put the crisis down to taxation, commenting that “it’s all Alistair Darling’s fault.” However, he dismissed the idea that supermarkets are undercutting pubs, pointing out that “people have always been able to get cheap booze.”

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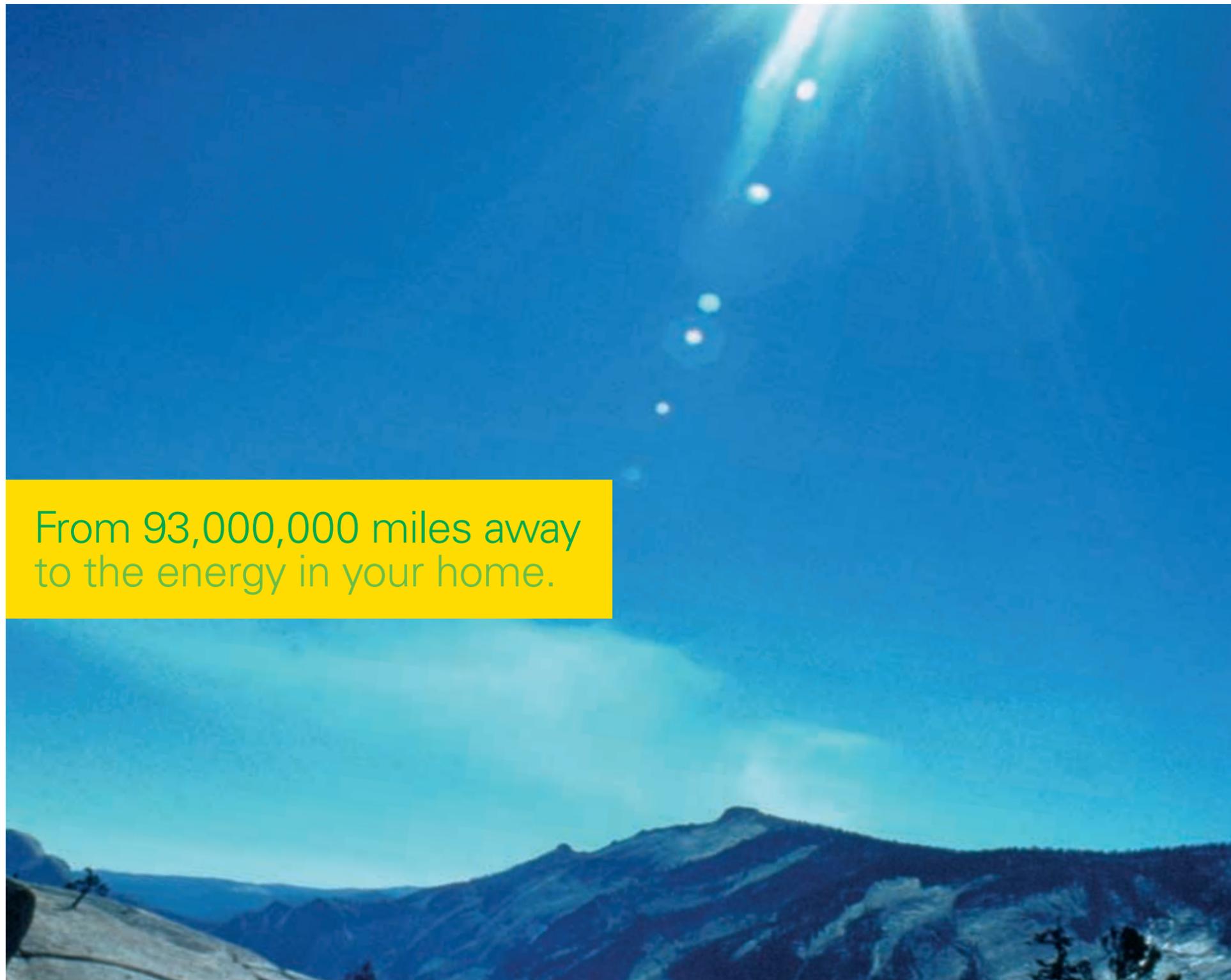
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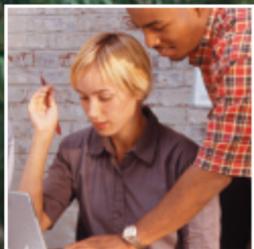
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# MAGAZINE



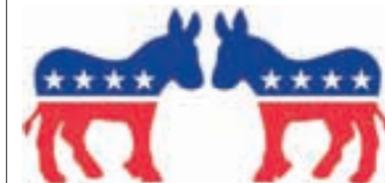
FEATURES, INTERVIEWS, REVIEWS & LISTINGS // ART, FILM, MUSIC, BOOKS, FASHION & SCIENCE  
THIS WEEK IN THE MAGAZINE: TIMOTHY POTTS / RICHARD EYRE / BARFLY CLOSURE  
HALLOWEEN STORIES / AMERICAN ELECTION SPECIAL / THE DAY THAT CHANGED MY WORLD

## Paint Potts

THE NEW DIRECTOR OF THE FITZWILLIAM MUSEUM, TIMOTHY POTTS, TELLS LIZZIE MITCHELL ABOUT MASTERPIECES AND MONEY, AND WHAT HE PLANS TO DO WITH "ARGUABLY THE GREATEST UNIVERSITY UNIVERSAL MUSEUM ANYWHERE"



### Hi! Society



#### Week 4: Democrats Abroad

The main focus of Cambridge Democrats Abroad this year has been voter registration: finding US citizens in Cambridge and making sure that they're able to vote in the election. The voting process has become much easier with new websites like [VoteFromAbroad.org](http://VoteFromAbroad.org) that walk you through the steps, but people still have lots of questions about it. We've found people who didn't even know that they were entitled to vote; for example, those whose parents are American but who have never lived in the US.

Our main event is a speakeasy — we go to the Castle pub on the first Wednesday of the month to talk about American issues over a pint. For this election, we've been showing the presidential debates at the Graduate Union, which have been very well attended. We've also organised a Fourth of July picnic and showed movies like *Uncounted*, which looks at election fraud.

Democrats have been organising in Cambridge since 2003, when four Americans began meeting to discuss politics. In the last two years, membership has exploded to over 500, thanks to close interest in this election and our decision to start manning a Societies' Fair stall. We have also become more formally organised, starting a University society and a local chapter of Democrats Abroad, the official international branch of the US Democratic Party.

For any Americans who haven't yet received their absentee ballot, you can still vote with a Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot, downloadable from [overseasvotefoundation.org](http://overseasvotefoundation.org).

Cambridge University Democrats Abroad will be partnering with the Cambridge Union on November 4 for an election night viewing party, from 10pm-6am. On November 5, they will be hosting a victory celebration speak-easy at the Castle Inn Pub at 6:30pm. Both events are open to Democrats Abroad members and their friends, and Americans abroad. Email [DAUKcambridge@googlemail.com](mailto:DAUKcambridge@googlemail.com) to RSVP.

The thing that was niggling me most when I met Timothy Potts was why on earth he would have chosen to take on the directorship of the Fitzwilliam Museum. Two years ago, the high-profile blogger Lee Rosenbaum (aka 'CultureGrrl') was suggesting that he should be the next director of the Metropolitan Museum in New York. When he moved to the Fitzwilliam this January, he already had directorships of two of the world's great art museums on his CV: the Australian National Gallery and the extremely prestigious Kimbell Art Museum in Texas. In comparison, a university museum with a comparatively small budget doesn't look like the most obvious route to fame, power, and art-world domination.

So why move to a third directorship on a third continent? The answer is twofold. As someone who originally started off as an academic (he held a Junior Research Fellowship at Oxford and worked as an archaeologist before moving into museums), the scholarly aspect of a university museum "brought the two halves of my career together in a way that was very appealing to me". But he also praises the Fitzwilliam as an institution in some of the most persuasive

terms I've ever heard.

For those of us who wonder what exactly the point is of the wildly divergent collections of the Fitz, and why it is that you can find a bust of the emperor Hadrian's boyfriend in the same building as a 60s painting of Camel cigarette packs in the same building as a Ming

**"I DON'T THINK WE SHOULD BE SPENDING A HUNDRED MILLION ON A BIT OF OIL ON A WALL"**

dynasty Chinese jade buffalo, Potts has an answer. This is a universal museum, a museum which "collects the culture of the world through all periods of our history and in all media". He describes the Fitz as "one of the great museums of the world and arguably the greatest university universal museum anywhere".

Judging by the pretty substantial anecdotal evidence, of course, not everyone is quite so fulsome in their praise of our local museum, and I put it to him that an

awful lot of people find it very difficult to know where to start with the Fitzwilliam's collections. His response is not entirely forgiving: "if you want to be led by the hand on a tour of the 50 masterpieces of western art, say, that isn't something we do at the moment". Potts is not a raw populist. "You do entertain people, but that's not what you set out to do."

He does, though, put a lot of emphasis on the need to get students and young people into the museum, and promises a program of exhibitions dealing with 20th and 21st century art and culture to lure in the unmuseumly youth of Cambridge. And while he isn't in the market for "blockbusters", exhibitions are to play a major role in his plans for the next few years; Potts thinks that the museum could become the "major visiting exhibition venue outside London".

As for the future of the permanent collection, the problem is not lack of things to buy but funds to buy them with. Money is much tighter at the Fitzwilliam than at either of Potts' previous institutions. Britain's Olympic bid is sapping funds from the cultural sector, and the credit crunch probably isn't going to do wonders for museum sponsorship. He is also wary of the art market. "It goes crazy

at times, and certainly parts of the market are very crazy at the moment, contemporary art particularly."

When I ask him about the value of art he is clear that "I don't think we should be spending a hundred million on a bit of oil on a wall." But he doesn't shy away from the controversial issue of deaccessioning (selling off objects to buy other ones), and although he emphasizes that it is a personal view, not museum policy, he says that he would be prepared to "sell off objects of lesser importance to buy something that is manifestly of supreme importance".

Timothy Potts come across very much as a voice of reason. When he talks about the future of the Fitzwilliam he is very measured, very positive, and very constructive. Things are looking good. The current exhibition, of Georgian antiquities, has been successful beyond all predictions. There have been no storms so far.

So how does he handle the work-life balance? He gives a wry smile. "By not having a private life. I'm not sure it's a balance really... But I've sort of created that for myself so I can't complain."

Watch the full interview with Timothy Potts on VarsiTV: [www.varsity.co.uk/tv](http://www.varsity.co.uk/tv)

## Time In

Our weekly suggestions for making the most of your spare time  
Week 4: Relive the memories of the 2008 election campaign.

**Jeremiah Wright, youtube.com.**

ABC News sat in on dozens of Wright's sermons during the spring waiting for something to pounce upon. He gave that to them when he declared "God Damn America" for killing innocent people.

**A More Perfect Union Speech, youtube.com.**

Having steered clear of directly discussing race, events lead Obama to tackle it head on in Pennsylvania on March 18. This stirring and immensely articulate speech about America's remaining racial divides was watched 1.2 million times on Youtube in its first twenty-four hours of being online. School children will no doubt be reading the transcript in a generation's time.

**Sarah Palin acceptance speech, youtube.com.**

Palin seems to lose her place, and then charms the Republican faithful with the old gag, "what's the difference between a pitbull and a hockey mum? Lipstick." Good point.

**Obama Meets Joe the Plumber, youtube.com.**

He's from Ohio, he is called Joe, and he is a plumber. It could not be more perfect as Obama meets the real American McCoy, Joe the Plumber. How are his tax increases going to affect the little man?

**McCain and Obama joke about campaigning, youtube.com.**

At the Alfred E. Smith Memorial foundation dinner McCain and Obama take some time off their earnest campaigning for a bit of lighthearted joshing. Obama finally comes clean; "Contrary to the rumors you have heard, I was not born in a manger. I was actually born on Krypton and sent here by my father, Jor-el, to save the planet Earth".

**You Can Vote However You Like, youtube.com.**

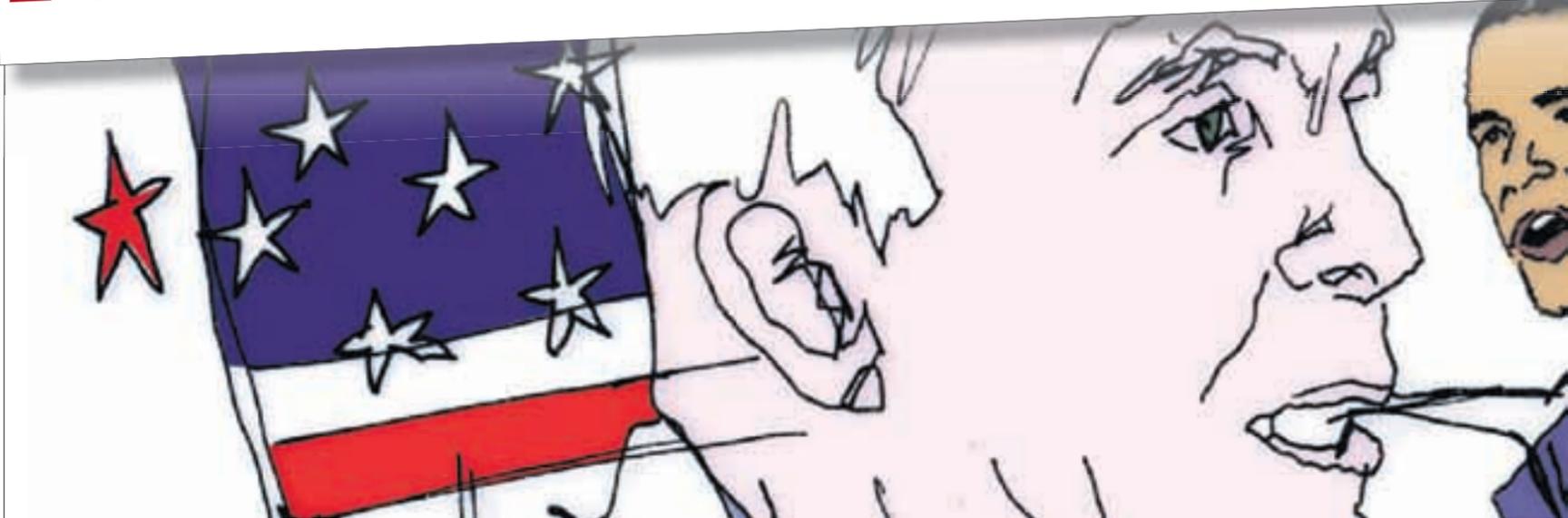
An awesome group of enlightened American school children sending the right political message, to the tune of TI's 'Whatever You Like'.

## Time Out

Week 4: US election night in the Cambridge Union.

Pull an unusual all-nighter as Tuesday makes way for Wednesday in the Union's Chamber. From ten in the evening until six in the morning you can watch the results come in and try to understand America's furiously complicated system of electoral colleges. To make the night run smoother, maybe devise a drinking game with a friend. One of you is a Republican, the other a Democrat; as each state is decided, the loser has to knock back a shot of bourbon or down a bottle of Bud.

# American Election Spe



ON THE EVE OF THIS HISTORIC ELECTION, WE GATHER FOUR CAMBRIDGE SPECIALISTS ON AMERICAN POLITICS TO CAST THEIR OPINIONS VIA THE VIRTUAL ROUND TABLE OF HERMES. MODERATED BY EMMA MUSTICH

All sorts of people – from media pundits to the candidates themselves – are calling this a 'historic' election. Do you think this election is more 'historic' than any other, and, if so, why?

**Dr Andrew Preston:** Definitely historic in the sense that an African American is even running for president as a candidate for one of the major parties, let alone as the favourite. But it is also historic in the sense that this isn't seen as all that revolutionary – even just twenty-four years ago, when Jesse Jackson ran for the Democratic nomination, a black man as the Democratic nominee was unthinkable. That Obama has become something of a commonplace among so many people in such a short period of time – this is remarkable, and the fact that it is now "normal" is even more remarkable.

Other historical milestones, potential and actual: a woman as the Republican veep nominee; potentially a woman as the Democratic nominee; potentially

a Mormon or an ordained preacher as the Republican nominee, and the oldest nominee in history as the actual candidate. All this signifies that American politics has at last become more like American society: multicultural, eccentric, dynamic. **Sewell:** Potentially the election may come to be seen as historic in another way. Some cycles of elections, such as those of 1894 and 1896 or 1930 and 1932, are seen as having brought a realignment politically, ushering in a prolonged period in which the winning party dominated the national political scene. If Obama wins and if the Democrats build on their 2006 successes and make big gains in the Senate (which looks possible) and they then consolidate their gains over the coming years, this election may be perceived as a significant turning point in political history.

What do you think is the single most important issue the candidates have to address?

**Professor Andrew Gamble:** The crisis in the financial markets and the risk this poses to the global economy. This crisis is the greatest to have hit the United States and the world since the 1930s, and the consequences for domestic politics in every country, the organization and development of the global economy, and the balance of power and influence between states are likely to be profound over the next decade.

Do you think the growth of the Internet has had a significant effect on American presidential politics?

**Jodi Williams:** Absolutely. There was a great column written by Girton alumna Arianna Huffington a few days ago on her blog, The Huffington Post, in which she talked about how the Internet has dramatically changed politics – and not just presidential politics. For instance, Huffington mentioned how the Internet has changed the public's ability to track

**Dr Andrew Preston** is a Fellow in History at Clare College. He specialises in twentieth-century American foreign relations.

**Dr Mike Sewell** is Admissions Tutor and Fellow in History at Selwyn College. He specialises in the history of the Cold War and of American foreign relations.

**Jodi Williams** was one of the first people working on the Obama campaign in the spring of 2007. This term, she is giving lectures about the American election in the PPS Tripos.

**Professor Andrew Gamble** is Head of the university's Department of Politics. He is co-editor of The Political Quarterly and winner of the Sir Isaiah Berlin Prize for Lifetime Contribution to Political Studies.

MEANWHILE, WE ASKED FOUR CAMBRIDGE STUDENTS TO RELIVE THEIR EXPERIENCES ON THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL THIS SUMMER. TRY AS WE MIGHT, WE COULDN'T FIND A SINGLE MCCAIN SUPPORTER

During the Primary season, Lucas Fear-Segal worked on Obama fundraising campaigns in Pennsylvania.

Although Obama lost in Pennsylvania, everyone involved in the campaign was remarkably positive from start to finish. There was the feeling that anything was possible. Of course, to a degree, this was true. Although Clinton had the biggest "war chest" overall, Obama was beating Clinton two to one on individual donations. What's more, we had people come in daily off the street and say: "Hi, I want to help Obama win." Ten minutes later they'd be leaving with armfuls of posters, badges, signs and placards. They'd invariably come back a few days later and make some calls for us. The Obama office made everyone feel involved and that we were all making a real difference; money and merchandise made it possible. It felt like working for some sort of pseudo-charity, not a political party.

Naturally, there was a flip side. Typical responses to calls I made, even to party members, asking for money or help at the office included "Barack Osama can kiss mine and my husband's white ass."

We used to ask members supporting Clinton for the reasons behind their choice. I quickly lost track of how many times the reason given for not giving their vote to Obama was "wrong colour". The Obama campaign is full of hope and energy and faith in the rational decision-making power of the American people. I just hope it pays off.

Elizabeth Davies worked for the Channel 4 team covering both the Democratic and Republican conventions.

It is impossible to convey how exhausted you become at one of these events. The long hours and constant work aren't even the main factors. The decor is so flashy, the people so constantly overenthusiastic for fear they appear less than completely behind their candidate, and your famous person radar on such high alert, that you can't help but feel drained at the end of each day. Despite that, it's still hard to sleep each night because your brain can't



stop processing the fact that you were actually there in the skybox looking down on the real stage, not a television screen, watching Bill Clinton or Fred Thompson give a speech roundly applauded as a "stemwinder" (it seemed to be the catchphrase for both conventions).

During Sarah Palin's speech at the Republican convention, which we were watching from the skybox, we suddenly found ourselves pariahs, being chanted at with accusatory finger-pointing by a hall of people wearing Fox News boaters. We were unfortunate enough to be sitting in the skybox of NBC, synonymous with 'liberal' in the American conservative lexicon. I may have only been an intern, but being revealed left me with a sense of self-importance almost equal to that of displaying my press pass at the door. Here I was somebody, possibly influencing the biggest news story in the world. Hated or obscure we might have been, but it doesn't get much more exhilarating than that.

# Special



JANE HALL

down information, check the facts behind the stories and the spin, etc. And of course it's changed the way people organise themselves, how campaigns organise voters, and how money is raised. I'd be remiss here if I didn't mention Howard Dean's campaign in 2004, which was really one of the first, if not the first, to envision and apply internet technology to campaigns.

**How useful are the results of political polls taken in advance of elections? How far do you think they accurately project election results, and what do you think is their effect on the mindset of 'undecided' voters?**

**Gamble:** Polls are very useful to newspapers, since it gives them a story, and one that is constantly changing. The fact that polls can sometimes be very inaccurate has also become part of that story. The justification for publishing polls is that they provide voters with information about how the race is going, but not many people decide how to vote depending on what the polls are saying. By increasing interest in the outcome of the election they may also encourage greater participation than would otherwise be the case. If there were no public polls, the parties would still

conduct private ones, and the results of these would leak out.

**Barack Obama has often been called an "elitist." Why might the supposed "elitism" of a presidential candidate be problematic? Does concern about "elitism" have a historical precedent in American politics?**

**Dr Mike Sewell:** Very much so. The tradition of stressing one's humble origins can be traced back to the first half of the nineteenth century. Abraham Lincoln was a rich lawyer in 1860 but his campaign played up his early life experiences doing manual work. More recently conservatives have liked to play up their ordinariness as against supposedly elite liberals in Washington, in the media, or in Hollywood. The Palin selection is an effort by a longtime Washington insider to portray his campaign as connected to smalltown and rural American anti-elitist values: she hunts, she's a working mother, she is not cosmopolitan. Hence the fact that the Democrats have made so much of both her alleged abuses of power in Alaska and her very expensive makeover when nominated. Those are not the actions of a stereotypical 'Hockey Mom.'

Then again, some of her gaffes, such as ignorance of her party's platform and of the constitutional role of the Vice-President, have perhaps carried anti-elitism too far.

**Williams:** I think the dialogue on the subject is stuck in a semantic swamp. 'Elite' can refer to either, obviously, 'the best' or 'gilded, aloof, aristocratic,' etc. I don't think Americans have a problem with their leaders being 'of the best.' They do, however, have a problem with their leaders being gilded. This harks back to America's earliest days and to the founding myth that survives, part of which is that we are a country that actively rejected class stratification. Similarly, still revered in the American narrative is the Horatio Alger, pull-yourself-up, my-grandfather-came-to-New-York-with-\$2-in-his-pocket story. Few things strike at the heart of this ideal more than a breezed-in-on-my-daddy's-coat-tails-because-he-has-all-the-connections tale.

**Much has been made of Obama's talent for speaking in public — for example, Hillary Clinton and John McCain have both argued that Obama offers style without substance. What is the place of rhetoric in**

**a presidential campaign? Is it important for a leader to be able to speak well?**

**Preston:** Not necessarily. It was a positive hindrance to Gore and Kerry because Bush seemed more authentic. This is the source of Palin's appeal, to her supporters; but she takes it so far, farther even than Bush ever did, that she is creating her own backlash. And Obama is showing that rhetorical eloquence can be an advantage for the Democrat.

**Williams:** Yes, particularly in the position of President. In the first instance, a decent command of the language instills confidence in the public that a leader understands what he or she is talking about. Secondly, a significant portion of a President's job is to communicate his or her vision for the country, explain his decisions, comfort in times of crisis, persuade when persuading is necessary and rally when rally is called for. [I]f the words coming out of [Obama's] mouth were just gibberish, then regardless of how pleasant he sounded people would have tuned out relatively quickly. The fact they tuned in again and again I think is proof positive that there is substance behind the style.

**Ryanne Perio spent her summer campaigning for Obama in New York.**

Intrigued by the political buzz surrounding New York City and the tangible sense of history in the making, I decided to get involved in my neighbourhood volunteer group when I left Columbia for summer vacation. After browsing Barack Obama's webpage, I realized how easy getting involved would be. My next-door neighbours were hosting a house party in his honour.

My responsibilities as a community level volunteer have included phone banking and neighbourhood canvassing, but the most rewarding part of my experience has been voter registration. In one day's effort during a Fourth of July celebration, I registered thirty new voters. Of those thirty, I registered a Mexican immigrant who had received her American citizenship just one month earlier, a young man celebrating his eighteenth birthday and his newly acquired right to vote, and a Korean War veteran who had never felt that his voice could make a difference in American politics, until now.

This campaign has been unlike any

other of our generation because it has been pushed forward by ordinary people in small neighbourhoods like mine all

across the country. My neighbourhood volunteer group, consisting of about twenty active members, works for our larger city group, which works for the state group determined to secure Pennsylvania, a crucial swing state, for Obama. Instead of interest groups, lobbyists, and large donors, real people have been determining the shape of the campaign.

If this blockbuster campaign has done anything for America, it has increased political awareness and made people excited about the freedom to choose who governs them. Personally, I am happy with the work I have done for the campaign. If my contribution does not help elect Barack Obama as president, at least it has helped others like me get involved in the political process.

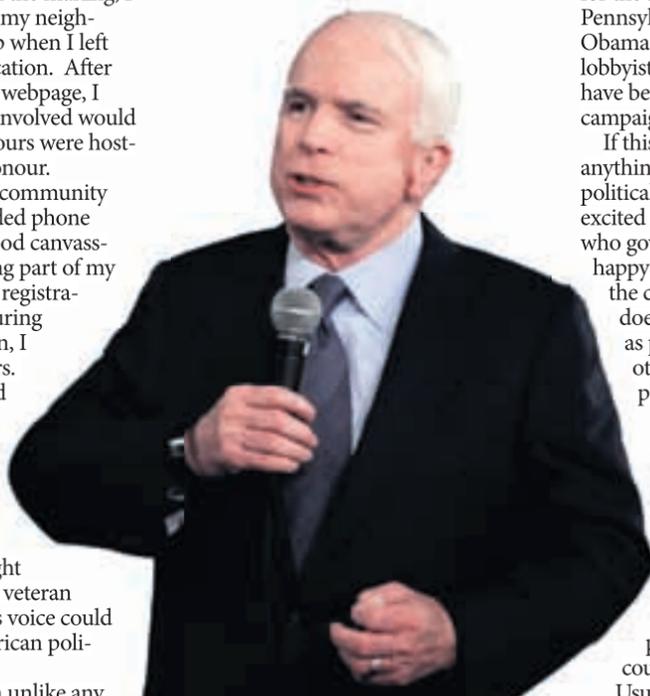
**Kenneth Fockele worked on Obama's Primary campaign in South Carolina.**

Most of our time was spent phone banking, which is like telemarketing and provokes generally the same reactions. We told ourselves that our product was the very future of our country. Most people weren't buying. Usually they were polite. "We're Re-

publican. But thanks for calling." Some were emphatic. "I wouldn't vote for him if all the tea in China depended on it." The best way to shut me up? "I have terminal cancer, and I probably won't make it to Saturday." Click.

When Obama gave a speech nearby, the last question he took came from a young woman whose new husband was on an extended tour in Iraq. Obama waxed eloquent on the admirable sacrifice her husband was making. For the soldiers' sake, the war had to end. Afterward, as she bustled to the front, the woman asked me, "Do you think I can meet him? I was a Republican until about four minutes ago."

The moment the polls closed on primary day, the networks called it for Obama. The volunteers' returns watch party became a celebration. The single room of Simmons Fish Camp was jammed, and each supporter who entered was greeted with a cheer. We ate fried chicken, green beans, and corn bread amidst the jumble of our fellows—all laughing, talking, eating, and making merry together. Together we stood while Obama's words rolled over us. "I did not travel around this state over the last year and see a white South Carolina or a black South Carolina. I saw South Carolina." Out of many, one.



## Peal's Meals



### Week 4: The Obama Burger

It will be a historic day, and as with all historic days, the crucial question with which all right-minded people are concerned is 'how can I ever eat a meal which will do it justice?' When, in years to come, people insist on asking that old cliché 'what were you eating when Obama won/lost the 2008 election?', it would be an acute embarrassment to give a pedestrian answer. So with this in mind, I have put together a recipe which is as topical and thought-provoking as it is tasty: The Obama Burger.

The contents of the burger seek to create a thematic and gastronomic synthesis of Obama's extraordinary life. Obama's father may not have grown up herding goats, but the legend has ascended to the realms of truth in the public imagination. The bizarre story of the rakish government advisor Barack Obama Snr of Nyang'oma Kogelo in Kenya is just one component of the magical improbability of Obama's story. So in his honour, the patty of the burger is made of goat's meat. Goat's meat tastes much like lamb, so the obvious seasoning would be some mint or rosemary. However, I suggest marijuana. When Clinton admitted to smoking weed, it was an outrage; but with Obama, it's all part of the hip package. Also, in culinary terms, one has to salute the audacity of dope.

Fruit in savoury dishes is a controversial step but unavoidable baring in mind Obama's Hawaiian upbringing. Therefore, on top of the goat's meat patty, place a circular cut of fresh pineapple straight from the beach front of Honolulu. After leaving the Pacific paradise of Hawaii, Obama has spent most of his life in Chicago. The work he did in the early Nineties with Chicago's African American population was extremely formative, and he is deeply in love with the Windy City. Chicago's cuisine is known for its blue collar roots, and their hot dog seasoning is famous. So, on top of the patty and pineapple place neon green pickle relish, yellow mustard, pickled sport peppers, tomato wedges, dill pickle spear and a pinch of celery salt.

Once you have your marijuana seasoned goat patty, your slice of fresh pineapple, and your Chicago style topping, the last question is what do you serve it in? Such exciting and colorful ingredients need to be offset by something stoic; a sturdy, crusty and dependable Joe Biden bap.

Lastly, the Obama Burger is best served next to a side order of McCain's Oven chips.

HALLOWEEN SPECIAL

# A Varsity Halloween

Cambridge has a long ghost-writing tradition, and not just in the plagiaristic sense: former don M.R. James' eerie Victorian yarns and alumnus Horace Walpole's gothic novels are staples of the horror genre. As the city's ghoulies and ghosties gather for Halloween, get yourself in pumpkin mood by reading our selection of the latest undergrad horror stories, cartoon strips and ghost tour reports.

## Mordancy shall be its name forever and ever

I went to bed with a ghost every night for a week. His name was John; he'd died when my hostel was an asylum. (I'd always known the legend was true. Still, some people insisted what we lived in was built as King's College housing only, even after he laid their beliefs to rest. But why would a ghost lie to his haunted?)

On Saturday, the first, I'd retired with the same old pains of the day – you, him, work, write, work – when John crawled under the sheets. I groggily thought him the old bedfellow and reached for his hand but dropped it when I touched cold skin. He pulled me over, away from facing the wall in my sleep. "Hello!" he shouted,

like only the dead can. I screamed, loud enough to wake the living. He jumped to his feet without apology and walked through the wall. It glowed, faint as the afterimage of an afterimage.

The next night, he appeared from the same wall, when I was awake.

The lights were off as I performed email ablutions but I felt him there – ghosts exert a force field like rolling down a hill, spreading from the navel. In the dark he hovered behind my desk. "Do

you want to explain yourself?" I asked. "Not really," he replied. He did tell me his name – John; how and when he died – respiratory infection, 1933, age 37, a year before King's rebuilt the place; where he was buried – the Fellows' Garden. In the dark, he bioluminesced phosphorescent. "May I lie next to you?" he requested. I was too tired to refuse, and he promised nothing like Monday.

On following nights, I waited for him to climb in like a thought stealing away.

Everyone should feel a ghost's weight in the bed before her or his own death.

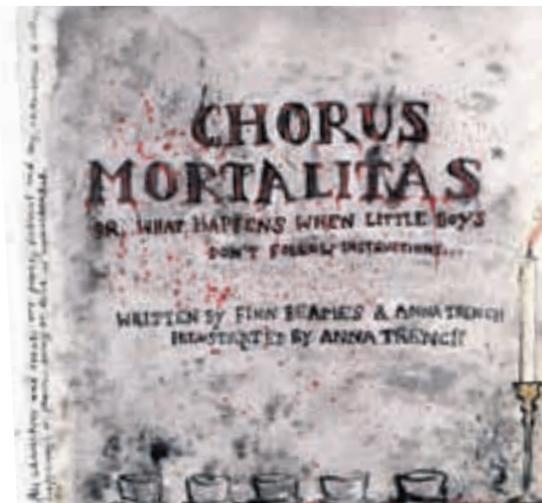
There is a certain intimacy to sleep-

ing with the dead. I didn't mind the ectoplasm he'd leave – it simply has to be washed out of the sheets quickly before it stinks. In return for letting him chase the starkness of the afterlife away with my company, he made the walls of the bitch living downstairs in 212 bleed and shriek.

We really went to bed, euphemistically, on Friday. Drunk after Cindies, I didn't care about his rotting lips or weak chin. "Goodbye," he said, just as he rolled off. I passed out with a grunt. Dawn got me up early Saturday. There was more ectoplasm than usual. Sometimes, in the months afterward, I'd find crickets in my fridge and dead rats in my socks. That is as thoughtful as a ghost can get.

Cathy Bueker

## Chorus Mortalitas



He fear'd how the day might come to an end, when the Rubens consumed all but five of his friends.



It was hard to make out if John sang or was screaming, when he rose from the floor and shot up to the ceiling. The tourists were somewhat surprised when they found, that his teeth and his feet had been left on the ground.

HALLOWEEN ADVENTURE (STARTS ON PAGE 11): Luckily you were accosted at the stroke of midnight, and so you immediately turn into a pumpkin. The highwayman stops, because the idea of someone robbing a pumpkin is ridiculous. However he is very embarrassed by the whole turn of affairs and so, because highwaymen were the hoodies of yesteryear, he stabs you with his little knife and you drip pumpkin pulp all over his breeches.

# A Ghost Tour of Cambridge

It was a dark night when Alan Murdie took me on a Ghost Tour. Don't let Murdie's nondescript appearance fool you. As a member of The Ghost Club (started in Cambridge around 1855) and co-author of *The Cambridge Ghost Book*, this man has the ability to reduce the usually tough into somewhat of a blithering mess with his ghostly tales of Cambridge.

*The Portrait Ghost* is one such tale that made my spine tingle.

Picture Trumpington St, end of the nineteenth century. A house is for sale. A woman, interested in buying the house, is ushered into the sitting room by the

maid, who then leaves to fetch the owner. While waiting, she takes a look around the room. Her eyes come to rest on a painting above the mantel, a portrait of a woman, dressed in green with a red feather in her hat. The woman's face is contorted in a grotesque pose.

After a tour, the woman decides she is still very interested in buying.

"There's just one thing I need to tell you," says the owner. "The house is believed to be haunted by a woman wearing a dress."

"You mean the woman in the painting?" asked the woman.

"What painting?" came the reply.

The woman led the owner back to the sitting room where above the mantelpiece sits a painting of a country landscape. The image of the lady in green was nowhere to be seen.

Another tale tells of *The Unfortunate End of James Betts*. Back to 1688, where Dr John Spencer was in residence at college with his sixteen-year-old daughter, Elizabeth. Around this time, Elizabeth met and fell in love with a student of the

college, James Betts.

Dr Spencer was not impressed with this arrangement and forbade the relationship to continue. This, of course, simply meant they would sneak out to see each other in secret.

On one particular occasion, they were hiding out in a room of the Master's Lodge. Dr Spencer was suspicious and decided to find his wayward daughter. When Elizabeth and James heard footsteps coming down the passageway, James swiftly hid in the nearest cupboard and Elizabeth secured the door shut.

This would have been fine, had Dr. Spencer not decided to take Elizabeth on a holiday to the country, effective immediately, and not return for a considerable time. You can imagine the smell that greeted them at home.

I have heard two endings to this story – the first is that Elizabeth recovered from her loss and went on to be happily married to somebody else and the second is that she died of a broken heart shortly afterwards. Either way, it wasn't a particularly happy ending for James. *Sally Harris*

## Love is the Devil

The old man was drunk. He was holding on to the bar for dear life and talking to himself. He smelt of yesterday's gin. Jack looked at the door. She isn't here yet.

"Son," said the old man, feet slipping across the floor, "Son, I am going to tell you a story the likes of which nobody has ever heard. It's about my meeting with the Devil." Oh Jesus. Humour him. "Look at me. Do I look like a liar? What I am going to tell you is the truth." The whole truth and nothing but the truth. Yeah right. Where is she? "The Devil doesn't look like the Devil, you see. That's not his way. He comes in many guises. The Devil can look like anyone. Like you or I." Jack looked at the old man who was trying to light a cigarette. His hands were shaking. Jack took the lighter from him and lit the cigarette.

"You're a good lad," the man said, "that's why I'm telling you this. You have a good face. I don't want you to get into trouble like me." You don't know the half of it. "Sometimes he looks ugly. He's visited me in many forms. He tried to rob me outside the bus station. He chased me through the streets in a gang of kids. He even looked at me through my mother's eyes." That doesn't surprise me. Why is she so late? Maybe she's not coming. "Sometimes the Devil can be beautiful. I've seen him in the park,

selling ice cream to children. Our eyes met and we both knew. He's waiting for me. He's taking his time." Jack looked at his watch. One hour and seven minutes late. The old man had tears in his eyes. "He follows me. Sometimes he speaks to me. Every time I turn a corner, I know he's somewhere on the other side." I can't wait any longer. This will kill me. She will kill me.

The old man coughed and spluttered. He wiped his eyes dry with the back of his sleeve. Jack finished his beer. "He's always waiting." The old man looked Jack straight in the face. "I'm always waiting too you see. That's his way. The worst times are when I don't see him. When I know he's out there, but I don't know where. When I don't know what to expect or what trick he's going to play next. That's when it really kills me." Jack pressed a fiver into the man's hand. The man looked down at it. "I like you, son. That's why I'm telling you this. I don't want the same thing to happen to you." This will kill me. She will kill me. Outside the night was cold. The Devil comes in many guises? You don't know the half of it. *Decca Muldowney*

## Double Spectre

Along the cobbled streets I had frequented many times before, I saw him, a man masquerading as myself.

The sun had set a half hour before and the alley was swamped with a green hue spilling over from the neon light around the corner. I was a physicist, used to observing strange things. And yet, the fruits of my overactive imagination never rivalled the spectacle of a spitting image of myself standing in front of me. He had flesh, a solid body rather than a spooky transparency. This was more startling than the fact he was holding a gun to my head.

"There isn't enough room for the both of us." He seemed to echo across the alley, with a tight grip on the gun.

And then he continued:

"You're my shadow. And I'm tired of you following me around."

"I'm not following you. I've never seen you before," I weakly protested.

"I'm tired of being the one to finish what you started."

With that, he fixed his dark blue eyes, my dark blue eyes, onto me without blinking and lifted the gun higher, taking aim.

It was shocking, seeing myself holding a gun to my own head. Except I knew this person was not my twin or earthly brother, he had different thoughts, different friends. Who was he? A ghost from the future?

He spoke again. "I'm tired of being haunted by you." He muttered as though I were the ghost.

He was wearing an unbuttoned white shirt and I was wearing a long dark coat with a mauve jumper

underneath. He was freshly shaven, I was not.

Suddenly, the shot rang through the air. The bullet sailed through me and into the wall behind, quickly crumbling the bricks.

I looked down expecting to see blood, to feel a wound, pain, maybe my body jerking. Nothing.

Then the impostor turned and ran, slower than I would, down the alley and into the darkness.

Since then, I have suffered several bullets but no bullet wounds. I have also learnt to walk through walls and float down staircases but I have never seen him before; my friend, my identical enemy. I still wander the streets without ever seeing his outline but being haunted by the possibility that he is out there, somewhere, living a life I have left behind. *Sita Dinanauth*



The remains of the alto made the boys' stomachs churn, So Rupert suggested they all take a turn. Then a curious creature of tin can and cogs, Leapt up and devoured him up to his clogs.



Calm scaled the pole, attempting to flee, But his eye was gouged out by the branch of a tree. Verger, who'd never been able to swim, Sank to the bottom whilst thrashing his limbs.



Mark was not able to dislodge his shoe, So the fence cut him up like those cheese-wires do. Luke met his end making friends with a cow, But when we asked Charles, he refused to say how.

## From the Archives

Week 4: November 2 1968  
American Election preview

Richard Nixon is most likely to win the election. His campaign has been run like a well-oiled panzer tank. The Republican Party's coffers have poured their support into advertising and television and all the public opinion polls give Nixon a comfortable lead. And this is in spite of his refusal to debate or discuss the issue, the rumours and speculation over an imminent bombing halt in Vietnam, and the constant embarrassment of his running mate, Spiro Agnew. Nixon's Strength this year does not come from his ability and experience, rather by default and defection. People will be voting for him as the least offensive candidate or refraining from voting for the opposition.

November 9 1968  
Humphrey is new US president...  
...as far as the Union is concerned

After a hard fought campaign, Hubert Humphrey was elected President of the United States on Monday. Represented by Hugh Anderson of Trinity, he scored an overwhelming victory in a special Union poll, defeating his nearest rival by 281 votes to 36.

In the debate which preceded the election, Anderson called Nixon an "exponent of gutter politics." He urged the electors to support Humphrey on the basis of his sound domestic record. His campaign to mobilise the would-be abstainers was entirely successful – 75 per cent of the popular vote went to Humphrey.

The runner-up was an "In Memoriam" candidate representing McCarthy and Kennedy.

Bambi Wimmert of Girton beat the Nixon forces into fourth place. She stood for comedian Dick Gregory's Freedom and Peace Movement and gained 32 votes, a margin of 12 over Nixon's total. William Powell of Emmanuel spoke for the Nixon Angew ticket, describing the Republican leader as the man to end the Vietnam war. The swing to the Democrats left him with 5½ per cent of the vote.

Wallace did worst of all. Represented by Joe Short of Queens, he achieved a total of 3 votes. While America voted, Short commented: "I hope sincerely that this is not going to be representative of the real result."

# Barflown

OVER THE SUMMER, CAMBRIDGE'S SPARSE MUSIC SCENE GOT EVEN SPARSER. FOR THOSE OF YOU MISSING THE INDIE VENUE ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE RIVER, KATY KING INVESTIGATES THE STRANGE DEATH OF THE CAMBRIDGE BARFLY

After arriving back for Michaelmas, many Cambridge students were dismayed to find out that the Barfly, previously one of Cambridge's best live music venues, was no longer open for business. After less than a year of trading, the Barfly group closed the venue without any prior notice, cancelling dozens of scheduled shows and leaving its workers unemployed.

In an official statement, the Barfly group announced, "as part of our ongoing investment programme in our live music estate we are going to be changing the layout of the Cambridge venue. To this end we will be closing the venue with immediate effect and reopening in the autumn (date to be confirmed)." However, it now seems unlikely that the venue will ever reopen under the Barfly name, as currently it has a large 'To Let' sign on its front door, suggesting the chain would rather to sell it off rather than invest in it further.

Simon Baker, a former full-time employee of the Barfly, identified the main reason for the closure as a lack of instant profits for the company's shareholders. According to Baker, "the Barfly shut because it was losing a phenom-



enal amount of money; it was getting better each month, but they couldn't afford to keep losing the money they were losing." The MAMA Group Plc, a media company whose shares are traded on the London Stock Exchange, currently owns the Barfly chain of venues. With shareholders such as Goldman Sachs owning a 13% stake, the company was presumably under a lot of pressure to produce large profits.

However, it seems a shame it didn't invest more in the Cambridge venue, as workers believed that with a bigger budget for staff and marketing, the venue could have improved its financial situation and continued to bring quality live music to the people of Cambridge. Additionally, the MAMA Group Plc was hardly strapped for cash, with revenues for the period of six months ended 31 January 2008 totalling £12.72 million and profits totalling nearly £2 million.

Another reason that has been cited for the closure is the location of the venue, as IndieSoc President Emma Tomlinson explains, "there was a big problem with getting students through the door with it being oh-so-far out of town – a whole 20 minute walk, in fact". Baker believes that the Barfly group did

not adequately research the local music scene before purchasing the venue. According to Baker, there were other venues in town that would have been far better choices, such as the Locomotive or Baker's Arms. The venue, which was previously called The Loft, was a cheap choice that was in far too residential an area for commercial success. Previously, volunteers had run The Loft as a community project.

If the Barfly chain had adequately researched their investment in the Cambridge music scene, perhaps there would still be a thriving new venue in Cambridge, bringing in high quality bands for both students and locals.

According to Cambridge gig promoters, interest in gig tickets has been declining over the past year. Perhaps due to the current economic downturn, events that would have sold out last year are not selling out this year. The future for the Cambridge music scene may seem bleak with the closure of yet another live music venue, but it is not all doom and gloom. Cambridge's largest independent music venue, The Junction, is still thriving after 18 years, and its future is secure with Arts Council funding promised until 2011.

# A Room of One's Own

ACKNOWLEDGING THE DIRE STATE OF HOME DÉCOR IN CAMBRIDGE STUDENT ROOMS, LILI SARNYAI MAKES LIKE MARTHA STEWART TO INSPIRE DECORATIVE ADVENTURE THROUGH A FEW SIMPLE TIPS AND TRICKS

It is a truth universally acknowledged that whether Cambridge years are spent in the hallowed environs of Neo-Gothic edifices, quaintly crumbling Tudor houses or unapologetically "forward-looking" modern constructions, student rooms leave rather much to be desired. Grungy carpets, suspect stains, peeling plaster and so forth make complaints of a 'seedy motel' atmosphere abound. Garish curtains, socialist-era furniture and complete lack of wall-colour or decoration are a common theme. Therefore, the general tendency is to resign oneself to a room devoid of all character and finesse. "It's only eight weeks" the student tells himself, assuaging dashed hopes of a catalogue-worthy pad with a few rather dejected-looking posters. Yet with minimal effort, a little inspiration and a few helpful ideas, one's room can go from drab and cluttered to chic, unique and organised in a matter of days.

The most fundamental aspect of any room is its level of neatness. Not exactly famous for militant organization, student rooms tend to resemble anything from chaotic bazaars to Domino's/Chinese takeaway museums, with a few exceptions found at the other extreme of obsessive tidiness. To mitigate the chaos, an easy storage idea that also works as an innovative home accent is to use old wooden wine crates as boxes, which can usually be procured for free from your nearest Threshers or wine merchant. These can be arranged on the floor to store heavier items such as shoes and books, and a colourful throw can be added for concealment. They can also act

as mini shelves, in which case a quick coat of paint really makes them stand out.

If the theme of Bacchian delights lies close to your heart, empty wine bottles make for fabulous vases for flowers picked during Grantchester frolics - or simply purchased from one of the many stalls in Cambridge Market Square on a lazy Saturday afternoon. These have the added advantage of being able to stand alone as rather Parisian-looking home décor; nothing conveys that intellectual, artisan *je ne sais quoi* quite like a few dark green, blue and clear glass bottles.

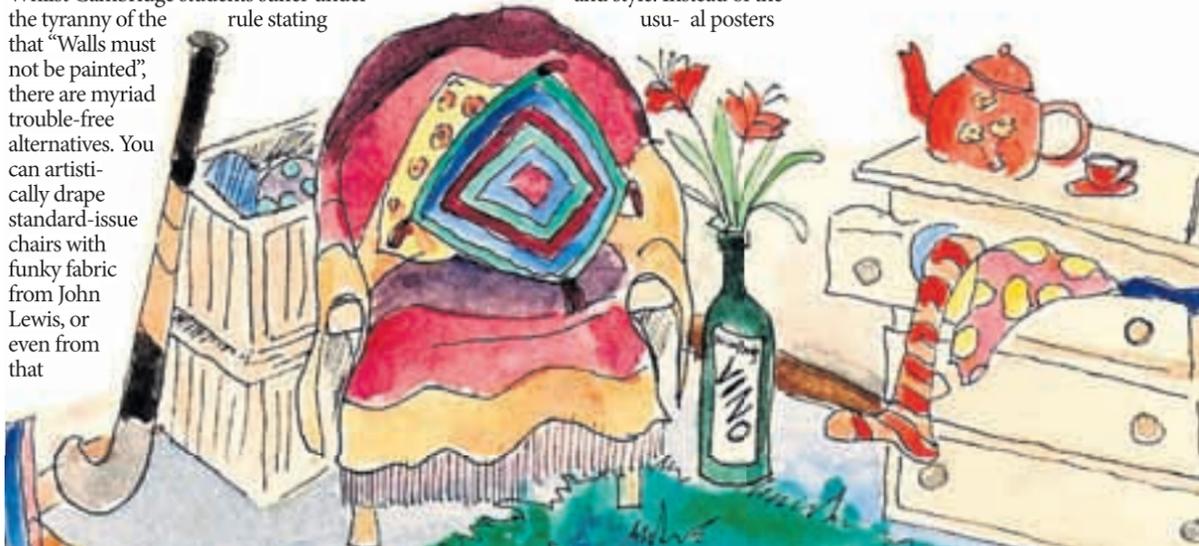
Perhaps the second most important consideration of any room is its colour scheme. Whilst Cambridge students suffer under the tyranny of the rule stating that "Walls must not be painted", there are myriad trouble-free alternatives. You can artistically drape standard-issue chairs with funky fabric from John Lewis, or even from that

fabulously disarrayed market stall selling textiles of every possible variation; fasten it with ribbons, safety pins or even multi-colored paper clips. Adding a soft, patterned throw to your bed is also a fabulous alternative. Or try clothing cushions in floral pillow cases purchased at Oxfam, bleached for a vintage feel (leave them in a solution of 50% water-50% bleach overnight). Lastly, try adding an oriental cloth rug beside your desk. Clearly, the possibilities for infusing your room with colour are endless.

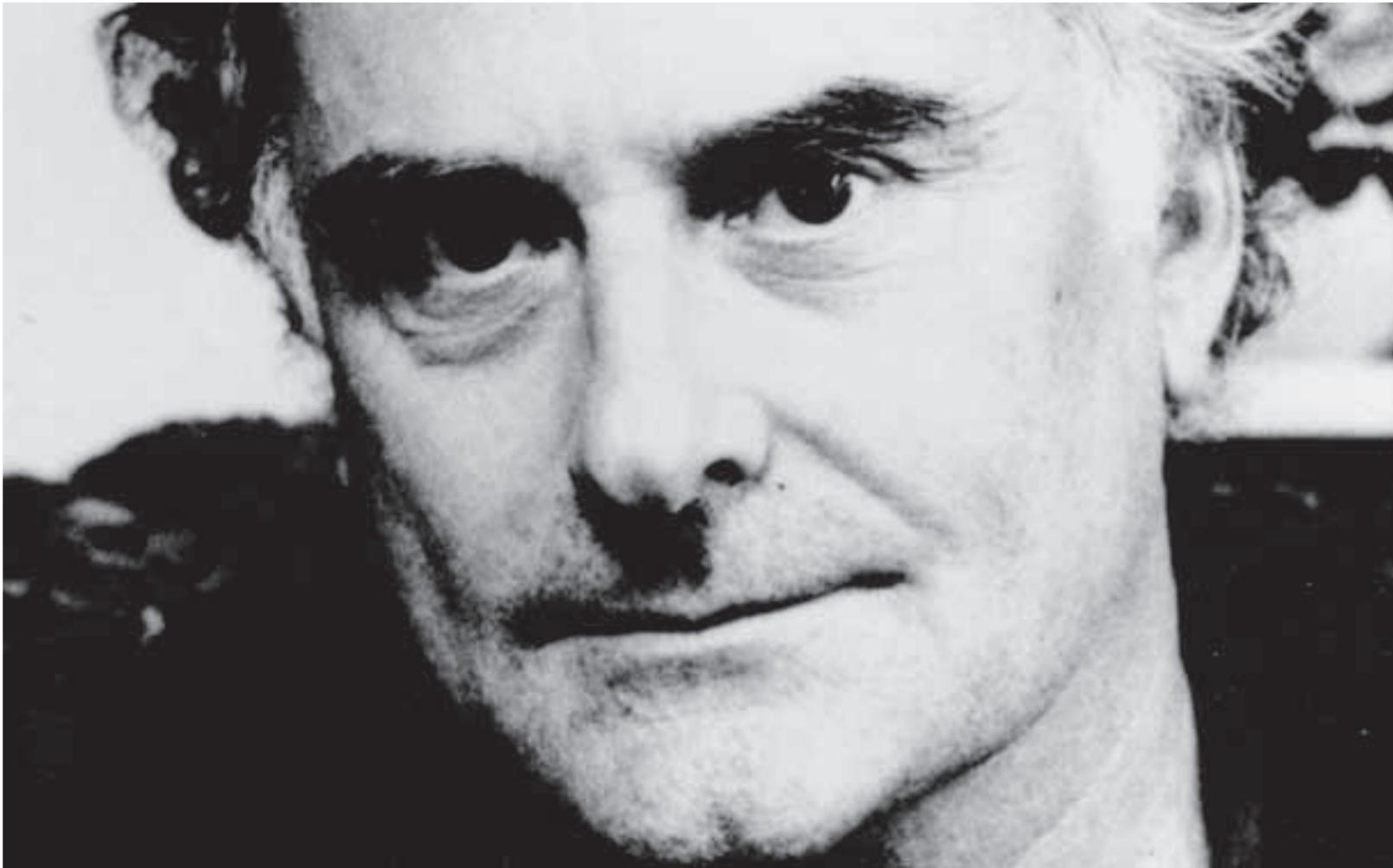
Following along the same line of thought, walls can be rapidly transformed into a display of individuality, vivacity and style. Instead of the usual posters

and photographs, take a little more time and search for old prints, maps and vintage photographs at one of the treasure trove charity-shops on Mill Road. These can be placed directly on the wall, or for a more finished look they can be mounted onto large sheets of card, available in a rainbow of colours from Heffers Art on King Street.

So there are no more excuses for decorative *laissez-faire*. Staring hopelessly at the empty walls, the jumbled clothes, and piles of textbooks scattered around plates of half-eaten midnight 'study toast' will not a stylish chamber make. Get planning, start shopping, and create the marvel in which you aspire to live.



SALLIE GODWIN



# Eyre and graces

ACCLAIMED FILM DIRECTOR AND FORMER DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL THEATRE RICHARD EYRE TALKS TO FINN BEAMES ABOUT THE MERITS AND FLAWS OF THE CAMBRIDGE DRAMA SCENE

It is hard to believe Sir Richard Eyre when he says, “somehow, it just seems to me an extraordinary accident that I was at Cambridge, and I have no regrets about it, except that I massively wasted my time there” – he’s obviously a pretty clever guy who has done incredibly well for himself. Asking him what theatre was like in his day, I got an answer that could almost exactly describe it as it is now. He once wrote it down:

“[The ADC] had most, if not all, of the technical apparatus of a modest repertory theatre, and in every sense tried to mimic the professional model to the point, I can see with hindsight, of extreme parody. Intrigues, jealousies, stars and careers, were conceived on the lines of what were imagined to be the real thing. We were cocky, immodest, self-regarding, ostentatious, vain and self-important. It seemed, and not only in retrospect, a golden age for the theatre [outside the university]. Barriers were broken in style, in content, in taste and in appetite but at Cambridge there were no eviscerations, no graphic sexual representations, and, apart from three semi-nude but wholly static Girtonians in a scene from *Expresso Bongo*, no nudity.”

I wonder whether today’s Cambridge theatre is at all revolutionary, or even interested in seriously challenging ordinary ideas. Eyre says of his time, “There was nobody who was for smashing the façade of conventional theatre – there were just a lot of hungry, very, very ambitious people; and some

very talented people.” It seems that today we’re in a similar position – there are names that filter through our funny little theatre world quite often, not due to any overwhelming talent they possess or because they’re really shaking things up, but, as Eyre would describe it, they have “a gift for engineering their progress”. Many students today are undoubtedly endowed with such a “gift”, but what does this actually do for the theatre world? Eyre wisely asserts

**“[THE ADC]... IN EVERY SENSE TRIED TO MIMIC THE PROFESSIONAL MODEL TO THE POINT, I CAN SEE WITH HINDSIGHT, OF EXTREME PARODY”**

that “it’s very hard for someone just to be anarchic and iconoclastic and turn something on its head, because of the fear that if you fuck this up really badly, you’re not going to get another chance”.

One crucial element of ‘real world’ theatre plays little part in Cambridge’s dramatic world – the important role of patrons. When we talk about people following and supporting someone’s work, which ultimately makes it successful or not, Eyre notes, “patrons – people who take an interest and are prepared to back it – they’re the catalysts, without whom the whole body of

theatre simply wouldn’t be active. That doesn’t exist in student theatre”.

Eyre’s perceptions of Cambridge drama, for all its faults, are never disdainful or sneering. The furthest he seems to want to go in the direction of criticism is to say, “it’s a sort of mimicry of the real world and I think that it gives the illusion of being the real world – that’s probably not very healthy – on the other hand I don’t see how you inoculate against that”. His neat summary of Cambridge theatre isn’t dismissive, just accepting, and illustrates his own transition from university to professional life – he never directed while he was here, save a “would-be Buster Keaton” short film, but he did a lot of acting. The notion of *being an actor* became a fiction for him when he left Cambridge (as did “I am a mathematician” – he was accepted to read Physics then changed to English). Speaking of his acting experience at Cambridge, he says, “the damage it did is that it gave me the conviction I could become a professional actor – but when I became a professional actor I was desperately in need of training, and I was only too well aware of how little I knew”. He was in a “very, very bad show” in Leicester when an opportunity to direct a one-off show came up, and somebody took an interest in him, “which no one had ever done, like that, before”, and took him on as an assistant, after which he moved from job to job, finally arriving at where he is now – director of several major films and director of the

## Eyre Time

- 1973-8 Artistic Director at the Nottingham Playhouse
- 1987-97 Director of the National Theatre
- 1989 Directs *Daniel Day-Lewis in Hamlet*
- 2006 Directs *Notes On A Scandal*

National Theatre 1987-1997.

“When I started directing I didn’t for a moment think, ‘oh, my career is to ascend to become Director of the National theatre’ – you go from piece of work to piece of work. You accrue experience and success, but I don’t know anyone who calculates a career path – I think in the arts it just doesn’t work like that.”

We talk about ‘Cambridge careers’ and the absurdity of constructing and copying ‘the real world’ in university life. Eyre says, “I can’t think that’s terribly helpful, but there was never a stage when we were completely innocent and we can’t go back”. I feel like protesting and trying to instate some sort of movement that promotes truly experimental and exciting theatre, which tries to achieve disconnection with fashion or protocol. But he is right; Cambridge will never stop chasing the ‘real world’, and we do gain more than we lose in this (maybe slightly perverse) endeavour. I suppose the only thing we have to be careful of is chasing our tails instead.

## Next Big Thing



### Week 4: Ladyhawke

Step aside Flight of the Conchords as New Zealand’s edgiest export. There’s a new lady in town, Ladyhawke in fact. Her eponymous album (released in September this year) is a beautifully crafted record of what she likes to call ‘indie/electro/pop’, so think synths, guitars and strong vocals.

After various stints as the lead guitarist in both the Wellington band Two Lane Blacktop and the Sydney duo ‘Teenager’, she relocated to London to focus on her solo project. Ladyhawke was chosen as her *nom de plume* (film buffs will recognise the reference to the 1985 medieval fantasy film), mainly because she deemed her real name (Pip Brown) too boring.

Her arrival generated high expectations in the music world. Clearly, Ladyhawke’s fear of living up to the hype was unfounded as her debut was received with critical acclaim, although huge commercial success has eluded her as yet (the album only peaked at #47 in the UK chart). But Ladyhawke has achieved cult status with a hard core of committed fans, as shown by the success of her recent UK headline tour shows (which came as a complete surprise to the modest singer). A current support slot for Black Kids, as well more plans to tour mean that the Ladyhawke love will continue to spread, and for good reason too. Her past singles ‘Back Of The Van’, ‘Paris Is Burning’ and ‘Dusk Till Dawn’ are hugely catchy.

The live Ladyhawke experience is epic, adding an edgier, rockier feel to her songs. Her passion for 70s and 80s pop music (from listening to her parents’ record collection as a youngster) is evident in her songs, as is an enthusiasm for new electro bands.

Ladyhawke has also drawn notice for her admission that she suffers from mild Asperger’s Syndrome, an admission that she now regrets (despite the positive reaction of other Asperger’s sufferers) due to the interest this attracts. Instead, Ladyhawke prefers to be identified as a female artist to highlight the struggle of women in the music industry.

Hopefully her immense talent (she can play ten instruments by the way) and the future success that she so plainly deserves will help towards breaking down these barriers. Ladyhawke is excited about her future musical endeavours: you should be too. Be sure to catch her live soon. An exciting and rising talent not to be missed.

# the VARSITY WEEK

THE VARSITY WEEK: YOUR COMPLETELY COMPREHENSIVE PULL-OUT GUIDE TO THE NEXT SEVEN DAYS. STICK IT ON YOUR WALL.



## Music

### Friday 31st

**Pinch**  
Clare Cellars: 9pm (£4)  
The suitably chilling Pinch provides a DJ set of ambient Dubstep for Halloween.

### Sunday 2nd

**Cambridge Ukulele Club**  
Portland Arms: 2pm (Free)  
Bring your Ukulele along and learn how to play fun songs round a big table with lots of other people!

### Live Modern Jazz

The Cricketers: 8.30pm (Free)  
Sax-led modern jazz from Ellington to Shorter.



### Monday 3rd

**Cage the Elephant**  
Junction: 8pm (£7 adv / £9)  
This young Kentucky band are getting a lot of attention at the moment. Why not check them out and see if they are worth the hype?!

### Tuesday 4th

**STOMP**  
Corn Exchange: 7.30pm (£16.50-£25)  
All this week catch the West End extravaganza where performers use everything including the kitchen sink to create a rhythm!

### Wednesday 5th

**Nitin Sawhney**  
Junction: 8pm (£16.50 adv / £18.50)  
This extremely talented multi-instrumentalist tours his London Underground album which features many famous guests.

### The Research

Portland Arms: 8pm (£6)  
Come listen to some catchy Tweecore as part of the Portland's Bonfire night party.

### Friday 7th

**Transmission**  
Junction: 8pm (£6 adv)  
The Junction showcases a selection on local and national up and coming bands, including Future of the Left.

## Theatre

### Friday 31st

**Hecuba** (see pg 20)  
**Horrible Histories**  
**The Pillowman** (see pg 21)  
**Knights of the Round Table** (see pg 20)  
**Gaslight** (see pg 20)

### Saturday 1st

**Hecuba**  
**Horrible Histories**  
**The Pillowman**  
**Knights of the Round Table**  
**Gaslight**

### Monday 3rd

**Enjoy**  
Arts Theatre: 7.45pm (£10)  
Alan Bennett's rarely-performed dark comedy, set in his native Leeds, charts the a sociologist's observation of an elderly couple as they are about to be re-housed.

### Tuesday 4th

**Peter Pan**  
ADC: 7.45pm (£6)  
CUADC present J.M. Barrie's classic tale in its original form. With incidental music by Cambridge's premier chamber-orchestra. See pg 21 for the director's thoughts on Barrie.

### ICE Chromosome

ADC: 11pm (£4)  
Improvisers face each other in the ultimate battle of the sexes.

### Enjoy

### Wednesday 5th

**A Beast for Thee**  
Pembroke New Cellars: 10.30pm  
Dark play from Freddy Syborn, investigating what drives us in the modern world.

### Peepshow

ADC: 11pm (£4)  
See pg 20 for the low-down.

### Footlights Studio Smoker

**Peter Pan**  
**Enjoy**  
**Knights of the Round Table**

### Thursday 6th

**Jesus Smoker**  
Above Jesus Bar: 10pm (£2)  
See pg 21 for a review of the last smoker.

### Peter Pan

**Enjoy**  
**Peepshow**

## Going Out

### Friday 31st

**Disc Shockies**  
Kings' Cellars: 10pm (Free/£2)  
Student ID required  
A night of 80s tunes to electric-shock your skeleton.

### Saturday 1st

**Indie Thing**  
Kambar: 10pm (£3/£2)  
A regular night of Indie Music playing new songs and old favourites.

### Renacimiento

Soul Tree: 10pm (£3)  
International music night

### Monday 3rd

**Fatpoppadaddy's**  
Fez: 10pm (£4/3/2)  
This long-running night is a melting-pot of Indie, DnB, Hip-hop, reggae...

### Tuesday 4th

**Thrust**  
The Place: 10pm (£3/£4)  
Celebrate the American elections by going to CUSU's new LBGT night.

### Credit Crunch

Niche: 9pm (Free before 11pm/£2/£3/£5)  
Priory DJs Sam I Am and George Lanham headline, with support from James Manning & Conor Healy amongst others. Very cheap drinks all night - 90p shots and bottles

### Wednesday 5th

**Remixology**  
Soul Tree: 10pm (£3)  
A new regular night dedicated to serving a helping of real dance music, with free entry on a guestlist.

### Appleblim

Emmanuel Bar: 9pm (£3/£5 for Emma students)  
Appleblim is at the forefront of the Bristol-Berlin axis of dubstep, in which heavy basslines and dubstep rhythms combine with a melodic, techno-influenced sound.

### Thursday 6th

**Milton Jackson**  
Clare Cellars: 9pm (£4)  
A night of clean and funky Techno, underground.

### Rotation

Fez: 10pm (£5/free)  
A new urban music night which looks remarkably similar to Ebonics, its predecessor. Hip Hop, Garage and R&B are on the menu.

## Talks and Events

### Sunday 2nd

**Amnesty Letter Writing and Waffles**  
Brazil F1 Match  
The Cambridge Waffle Company: 12-5pm  
As part of Amnesty International's Weekend of the Letter, Emma and Downing Amnesty societies have organised an afternoon of waffles (including the discounted 'Amnesty' waffle) and letter writing. Human Rights have never tasted so good.

### Tuesday 4th

**US Election Night**  
The Union Chamber: 10pm - 6am  
Don't miss a minute of election coverage - join the Union through the night, and welcome in, with any luck, the dawn of a new era for American politics.

### Jesus College Literary Society

The Shop, XVIII Jesus Lane: 8pm  
The evening will begin with some readings by Slovenian poet Ales Steger as well as practicing poet and English Fellow at Jesus College, Rod Mengham. Discussion and open mic readings follow.



### Thursday 6th

**Slade Lectures 2008**  
Mill Lane Lecture Rooms: 5pm  
Prof Robert Hillenbrand FBA delivers the fourth Slade Lecture (focusing on early Islamic art) on 'Royal Frescoes: The Good Life in the Syrian Desert'. See pick of the week.

### Union Debate

The Union Chamber: 7.30pm  
Speakers, including Oliver Letwin (above) and David Howarth, discuss the motion: "This house has no confidence in Her Majesty's Government."

### Friday 7th

**Ukrainian Film**  
Arts Picturehouse: 7pm (Free - but booking necessary at CambridgeUkrainianStudies.org.uk)  
'Na perekhrest'i / At the Crossroads': A Festival of Contemporary Ukrainian Film.

## Sport

### Sunday 2nd

**Brazil F1 Match**  
ITV 1: 4pm  
Victory in Shanghai left Lewis Hamilton 7 points clear of lone title rival Felipe Massa, who has won in Sao Paulo for the past two years. A top-five finish will clinch the title for the Brit.

### Wednesday 5th

**Girls' Hockey v Exeter**  
Wilberforce Road: 2pm  
The Hockey Girls continue their BUCS campaign at home to Exeter. Having made a poor start to the season, captain Rosie Evans will be looking for improvement a side sitting in mid-table. Despite an encouraging performance, the Blues went down to the old enemy Oxford on the opening day and will be hoping for a change of fortunes on Wednesday.

### Rugby Blues v Crawshays Welsh XV

Grange Road: 7.15pm  
Fresh from their match against Spain in Madrid, Jon Dawson's men return to Grange Road for a game against Crawshays Welsh XV. A fortnight ago, the Blues were comprehensively beaten against another Welsh outfit, the Ospreys. They'll be looking for an improved performance on Wednesday but will have to do so without influential fly-half Ross Broadfoot whose ankle injury will rule him out of the Varsity fixture in December.

### Football Blues v Birmingham College

Fenners: Time TBC  
The footballers contest their first home fixture in almost a month. They battled to a hard-fought draw in their opening BUCS league game away at Northampton a fortnight ago, succumbing to a late set-piece to deny them the three points. They'll be looking to make a strong start to their home campaign with victory over Oxford.

### Thursday 6th

**India v Australia**  
Sky Sports 1: 4am  
The fourth and final test from Nagpur. After a draw in the first test, the Indians romped to a 320-run victory in the second test at Mohali thanks to Amit Mashri's seven wickets on debut. It was only the second defeat inflicted upon the Australians since their 2005 Ashes campaign. Ricky Ponting will be going all out to avoid a series defeat on the sub-continent.

### Monday 3rd

**Stravinsky**  
Hall One, Kings Place, London: 7.30pm (£9.50)  
Thomas Adès (who graduated in 1992 from King's) accompanies Anthony Marwood in what promises to be a brilliant performance.

## Art, Jazz & Classical

### Ongoing Exhibitions

**Fitzwilliam Museum:**  
• New Art from Old: works inspired by pieces from the Fitzwilliam's collection.  
• Sir Sydney Cockerell and The Fitz (starts Tuesday 4th)  
• Japanese Pottery (booking necessary)  
• Palaces in the Night - Whistler's Prints  
• Chinese Imperial Jades  
• Tomb Treasures of Ancient Georgia  
• Greeks, 'Barbarians' and their Coins  
• Picasso Prints - Dreams and Lies

### Kettle's Yard (all free):

• Conversations  
• Paul Coldwell: 'I called when you were out' (2-4pm)

### Saturday 1st

**Cambridge Horn Consort**  
West Road: 7.30pm (£12.50)  
Directed by Tony Halstead and with The Band of Oboes as special guests, the Consort's programme includes the West Side Story Suite.



### Vaughan-Williams Festival

Fitzwilliam College  
See pick of the week for the events happening this weekend, to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the death of the great English composer.

### Sunday 2nd

**Ukelele Orchestra of Great Britain**  
Arts Theatre: 7.45pm (£10)  
Not just a concert. The orchestra promise to take you on a tour of the world through their humorous re-stylings of pieces from Tchaikovsky to Nirvana.

### Monday 3rd

**Stravinsky**  
Hall One, Kings Place, London: 7.30pm (£9.50)  
Thomas Adès (who graduated in 1992 from King's) accompanies Anthony Marwood in what promises to be a brilliant performance.

## CUR1350 Radio

### Saturday 1st

**Seventy Loud Years**  
9-10pm  
An experimental exploration of the last three generations modestly following in the footsteps of Cage, Eno, DJ Spooky and others.

### Soul Food

7-9pm  
Soul Food returns for a new term of all things in black music - whether you love jazz, funk, motown, reggae or R'n'B, you are bound to find it on Soul Food.

### Monday 3rd

**Dreams of Electric Shepherds**  
9-10pm  
Downtempo dubstep. Post-rock glitch. Orchestral breakcore. Brain-dance? Will and William explore the frontiers of modern electronic music. Let us be your shepherds to musical enlightenment.

### Tuesday 4th

**Cubed**  
9-11pm  
A fresh faced techno show taking you from the deepest and darkest techno through to the most stripped back sounds.

### Subterranean Trawler

11-12pm  
To celebrate Guy Fawkes' Eve, listen to tonight's show of explosive beats.

### Wednesday 5th

**Dangerously Unfashionable**  
3-4pm  
Join Chris Boreham as he fights the tyranny of modernity, bringing you an hour of the best in classic Rock, Pop and Soul. Features include a spotlight on lesser known bands, Original vs. Cover and Guess that Intro.

### Thursday 6th

**Faces for the Radio**  
6-7pm  
Libby and Ellie's safari through indie and alternative classics; from The Velvet Underground to The Verve. More fun than a penguin on a bouncy castle, and twice as enjoyable!

### Friday 7th

**Tape Modern**  
9-10pm  
No jazz, just music, Old and new, great and great.

## Film

### Quantum of Solace

**Vue**  
Fri to Thur: 09:00, 10:00, 11:30, 12:30, 13:20, 14:20, 15:20, 16:10, 17:10, 18:10, 19:00, 20:00, 21:00, 21:50, 22:40, 23:40  
**Arts Picturehouse**  
Fri to Sun: 11:00, 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00, 11:30  
Mon to Thur: 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00  
**Film of the Week:** Has Marc Forster managed to keep up Craig's lead in the best Bond ever poll? We can only hope, but whether or not this matches 'Casino Royale', it's our Friday night movie of choice.

### Ghost Town

**Vue**  
All Days: 13:00 15:30 18:00 20:30  
Finally Gervais gets a Hollywood lead. He dies for seven minutes and ends up being charged with preventing a widow from marrying an idiot... by her deceased husband. It's a comedy, no surprises. Ok, it is about a dentist and some meddling ghosts, but it is Gervais. Go on. See pg 23 for our review.



### Burn After Reading

**Arts Picturehouse**  
Fri to Thurs: 12:00, 2:45, 6:50, 9:15 (except Tues: 12:00, 9:15)  
**Vue**  
Fri to Thurs: 15:50, 18:20, 20:45  
The Coens' respect for their audience decreases again. Utterly disappointing.

### Gomorrah

**Arts Picturehouse**  
Fri to Thur: 2:15  
A hard-hitting drama about the Neapolitan Mafia. In Italian with subs.

### Mamma-Mia

**Vue**  
13:10 (Tues - Thur)  
Pierce Brosnan's 'S.O.S.' is still the cinematic event of the year.

### Of Time and The City

**Arts Picturehouse**  
Fri to Thur: 1:00, 5:15, 9:10 (except Tues: 12:00, 3:30, 9:10)  
Terence Davies demonstrates the real grit of 1960's Liverpool: unmissable.

## Pick of the Week

### Buying Bodies, Selling Souls

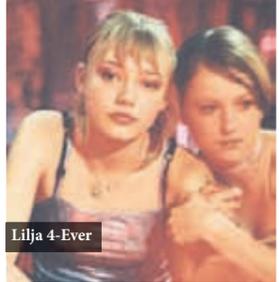
Friday 7th to Saturday 8th November  
Murray Edwards College, Buckingham House Lecture Theatre (off Huntingdon Road): Various times (Free)

Human trafficking will be examined in a series of films, concentrating on the areas of sex, labour and organs.

Friday: 8.15pm: Lilja 4-Ever [18] (Lukas Moodysson)

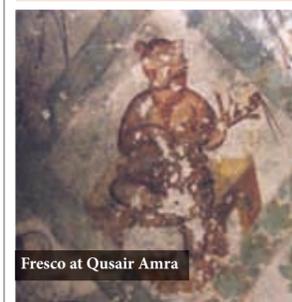
Saturday: 3pm: In This World [15] (Michael Winterbottom)

Saturday: 8pm: Dirty Pretty Things [15] (Stephen Frears)



Lilja 4-Ever

**adc theatre** To win a pair of tickets to ADC's mainshow, turn to our competition on page 23



Fresco at Qusair Amra

### Royal Frescoes: The Good Life in the Syrian Desert

Thursday 6th November  
Mill Lane Lecture Rooms: 5pm (£4)

Felix Slade, a nineteenth-century art collector, bequeathed an endowment for a series of lectures to be given annually at Oxford and Cambridge. The first were John Ruskin and Sir Matthew Digby Wyatt. Professor Robert Hillenbrand is more than able to keep company with such lofty names. His lectures so far in the series have provided witty and insightful re-thinkings on Islamic art, and on the links of the Islamic and Byzantine worlds. These lectures are a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to listen a great of the art-historical world. Not to be If you miss it, there's another at the same time next week.

### Vaughan-Williams Festival

Fitzwilliam College

### Friday 31st:

Song Recital: 8pm (£13)  
Including V-W's Songs of Travel and Finzi's Let Us Garlands Bring.

### Saturday 1st:

Lecture: Em Marshall on "V-W, the Progression": 10.30am (£3)

Lecture: Jeremy Dale Roberts on "Regeneration": 11.30am (£3)

Violin Recital: 2pm (£10)  
Works by V-W, Holst, Finzi, Parry

English Song Workshop: 4pm

Lecture: Diana McKeagh on "V-W - Man of his time; Man of OUR time": 6.30pm (£3)

Evening Concert: 7.30pm (£15)

Including string quartets by V-W and Radcliffe

### Sunday 2nd:

Film: "The Passions of V-W": 10.30am (£5)

followed by discussion forum

Choral Concert: 2pm (£10)

V-W's 5 Mystical Songs and Mass in G (see right)



### Vaughan-Williams - Pick of the Festival

Sunday 2nd: 2pm (£10)  
V-W's 5 Mystical Songs and Mass in G

Vaughan-Williams excelled in writing for solo voice and for choirs. His 5 Mystical Songs, in which he sets a series of poems by the sixteenth-century poet George Herbert, provide a magnificent juxtaposition of choral grandeur and eloquent solo lines. His Mass on G, scored for unaccompanied double choir and solo SATB, imbues the liturgical text with sparkling wit and compelling musicality. Expect to come out feeling exhilarated.

**HALLOWEEN ADVENTURE (STARTS ON PAGE 11):** Well it is and it isn't. On the one hand, it could be haunted because there's a hideous moaning and retching coming from the toilet. And on the other it might not be haunted because they've completely run out of spirits. Also the two hands might be linked. Or at least the hands are shaking. Well your hands are shaking. You call it all off and decide to see Quantum of Solace instead.

View From  
The Stage

**Week 4: Lauren Cooney, Peepshow**

**What's it all about?**

A quick, slick, blast of a lateshow at the ADC this week. Seven actors have come to terms with the ambiguities and energy of a script originally performed by groundbreaking physical theatre company Frantic Assembly. Semi-scripted and semi-devised afresh; seven characters in a block of flats meet, greet, and eavesdrop on one another.

**Tell us a tale.**

The play's events unfold due to the characters drinking a lot of wine. In an effort to combat the actors' fear of playing drunk, the cast attempted a wet run of the play. As initially suspected, the run yielded little inspiration but many a hangover.

**Your role?**

Officially the Director, in the sense that I applied for the theatre slot and chose the script, but I will also be acting in the show as well. Due to the nature of the piece, we all act and all direct together.

**If you like this, you'll like...**

...anything that Idle Productions put on in the future. This is a new theatrical venture by a brand new company.

**What's in it for me?**

A short, lively piece of theatre that doesn't take itself too seriously. We've thought about naturalism, about physical theatre, about musical accompaniment and tried to bring them together. *Peepshow* is a risk. An experiment.

**You'll be happy if the audience goes away...**

...wanting to see more stuff like this in Cambridge.

**Little known fact...**

*Peepshow* was originally performed in collaboration with Lamb, whose songs pepper the script. But the script demanded a fresh input, and so our production has been set to an original soundscape that runs for the length of the show, composed by Cambridge's finest, Soosan Lolvar.

**Show Details:**

Lauren is directing Idle Productions' *Peepshow*, which is this week's ADC Lateshow. It's on from Wednesday 5th to Saturday 8th November, at 11pm. Tickets from [adctheatre.com](http://adctheatre.com) for £4. And if you're still in doubt, there will be a first-night review on the Varsity website.

## THEATRE

*Hecuba* by Euripides, trans. Frank McGuinness

Corpus Playroom, October 28 - November 1

Dir. Oscar Toeman; The Shirley Players

★★★★★

"It's a difficult part when all she does is complain." So spoke one of Cambridge's foremost Classicists as we emerged into the dank mire after the play, and headed to The Eagle for a debrief.

The discussion was necessarily short – he had soup to buy before Sainsbury's closed – and wasn't entirely productive: he mainly just showed me pictures of his girlfriend dressed as a centurion (those Classicists...). But there is value to his insight. *Hecuba* is a ridiculously difficult part. Troy has fallen; she whinges. Her child must be sacrificed; she whinges some more. She finds out her remaining child, who she thought was alive, is now also dead. She has another whinge. And then she blinds his killer, murdering his babies.

This play was always going to hinge on the question of whether Ellie Massie

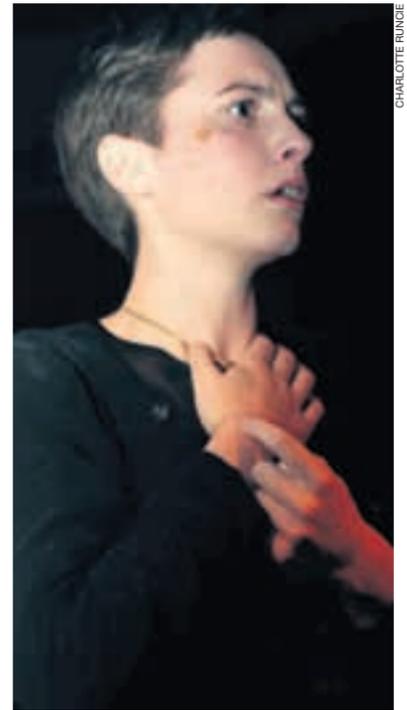
could pull this off. She could – sort of. Her movement was odd. Her gloating over the blinded Polymestor wasn't wholly convincing. Otherwise, though, she stepped up to the challenge with total commitment: her entreaty to Odysseus (a wonderfully inscrutable James Sharpe) was more than moving; her tears were a very real manifestation of great suffering.

The rest of the play followed this pattern: a curate's egg good in most of its parts. Alashiya Gordes, the lone chorus, had some of the best lines in the play, skilfully getting her mouth round the translation's more beautiful poetry and cutting epithets. Had it not been for an alarmingly eerie look that sometimes filled her eyes, which looked ominously like the early stages of an astigmatism, it would have been the performance of the evening. Instead, that accolade

belonged to Ed Rice, whose blinding about twenty minutes from the end started a breathlessly exciting denouement. He, more than anyone, invigorated the translation, tapping the reservoir of humanity's darkest impulses that underlies it. He was quite simply superb, worth a fourth star alone.

That's not to say it's really a three-star show. It was a more than capable attempt to tackle a play that through its very age can appear daunting and alien to modern audiences. Tack on the superb last quarter and you've got a winner. Certainly, it's essential viewing for anyone studying Tragedy. Being a *Varsity* reviewer, I didn't pay for my ticket. Yet I would have done, and gladly. And in these days of Credit Crunches and toxic debt, I can't think of a better endorsement than that.

George Reynolds



CHARLOTTE RUNICE

*Gas Light* by Patrick Hamilton

ADC, October 29 - November 1

Dir. Fred Rowson; Pembroke Players

★★★★★

It is important to criticise student theatre without forgetting the nature of its effort – especially at Cambridge, where we're all doing demanding degrees – which means that maybe one should be kinder, and take into consideration the unavoidable obstacles in the way of the amateurs. It is very difficult to be so generous when the production is poorly performed and soullessly directed, and the play itself is utterly irrelevant.

Acting was, for the most part, incredibly wooden or hackneyed, with a variety of badly executed accents and social stereotypes getting in the way of any emotion being conjured whatsoever. Aside from any detailed analysis of the mechanics of the play, it seems absolutely bizarre that anybody would ever decide to stage this piece of theatre without extend-

ing some sort of allegory, suggestion – for god's sake, even a mild hint at something remotely important to a modern audience. I have a great deal of sympathy for the actors involved, however, because they weren't working with a script that could have ever really communicated anything to them worth magnifying for an audience. But if you decide to stage this sort of inane little story, you have to be damn sure that your production of it has so much pizzazz, shebang, doo-wop or whatever, that it's compelling enough for the audience to stay awake. This one didn't provide any of those things.

For sure, the story provides nothing exciting, nothing motivating, nothing challenging; we see a man and a woman in a clearly dodgy relationship, he is nasty to her, goes out; another man

comes in and exposes the husband as a murderer. After a while the police come and arrest him. It is incredibly dull.

Also, as a lateshow I feel that the person in charge has a duty to select something suitable and responsible. A play that lasts for one hour and thirty-five minutes is too long, unless it makes you feel more alive than you have ever felt or will feel again. In the ADC guidelines for lateshows I believe there is something encouraging experimental or innovative theatre, which *Gas Light* most certainly was not. So if critics are to respond appropriately to student theatre, then student theatre should engage appropriately with its audience, and think about what on earth they're trying to achieve before they tread any boards. Try walking the plank. Finn Beames



KATY KING

*The Knights of the Round Table* by Jean Cocteau

Peterhouse Theatre, October 24-26

Dir. Hannah Mayer & Alex Wong; The Heywood Society

★★★★★

This play was a bit of a joke. I wish I could say that this meant I laughed a lot but, if I did, it was through gritted teeth. Jean Cocteau's Arthurian drama is certainly playful, at times an almost pantomime pastiche of medieval romance, but it is also a frightening dystopia. Unfortunately, in the hands of Hannah Mayer and Alex Wong, highs and lows alike were flattened into uneasy laughter.

The set conjured up memories of second-rate hotel lobbies, with fleur-de-lis carpeting and conference room chairs, but with the strange addition of some hanging fruit in an interesting (if a little irrelevant) nod to surrealism. The play failed to get much more convincing. Over the course of three acts, Camelot is thrown deeper into

confusion as Merlin (Daniel Binham), its Rasputin-like enchanter, employs his familiar, Ginnifer, to impersonate the castle's inhabitants. Thus, in turn, Ginnifer must be played by the actors playing Gawain, Guinevere and Galahad. On the whole this was achieved with surprising clarity and consistency, remaining, against the odds, one of the least confusing aspects of a largely unconvincing performance.

There were, however, flashes of promise. These were offered mainly by Amanda Kay, as Guinevere, whose oscillations between pious lover and possessed seductress provided a lynch-pin for the rest of the performance, which sagged as the other lead roles failed to deliver. Brendan Laing's childlike Arthur provided some light relief early

on in his role as the bumbling dupe, although his performance, like most, fell on the wooden side of earnest.

The play's final scene was representative of much of the production: undermined by the heavy air of suppressed laughter from audience and cast alike. As the inhabitants of Camelot reawoke to both the beauty and cruelty of reality, what could have been, and so nearly was, a poignant moment was yet again flooded: this time, improbably, by a chorus of chirping elves. James Wakerley's haunting last lines almost salvaged this, but too late. Overall, opportunities for real humour were missed as nearly every stab at sincerity ended in laughter from those on and off the stage. After almost three hours, perhaps the joke was on me. Alice Newell-Hanson



TIM JOHNS

**FIRST NIGHT THEATRE REVIEWS ARE PUBLISHED ONLINE AT VARSITY.CO.UK/REVIEWS**

★ Company should be ashamed   ★★ Serviceable elements, but little overall success   ★★★ Very good show spoilt by a few weak moments  
★★★★ Level of success outweighs its few faults   ★★★★★ Among the highlights of the term   ★★★★★★ One of the best you'll see at Cambridge

**Jesus Smoker**

*Coleridge Room (above Jesus Bar), Friday 25th October*

**Various Stand-Ups**

★★★★★

In the packed Coleridge room above Jesus Bar last Friday, six student comedians tackled everything from the American Election to the Corpus Clock, all to the delight of the fresher-strong audience.

Lucien Young warmed up the crowd with a set about the perils of chatting up girls who like Margaret Thatcher ("My dick is a socialist too"). Jacob Shepherd's set was a confection of culinary delights as he tackled topics ranging from duck to humorous. Contemplating the possibilities of a post-Nuclear Cambridge, Shepherd theorised that only humans would survive, possibly re-forming into some ferocious pureed monster. He had the crowd eating out of his hand, especially impressive for new-comer. Will Hensher followed wearing a fetching pink silk scarf and bemoaning the dangers of the 'manly

police'. Sadly the amount of people in the room and the noise made it occasionally hard to hear Hensher's surreal story of being pursued through the streets because of his desire to ride to Persia on a donkey. Harry Winstanley (right) delivered a virtuoso if somewhat fast and garbled set, taking in everything from the conflict between Russia and Georgia and the rest of the world's reaction ("Meh"), to the economic collapse, to the Apocalypse, which will probably happen while God is checking his emails. Brilliant stuff.

Organiser James Moran read a poem to Lydia, a salesgirl at Sainsbury's that I will be keeping my eyes open for. Liam Williams produced slightly more dark and unsettling social observation. Targeting typical fresher's week japes he pointed out that at fancy dress events, "No matter what the theme is,

some girls always come as slags". Ed Kiely rounded off the stand-up with a set about anti-state school prejudices in Cambridge ("Everyone always thinks because I went to comprehensive school I must come from Sheffield"). Actually he grew up in Suffolk choosing between taking drugs and "watching farm animals die slowly." The weakest point in the night was unfortunately the last sketch, where James Moran played a Jeremy Kyle-like megalomaniac psychoanalyst systematically destroying his patient Lucien Young. It was a little predictable given the high standard of the night. Overall, a good start to what will hopefully be a great year of smokers.

*Decca Muldowney*

*The next smoker is on Thursday November 6.*



Harry Winstanley

**Analysis**



**Week 4: J.M. Barrie (1860-1937)**

"It is a lovely lake, and there is a drowned forest at the bottom of it...they say that at night there are also drowned stars in it."

Despite publishing exclusively novels and plays, it is the poetic quality of J.M. Barrie's writing that is most captivating. Open any page of the *Peter Pan* script and you will find stage directions, pages long, indirectly sketching characters and scenes in a way that often renders them completely un-actable. There is even the line: John: [No, he doesn't say it]. This creates, in all Barrie's works, a disorientating blurring of fantasy and reality so that you are never sure what is said, what is meant, and what we are to believe.

Captain Hook did not appear in the first draft of the play at all. The 'villain of the story' according to one of Barrie's notebooks was 'Peter Pan - a daemon boy'. Hook only emerged from a necessity to have a scene in front of the curtain in order to give the stagehands time to change the set. The clear lack of innocence intended for Peter's character is also clear from Barrie's complaint about the character's statue in Kensington Gardens that "it doesn't show the devil in Peter."

In *The Little White Bird*, the novel in which Peter Pan first appeared, there is a fascinating, if somewhat disturbing, depiction of the protagonist's almost obsessive love: he clearly yearns for a child of his own - even invents a pretend son called Timothy - but the relationship between the man and the boy is certainly uncomfortable for the modern reader.

Barrie's apparent ease at making friends with children has led to accusations of paedophilia or repressed paedophilia, but no evidence has been found to suggest this. Others have concluded that Barrie was asexual: his marriage to actress Mary Ansell was believed to be unconsummated. When they returned to London after their honeymoon, Barrie began his novel *Tommie and Grizel* in which Tommie complains he cannot love a woman as he should: "Boys cannot love.... He gave her all his affection, but his passion, like an outlaw, had ever to hunt alone."

Whatever the truth - a dangerous word when it comes to Barrie - questions of sexuality, obsession, misunderstanding and inadequacy dominate Barrie's work. Certainly George Bernard Shaw's comment about the play, once described as 'that terrible masterpiece', rings true: it may be "entertainment for children but really a play for grown-up people." *Jo Harries*

*Jo directs Peter Pan at the ADC, from Tues November 4 to Saturday 8, with matinees on Thurs and Sat. Evening performances starts at 7.45pm. Tickets £6-7 from adctheatre.com.*



**The Pillowman by Martin McDonagh**

*ADC, October 28 - November 1*

*Dir. Abigail Rokison; FallOut Theatre*

★★★★★

Emerging into the coldness of the snow-darker-earlier Cambridge night, I couldn't help but feel that *The Pillowman* was a perfectly appropriate play for this season. And FallOut Theatre have given Martin McDonagh's play the necessary darkness to fully exploit its blackly comic qualities.

Set in a totalitarian dictatorship, where death and murder seem to be common currency, the play follows an investigation into the supposed links between a spate of recent child murders and the particularly gruesome stories of writer Katurian (Patrick Warner), 399 of the 400 of which feature drastic violence. The police inspectors conducting this enquiry, Ariel (Tom Attenborough - left, above) and Tupolski (David Brown), engage in the classic good cop/bad cop (though only just, bad cop/bad cop may be more suitable), lending a sardonic

sense of humour to the proceedings, in the bleakest of all settings.

Warner imbues his Katurian with a wonderful earnestness, that gradually slips into horror, as both he and the audience begin to realise the true repulsiveness of his tales. While we may be initially taken in by his supposed innocence, the production leads us to questions about the moral responsibility of writers, particularly those who state their writing "just comes out this way". This statement is undermined by stories like 'The Little Apple Men', where a little girl is killed by tiny men fashioned out of apples, though containing razor blades. Katurian's sense of culpability is put into dramatic relief in an especially well-acted scene where the horror of the events related by his brother Michal (Jack Monaghan) become a little too real for the writer.

Special mention should go to Mona-

ghan for his portrayal of Michal, his sweet, seemingly innocent comments delivered with perfect timing. Brown, also, lends Tropolski's caustic dialogue the necessary bite, which elicited enthusiastic laughter from the ADC audience, notably after a lengthy reprimand to partner Ariel which culminated in "thanks babe!" The production made inventive use of the story-like imagery of Katurian's childhood narratives. His caricature-like parents (Anna Harpin and Tom Barbour) give a comic fairytale spark to the performance, providing a counterpoint to the visceral violence of the contents of their tales.

McDonagh's play, which raises themes of literature's true effects, as well as elements of tragedy revealed at the play's end, is bleak and sparse but with interludes of vital humour. Catch it while you can. *Laurie Tuffrey*

**Little Shop of Horrors by Alan Menken and Howard Ashman**

*Robinson Theatre, Hills Road, October 29 - November 1*

*Dir. Suzanne Emerson; Festival Players*

★★★★★

The hairstyles were spot on, the accents wonderfully clichéd and the cast inspiringly enthusiastic. With these ingredients, Suzanne Emerson's production of *Little Shop of Horrors* could never go far wrong. The popular cult musical follows the fortunes of Seymour and his human-devouring, insatiably hungry, hip-hopping plant, Audrey II - 'catchy name, I like it'. After acquiring this 'strange and interesting' plant, Seymour is catapulted to fame but the plant proves to be more than a little demanding and Seymour has to make some difficult choices. Since its release as a low-budget B-movie in the 1960s, 'Little Shop of Horrors' has gained a strong cult following.

In this, the festival players' version, Thomas O'Connor as Seymour strikes

the right nervously nerdy note and Davinia Denham's Audrey is pitched at just the right level of cliché. The three girls, Ronnette, Chiffon and Crystal (Lea Chambers, Rachel Bye and Melody White), provide polished and witty performances in their role as chorus and narrator and Mark Bak's sadistic dentist, Orin, is pleasingly demonic and melodramatic. The stage belongs, however, to the plant. Emerson's production sees the plant encroaching onto more and more of the set while Oliver Fisher (as the plant itself) sits enthroned in tendrils in the centre of a giant pot. Each time a character is devoured, Fisher's plant contraption gives birth to a new shoot - with appropriately grotesque sound effects. Fisher writhes, gestures and sings with gusto, clearly revelling in such a



deliciously outrageous part.

The performance had its weaknesses but few that weren't attributable to first-night jitters. In this production, Suzanne Emerson has created a light-hearted, competent and highly enjoyable amateur performance of a hilarious show. It may

not live up to the original 1960s film, or the 1980s remake, but it is an enthusiastic and visually effective tribute to Charles B Griffiths' work. This show is worth a trip - if only to catch a glimpse of the 'mean green mother from outer space' for yourself. *Lizzie Davis*

**HALLOWEEN ADVENTURE (STARTS ON PAGE 11):** 'Oh,' says the voice. 'Well not to worry then. Have a good night.' The party goes without a hitch, although you remember you never asked for a Bloody Mary in the first place and would have much preferred a beer. Still, beggars can't be choosers. And that's what you point out to the Big Issue guy you pass on the way home when he says he didn't choose to be homeless.

## Films Every Right-Minded Person Should See



**Week 4:**  
*Cry, the Beloved Country* (1995)

The inspiring majesty of the South African landscape, captured with stunning cinematography, provides a dramatic backdrop for a film of equal power and beauty. Based on the 1948 book by Alan Paton, it expresses the pain and fear of South Africans just before the imposition of apartheid law. Trapped between the cruelty of the cities, repression by the whites and the hostility of barren farmland, the sorrow of the black people is felt acutely. It throws into sharp relief the breakdown of respect between the two social classes which led to the instigation of apartheid. The implications of that social division are still felt throughout Africa.

The film tells of Stephen Kumalo, a black pastor, who searches for his family in the city and learns that his son is accused of murder. The dead man is Arthur Jarvis, son of James Jarvis, Kumalo's white neighbour. The stories of two fathers become entwined as both seek to understand their children, and to fight back against the injustice their families have suffered. Their personal struggle is representative of the tensions in the country: the black community trying to escape the binding grasp of prejudice and to find a new self-identity, the white society balanced between incomprehension, anger and compassion. These traits are encapsulated in the passions and actions of the two grieving men as their search for answers grips the viewer until the dénouement.

Not all the themes are dark, however. Repentance and reconciliation between the spotlighted families promise hope for the larger communities of the country. Small acts of human kindness, irrespective of race, break through established cultural barriers.

While Kumalo calls the country to "cry for the unborn child which is the inheritor of our fear," we can now see that the result of a continuous campaign by the blacks to regain their humanity has allowed the child to be delivered with a hope for the future.

Whilst the film gives a greater understanding of one of the most important periods in modern history, it is not without relevance for today. In light of the recent unrest in the capital, the fear that "one day when [the whites] are turned to loving, they will find that [the blacks] are turned to hating" is a warning South Africa would do well to heed.

Giles Colclough

# ART AND CLASSICAL

## The Notebook Project

Michaelhouse Centre, Trinity Street, October 20 - November 1

Various Artists

★★★★★

Inside Marianne Morris' notebook there is the corpse of a tiny dead mammal sewn onto the page. I looked at it for ages, even stroked its fur, but still have no idea what is it. A mouse perhaps? Moore, current holder of the Harper-Wood studentship for creative writing at St John's is one of twenty-one artists, writers, performers, designers and academics commissioned to keep a notebook for one month as part of the Cambridge Festival of Ideas. The books are suspended from the walls of the warm and welcoming Michaelhouse gallery for anyone to flick through.

The participants were allowed to do whatever they wanted with their notebooks and the results are mixed. DJ Emma Sutton's notebook documents her travels around the country, playlists made by the Mystery Jets and her frequent desire to do Bikram Yoga. On the

other hand, David Smith's is filled with sketches of slightly different geometrical shapes and patterns as he tries to find the perfect structure for his next work.

What is the appeal of reading someone else's personal scribbles? (Or, in the case of author Rob McFarlane, being unable to decipher illegible handwriting?) The answer is that often it is not very interesting. Reading the notebooks in this exhibition is not like stumbling across shocking secrets in your little sister's diary because the participants know that what they are writing will be read by the public, and so often seem either too self-conscious or too obscure. Only when the audience has been forgotten are the books truly fascinating. Artist Ben Kelly's notebook documents his work process as he researches a project with Manchester City Football club. He starts with printed images of the grounds

and the fans and then develops these into beautiful loose ink drawings, finally adding colour and texture. Barry Phipps, a Fellow of Churchill and Interdisciplinary Fellow at Kettle's Yard has produced a notebook exploding with a messy, colourful collage of postcards, art history theory, famous works and neon post-its.

But Marianne Morris' notebook remains my favourite. Pages of her real notes are sewn onto the regulation book with scratchy ink sketches, delicate collages and a wealth of poetry. Morris' book manages to be at once obviously personal and yet totally absorbing.

If you find yourself walking down a freezing Trinity Street in the next few days, dip into the Michaelhouse Centre. You might find what we are always looking for when we read someone else's personal jottings, a little bit of ourselves. **Decca Muldowney**



A segment of Megan Conway's Notebook



## Arnold, Walton, Holst

West Road Concert Hall, Monday 27th October

Cond. Peter Stark; CUMS 1; Rosie Ventris (viola)

★★★★★

After being interrupted by the custodian of the music department asking those without seats to leave the hall, just as the lights had gone down and Peter Stark had raised his baton, CUMS' season got under way with Arnold's rousing *Peterloo Overture*. The low opening string anthem of the protestors on St Peter's Field had a suitably uneasy quality to it, slowly drowned out by the mass ranks of the cavalry's percussion. As the battle between protest and authority died down, the opening theme returned with a glorious singing tone in the strings and brass, showing that the ideals of the marchers had not been dampened.

The signs were good for Holst's *The Planets*. After a tentative opening, 'Mars' built into a powerful climax, gaining menace in the strings and bite in the

brass, as war did its worst. After this, however, highlights were few and far between. 'Venus' sounded laboured as the woodwind and harps struggled to keep their rocking rhythms in time: occasionally, it was like they were watching different conductors. In 'Mercury', the strings coped with their scurrying passages remarkably well, but again the sectional work was scrappy. Despite a wonderfully magisterial central hymn, the outer sections of 'Jupiter' lacked the playful dancing qualities required. Brassy climax aside, the march of 'Saturn' was faltering in the extreme: instead of the nobility of old age, I got the sense of a tottery, slightly blind old gentleman feeling his way to the bedroom for a good nap. Incidentally, a few members of the sell-out audience took the opportunity to catch up on some sleep themselves.

The Debussian beauty of 'Neptune' came across better, the off-stage chorus fading away ethereally, but again the orchestra struggled to stay together.

Between Arnold and Holst, Rosie Ventris, the first of CUMS' Concerto Competition winners, took to the stage with Walton's *Viola Concerto*. This is not an easy work to get to grips with, for soloist or audience, but Ventris managed to project her viola over the orchestra most of the time. Her double-stopping in particular worked well, with two distinct cantabile lines emerging. The high-energy scherzo was strongly characterised, with its jazzy cross-rhythms often surprising the listener. The orchestra dealt with the difficult finale with impressive aplomb. What a pity the same could not be said for the Holst that followed. **David Allen**

## Stravinsky, Shostakovich

West Road Concert Hall, Sunday 26th October

Cond. Howard Williams; CUCO; Ilona Domnich (Soprano); Matthew Rose (Bass)

★★★★★

A programme of Stravinsky's *Pulcinella Suite* and Shostakovich's bleak *Symphony No. 14* is not exactly populist. CUCO, however, deserve much larger audiences than the one they got on Sunday night: the hall was not even half full. CUCO were consistently the best student orchestra, pound-for-pound, in Cambridge last year. On the evidence of this concert, despite massive personnel changes, they are only going to improve.

Yet the first bars of the Stravinsky did not inspire confidence. The strings were hesitant, cautious, but it turned out just to be nerves, for even by the end of the opening Sinfonia they had improved markedly. Despite some incoherence in the pianissimo sections, this was a performance full of wit, particularly in the brass in the Vivo section, and in the in-

terplay between individual instruments. Special mention must go to the wind section for their Gavotte, in particular the flute of Harry Winstanley and the oboe of Peter Facer, who was wonderful when replacing the singing role of the full ballet in the Serenata.

Humorous is one thing that the Shostakovich was not. His *Symphony No. 14* sets eleven poems which pontificate on death to music that shuns memorable tunes. There is more than a hint of dedicatee Benjamin Britten's writing to the opening, though the exposed strings were timid to start, as in the Stravinsky. With the second song, 'Malagueña', came more confidence, certainly needed for its manically difficult violin work. The fourth song, 'The Suicide', soprano Ilona Domnich's best moment, tells of three lil-

ies adorning a grave: the loneliness of the dead occupier is accompanied by haunting melodies on solo cello, harrowingly played by David Foster. Rose, however, was the star of the show, particularly in the eighth and ninth songs, marvelously accompanied by raging strings in the eighth and a ravishing quartet of cellos, which just about managed to stay in tune, in the ninth song, 'To Delvig'. The work ends in total bleakness, which makes it hard to believe that Shostakovich intended this symphony to show how beautiful life really is.

The odd mistake aside, CUCO coped wonderfully well under stand-in conductor Howard Williams. Their next program of Beethoven, Mozart and Mendelssohn ought to be spellbinding. **David Allen**



Howard Williams

# FILM AND MUSIC

## Ghost Town

Dir. David Koepf

Starring: Ricky Gervais, Greg Kinnear, Alan Ruck, Téa Leoni

★★★★★

Sitting in the back row of the cinema on Tuesday I was in a good position to see those people who walked out of *Ghost Town*. At first it was two, and then a third soon followed. Whilst often viewers walking out on a film is a bad sign, on this occasion it was the disgruntled customers who made the wrong decision. *Ghost Town* may start at a sluggish pace, but it does get there in the end.

It takes a good half hour to fully outline the basic premise of the film, which is not complex and could have been done in a more concise manner: we meet Gervais as Dr Bertram Pincus, a miserable sod of a dentist whose daily routine involves little more than his work and his return to his apartment, to be met by folded pyjamas on the bed and the daily crossword – of course, interspersed

with moments of rudeness to others, bordering on Schadenfreude. His 7-minute death on the colonoscopy table enables him to see ghosts, and one specifically chooses to harass him: Greg Kinnear as Frank Herlihy, a cheating husband who wants Gervais to prevent his widow from remarrying a man, who he claims is after her for her money. This is no Hamlet – Gervais does not find himself in existential crisis by the appearances of the dead, charging him with their missions. Instead he gets aggravated by their pestering.

Don't expect many laugh-out-loud moments, but unsurprisingly Gervais is at his funniest when he slips into David Brent mode: the awkward humour of his dental jokes or the label hanging out the back of his new shirt. The film is advertised as a

comedy, and you definitely leave the cinema feeling entertained. However, *Ghost Town's* greatest success is that, at moments, it transcends the purely amusing aims of the comedy genre and provides touching insights into Gervais' character. The irony is that before Gervais is able to see ghosts, his character is effectively a ghost in the world; acting in isolation without the ability to fully engage with others.

This is not an especially memorable film, but the Gervais/Leoni dynamic works, and we see real change and development in Gervais' character by the end. As we reach the film's climax there are even some genuinely poignant moments that are offset nicely by the earlier moments of light comedy. It takes a while to get there, but is definitely one to be enjoyed.

Daniel Isenberg



## Goldfrapp Cambridge Corn Exchange Thursday 23rd October

★★★★★

Fresh from a BBC Electric Proms gig the previous night, Goldfrapp kicked off the UK leg of their 'Seventh Tree Tour' in spectacular fashion in Cambridge last Thursday. The Corn Exchange returned to its village fete roots for one night only with a stage draped in a woven backdrop, two harps and a microphone stand with added flowers and corn attached. Even the merchandise stand was selling tea towels adorned with specially designed Goldfrapp owls, amongst the standard concert fare.

Three years ago it would have seemed impossible to imagine Goldfrapp, an act so firmly rooted in seductive electro pop, adopting an ethereal, folk-like sound, yet February's *Seventh Tree* marked a pleasant shift in direction. Lead single 'A&E' was an early highlight with Alison's powerfully emotive voice taking precedence to the joy of the sold

out crowd. Barefoot in a pink shawl and dress, she only managed to muster up a shy "Cheers" at the end of each song, or a nervous chuckle following the obligatory heckle from a male admirer. Nevertheless, her enigmatic nature makes for a mesmerising stage presence and the absence of clichéd audience interaction is quite refreshing.

The slow burning 'Little Bird' began as a soothing acoustic ballad before exploding into an epic whirlwind of falsettos, synths and guitars, accompanied by a stunning kaleidoscopic light show. 'Happiness' was also a stand out moment, with its lilting uplifting chorus steering the show in a more upbeat direction after a stripped-down and occasionally slow-paced first half.

In fact, it wasn't until the opening keyboard riff of 'Oh La La' that the crowd finally began to thaw, with Alison

returning to her flirtatious glam rock persona, despite her rustic clown costume. As great as the new tracks are, it is the vibrant and sensuous nature of songs from *Supernature* and *Black Cherry* that have the greatest impact live. The industrial squelch of 'Train' complete with pulsating synchronised psychedelic visuals was boosted by Alison bringing out a Theremin to add further electronic distortion to the frivolities.

A fittingly exhilarating encore of 'Strict Machine' brought the highly varied gig to a crashing end. Alison and musical partner Will Gregory know how to take risks and it is this constant re-invention and genre shattering that makes Goldfrapp one of the most exciting English acts of the 21st century. However, as the closing track hinted, they are slightly more "Wonderful Electric" than acoustic. Paul Smith



## Just a Souvenir

Squarepusher

Pias UK; Out Now

★★★★★

Having listened to almost all of Tom Jenkinson's output over the years, I think I can safely call the man a genius; but listening to him describe what he was imagining when he wrote this album, suggests a crossing of the fine line over into the territory of absolute insanity.

In the liner notes of *Just a Souvenir* he includes a description of a daydream, which is based around a fantastic concert where a super-group who have access to all sorts of strange equipment such as time-travelling guitars are performing during an electric storm. Tom tries to recreate the sound of this concert on this album in order to solidify his memory of the event, and you would be surprised at how much the music he has made really could have been played that night. This

album is ridiculous.

Even though Squarepusher moved away from his mentalist Drill'n'Bass roots a few albums ago, it is those years of fucked-up bleeps and hyperbreaking for which he is most remembered (probably because of all the mental retardation that those, his first albums, caused). But some years ago now Mr Jenkinson picked up a Bass guitar, got a Japanese Bass Master in an Osaka basement to attach a couple of extra strings to it: the result, an absolute monster. However, instead of going the extra mile and paying those extra 700 Yen to give it a life of its own, he underwent the painstaking process of installing mechanical knuckles into each finger of his right hand. This now allows Tom (for I can't imagine any other way) to play the Bass with

unparalleled speed and dexterity.

And it is a showcase of this supreme talent that this album provides. But instead of settling for a Bass excursion, Tom has recorded some crisp live drums which hark back to the old days of his Amen-break over-usage, as well as layers of soaring synths that constantly remind the listener of the epic show he is recalling. Some of the songs may seem like they could be intimidating, especially coming from a bearded man who typically produced many of his songs in his bedroom, but even the racing Space Rock and Free-Jazz-like improvisations fit comfortably into this ambitious project which marks yet another step in Squarepusher's ever-changing repertoire of styles.

So Tom, I hope that in producing this



masterpiece, you now have the images of the glowing coathanger as well as the Monopoly-playing Cro-Magnon firmly ingrained in your mind, for that was your intention wasn't it? Andrew Spyrou

## Take Five Scary Culture



## Five of the Best

### Malcolm Marshall

The West-Indian pace-man terrorised batsmen the world over during the 1980s. England debutant Andy Lloyd, above, was hospitalised in the pictured encounter (from 1984), and never played cricket again - leaving him as the only test cricketer never to have been dismissed.

### The Pillowman by Martin McDonagh

This tale of the coincidence between an author's tales and a series of murders provides truly chilling theatre. Watch it this week at the ADC - and see pg 21 for our review.

### Saw 1 (2004)

A graphic depiction of one man's quest to enliven his victims' lives by... making them saw their own legs off.

### Saki's Short Stories

Hector Hugh Munro, who wrote under the name 'Saki', penned several unsettling tales, mostly about young boys' revenge on their aunts.

### Clowns

I know I'm not alone in this fear. Hugo Gye, our News Editor, saw me writing this; he's currently rocking in a foetal position on the floor, whimpering quietly while battling with characters from his infantile birthday parties.

## Five of the Worst

### Scary Spice

The names ascribed to the Spice Girls aren't going to win prizes for inventive wit. Least of all this one. She's got big hair. Ha ha. Scary. Of course.

### Halloween

This effervescent festival sits uneasily between tongue-in-cheek humour and genuine fear. The resulting mis-mash is a bit of a nothing, really.

### George Bush

"Children, the world is a scary place. So leave it to us and we'll make it all better." So runs the logic of American foreign policy. Our fear isn't invoked in the way they'd like, though.

### When a Stranger Calls (2006)

For a film whose tag-line is 'Evil Hits Home', the lack of scariness is a problem. Especially when they catch the chap making the "scary" phone-calls.

### Resident Evil (2002)

In among occasional dollops of terror, Paul WS Anderson can't resist his fair-share of cliché. Epitomised by the incessant parade of zombies jumping through the membrane walls. Monotonous terror at its best.

## Competition adc theatre

Next week's topic is *Sportsmen in Culture*: send your worst and best to reviews@varsity.co.uk by midday on Monday, and you could win a pair of first-night tickets to the ADC mainshow.

SHE'S DRESSED TO KILL!

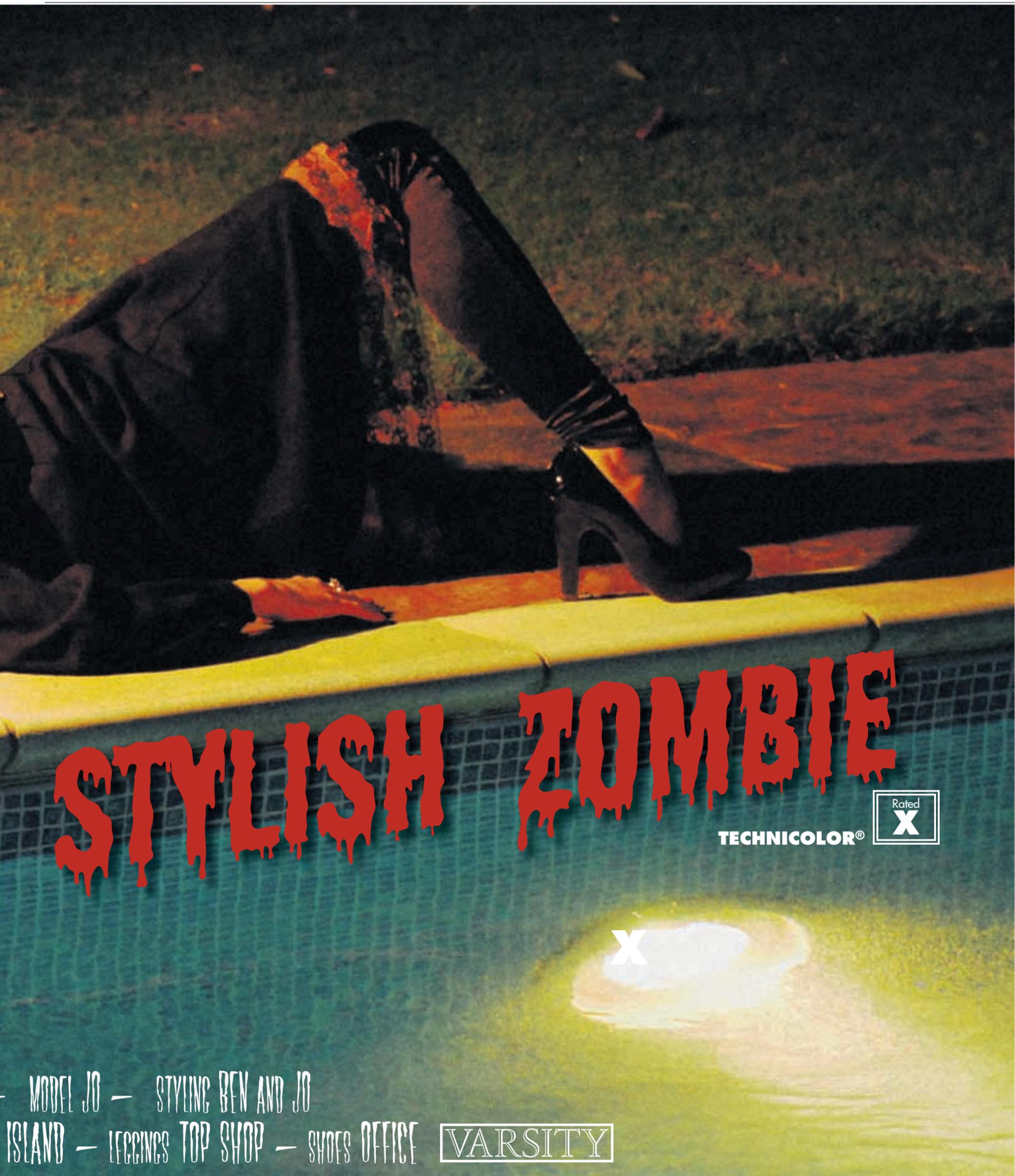
ATTACK OF THE DEAD

STARRING PHOTOGRAPHER JAMIE DALTRY —

DRESS AND PETTICOAT ARK VINTAGE — BELT RIVER



**HALLOWEEN ADVENTURE (STARTS ON PAGE 11):** 'Alright then,' says the ringleader. 'I'll give you a lifetime supply of chocolate.' You're about to point out that this is more of a treat, if anything, when the whipper-snapper hands you a single mushed up Mars Bar. 'This isn't a lifetime's supply of chocolate!' you complain. Then the scoundrel shoots you dead. And takes the Mars Bar back.



# STYLISH ZOMBIE

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*HALLOWEEN ADVENTURE (STARTS ON PAGE 11): There's a moment of confusion, because you thought they were going to give you a treat. But actually you're giving them a treat. forgot that the game works with you having to give them the treat rather than vice versa. Thinking about it, trick or treating isn't much fun at all. This seems a bit like terrorism, but you don't negotiate with terrorists, so you just chuck them a pack of Haribo and tell them to be on their way.*

## Great Works Of Art In Cambridge

### #14: The Adoration of the Magi by Rubens

#### King's College Chapel

King's – 1968. As students were revolting on the streets of Paris, another revolution was happening in Cambridge. A painting was hung in King's College Chapel – one of most expensive of its time, given to the College on the condition that it would be displayed to the public. It took no less than seven years to radically lower the level of the high altar (where, Halloween beckons, lay fifteenth-century fellows' coffins) and to remove a mish-mash of wood panelling, in order to accommodate the Rubens at the east end. The painting was set in a simple frame under the east window, in front of the bare stone wall, thus eliminating any artifices which might distract from the pure beauty of the ensemble. Needless to say, that created quite a stir. It still does. Some even call for it to be sold. But, I want to ask them, why not preserve what is probably the most extraordinary painting in Cambridge?

Rubens painted *The Adoration of the Magi* in 1633-34 for the convent of the White Nuns at Louvain in Belgium. The pay was not high and so, instead of producing the work aided by his numerous workshop assistants in Antwerp, Rubens is said to have produced

the work on site in a week. Paradoxically, it is because the work had to be produced cheaply that it is extraordinary. It was under restricted conditions that Rubens was able to express his true genius. One night last Easter, I stood at the high altar, only a few centimetres away from the panel. As I got closer to the painted surface, the brushstrokes became more abstract, and I realized to my astonishment that they had all been executed with an extremely thick brush. As pigments were expensive at the time, Rubens used them sparingly, but not restricting their variety. His virtuoso play between opacity and transparency of pigments can be seen in his use of opaque vermilion and lead whites on the clothes of the old king contrasting with the ethereal lake red and pearly tones of the Virgin's garment. Not a single drop of paint was misused. Each large stroke fits exactly in place to create the overall picture, giving the painting an incredible dynamism which is also reflected into the composition. The three Magi create a wave of colour arching and thrusting towards Christ who appears frail but dominant at the centre of the composition. *Julien Domercq*



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## The Day That Changed My World



### Week 4: I gave everything up for an interview in Cambridge

Failure was the defining feature of my academic record – until it drove me to drop out of uni for an interview in Cambridge.

I went to a state school where working wasn't really the done thing; lots of my ex-classmates are either pregnant, or in jail. There was a group called 'gifted and talented', for students who might go to Oxford or Cambridge, but I wasn't allowed in. Apparently I wasn't 'Oxbridge material'. After getting rubbish GCSEs, I drifted into my A-levels and failed them, twice, just for good measure.

Then I got a singing teacher who'd studied at Girton, and she told me I could do better if I tried harder. So I did. I sat in my room for nine months and taught myself four A-levels. I didn't get into Cambridge, but was accepted by Nottingham, where I started in 2006.

I was underwhelmed to say the least. I'd worked so hard to get there, but the course was a joke and all anyone cared about was clubbing. I lost interest, and in February of my first year, failed another exam. I'd had enough: all I'd ever wanted was Cambridge. I called up random Colleges to see if I could convince them to let me re-apply in October. Most people dismissed me immediately, but eventually someone said yes. In fact, he offered me an interview the following week, with one twist: I had to drop out of Nottingham first.

It was a pretty big decision; one that changed everything. It took a lot of courage, since I had nothing to fall back on and was unlikely to get in. Although I knew I was good enough, I'm not exactly a great candidate on paper. But there was never any doubt; I'd rather get catastrophically lost than keep to a path of mediocrity. It was exhilarating – I loved the risk. So I dropped out, had an interview, and three weeks later got the e-mail: I'd been accepted. Unbelievable. For six months I expected another message retracting the offer, but it never came.

Taking that decision and getting in negated everything that had gone wrong before; I'm really happy now. Last year was the best of my life – so far. In the future I want to be a novelist. It's what I already do: I'm always searching for stuff that's a bit different, that'll make a good story.

Contributor: *Beth Williams*  
Interview and article by *Moya Sarner*.

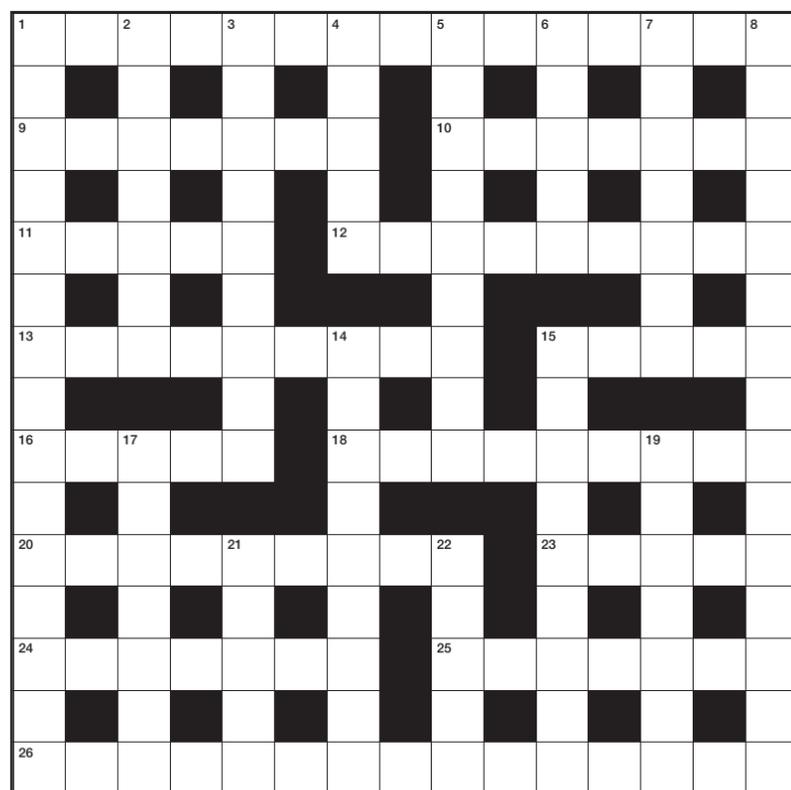
Would you like to be interviewed for this column? Please contact Moya Sarner (mts31)

# Games & puzzles



## Varsity Crossword

no. 490



### Across

- 1 This is one angry term for challenging the brain (9,6)
- 9 To utter an earlier demand? (7)
- 10 Mice run oddly on numbers (7)
- 11 To tempt, as admitted to golf supporter (5)
- 12 To repair strange paths in a place to relax (6,3)

- 13 Record two types of cassette (9)
- 15 Long sleep interrupted by minute punctuation mark (5)
- 16 Was it overlapping under the stomach? (5)
- 18 Saint, icon, impossibly great conductor (9)
- 20 Encroached upon in Fred, grasping

- ring (9)
- 23 Holy man to earn, disheartenedly, an austere manner (5)
- 24 Is a partially belated Spanish name (7)
- 25 One is stuck in tar, mostly, after miner loses head, indicating a resistance to motion (7)
- 26 Water high as trek turns nasty, revealing ferocious sea-creature (5,5,5)

### Down

- 1 Imaginative prose is incoherent wittering I crave (8,7)
- 2 Alternatively, Richard loses his head twice where the apples grow (7)
- 3 Stoned at regular intervals (6-3)
- 4 Extra power, but absolutely nothing on the speedometer (5)
- 5 Heavy trousers a mystic returns after excretion (9)
- 6 Not found a thousand in tune, somehow (5)
- 7 Type of game involving no numbers? (4-3)
- 8 Measure out following out-of-tune Mexican alto! (11,4)
- 14 Sign a car chart? (9)
- 15 Without style, without an education? (9)
- 17 Blow up in apartment (English) (7)
- 19 I noticed tears containing a cold drink (4,3)
- 21 It holds upcoming writer: useless (5)
- 22 A man of science, I find that heads wander about aimlessly (5)

Set by Hisashi

## Sudoku

The object is to insert the numbers in the boxes to satisfy only one condition: each row, column and 3x3 box must contain the digits 1 through 9 exactly once.

6	2	7	9		4	5	1	8
	1	5				9	2	
	8	9	1		6	4	3	
4								2
	5	3	2		8	6	7	
	6	4				3	9	
8	3	1	4		9	2	5	7

## Hitori

Shade in the squares so that no number occurs more than once per row or column. Shaded squares may not be horizontally or vertically adjacent. Unshaded squares must form a single area.

2	2	5	6	4	1	3
6	7	4	3	7	5	7
5	7	2	5	6	1	7
6	5	6	7	3	2	4
1	2	4	5	3	6	3
7	1	3	1	2	2	5
3	4	4	2	5	7	6

### Last issue's solutions

3	8	7	6	4	1	2	9	5				
8	4	5	9	7	2	3	8	6	4			
1	3	5	1	3	2	6	5	9	8	1	3	7
2	8	9	3	7	3	4	1	6	5	8	9	7
4	1	5	2	8	9	6	7	3				
8	9	6	3	7	5	4	1	2				
5	2	3	1	6	7	9	4	6				
9	4	1	8	3	2	7	5	6				
8	1	7	8	6	7	9	5	4	3	2	1	7

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**Debbie Richards** – *Co-Founder and Director, Baker-Richards Consultancy*

**Justin Shreeve** – *Deputy Director, Human Resources, Sotheby's*

**Julia Tozer** – *Head of Education, Fitzwilliam Museum*



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## The Varsity Debate



# Obama or McCain?

With four days to go until the climax of the most expensive and significant election campaign ever, Varsity asks which candidate is best placed to save America.

## Obama

Julie Chan



*Obama is a better bet for improving international relations*

The world isn't doing too well right now. And neither is America. The next leader of the free world (actually, the US president leads some pretty un-free organizations at the moment) will need the guts to stick his neck out in order to solve problems at home and abroad.

America needs someone who can fix the economy, budget deficit, the healthcare system, the education system, its image, Iraq, Afghanistan and that little problem about the earth heating up. Basically, they need God. However, divine intervention doesn't seem very likely to happen anytime soon. So the next best choice is probably Barack Obama.

Yes, from over here, it may seem that Obama inspires irrational cult worship simply because of his media-savvy outlook. Yet a media-savvy president is exactly what American requires now. Bush has entrenched himself in the mould of a gun-slinging Texan cowboy that the world has very little regard for.

Never mind that Obama was educated at a university in the other Cambridge and is regularly accused of being elitist.

In person, he comes across as a pleasant, intelligent man. And unlike Bush or McCain, he is very capable of keeping his cool, as was seen in the latest presidential debate at Hofstra University.

Admittedly, he isn't the most experienced person around. But being able to gain favour with the media doesn't mean you don't have sound policies. Nixon was vice president before ascending the throne, but his experience didn't translate into integrity.

Besides, experienced or not, Obama definitely has one thing that McCain sorely lacks: a sound grasp of basic economics. You don't deal with a budget deficit (\$455 billion as of 14th October according to Reuters) by dramatically slashing taxes. Neither do you help matters by proposing to spend \$300 billion buying out troubled mortgages.

McCain will also never win the Nobel Prize for Peace by "reconsidering" his opposition to the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (something Obama openly supports). Or committing himself to fighting the insurgencies in Iraq and Afghanistan for as long as it takes. When US relations are at such a fragile state with the Islamic world, being determinedly belligerent only reinforces the anti-US stereotypes held by Islamists. He does propose solving humanitarian problems by creating a new organization called the "League of Democracies". Frankly

though, this sounds more like an organization that requires you to wear Spandex and your underwear over your tights rather than anything that can effectively deal with suffering in places like Darfur.

While McCain supporters would like to accuse Obama of being an idealistic superhero, Obama actually has quite a realistic approach to solving both American and world problems. For a start, he is proposing improving labour and environmental standards in trade agreements. This essentially kills two birds with a very practical stone: Obama is incentivising a global reduction in emissions as well as better protection for workers through the free market mechanism.

Furthermore, he's ready to help a neglected, undermined and underfunded UN by paying the over \$1 billion in arrears that the US owes. Not only will this allow the UN to step up its aid programs, it also helps to fix America's strained relationship with the global community after ignoring UN directives and unilaterally invading Iraq.

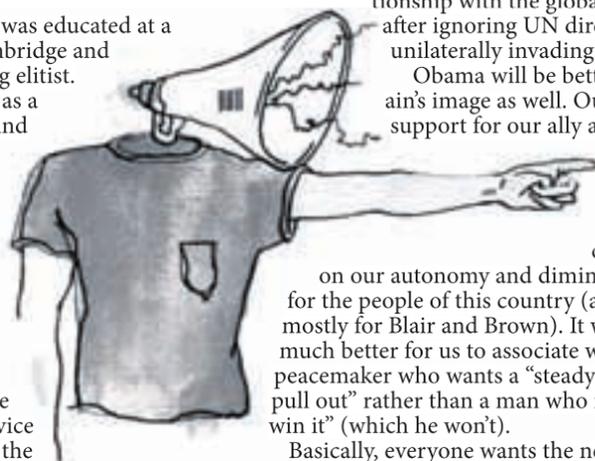
Obama will be better for Britain's image as well. Our inflexible support for our ally across the Atlantic, despite its wrongdoings, has cast doubts

on our autonomy and diminished respect for the people of this country (actually, mostly for Blair and Brown). It would be much better for us to associate with a realistic peacemaker who wants a "steady and careful pull out" rather than a man who is "in it to win it" (which he won't).

Basically, everyone wants the next president to listen to his advisers, his people and the rest of the world. In America, there is a tendency to trumpet your experience as some kind of assurance that the next decision you make is the right one. Even when the rest of the world is telling you to shove off.

Obama is showing himself to be more collaborative in his domestic and foreign policy aims. He intends to work with Latin America in immigration reform, negotiate nuclear disarmament treaties and increase American financial support for humanitarian missions in Africa. This is the kind of plan that you want to put out the fires that the US started.

And of course, with Obama's lofty rhetoric on hope and change, he might persuade the world that America's selfish, interventionist "democracy agenda" is finally at an end. Because we don't need another stubborn gunslinger, we need the dove who's brave enough to deliver the olive branch. If Obama gets elected this November, I might start believing in America again.



Hugo Gye



## McCain

*Only McCain has the experience required to change American politics*

On October 26, 1967, while serving as a bomber in the Vietnam War, John McCain was shot down and taken prisoner by the North Vietnamese army. He was badly mistreated and put into solitary confinement, where he would remain for two years. In July 1968, McCain's father was given authority over all US troops in Vietnam. At this point, McCain's captors offered to release him for propaganda purposes. He refused this offer, as accepting early release contravenes the Code of the US Fighting Force. From August 1968 to late 1969, he was severely tortured every two hours. This torture meant that he was, and remains, unable to lift his arms above his head. He was a prisoner of war until March 1973.

McCain knew the consequences of refusing early release. He deliberately took the decision to be beaten, tortured and separated from his young family, in order to safeguard his own honour and that of his country. He sacrificed himself so that he could do what he saw as his duty. Militarily speaking, McCain is a hero. He has shown an integrity of character and devotion to others which even the most ardent Obamaniacs could not claim for their idol.

The job of US President requires certain personal qualities and faculties of judgment, and McCain displayed those qualities in Vietnam. But these are not everything, and he is not the right man simply because he was tortured. He has been a congressman since 1983, and a member of the Senate since 1987. During that time, he has consistently stood up to his own Republican party and engaged in bipartisan legislative efforts. He has worked hard to regulate the election campaign finance system; he has devoted his career to eliminating absurd federal 'pork barrel' spending; he introduced a bill to combat climate change; he tried to integrate illegal immigrants into society; and – unsurprisingly – he has always opposed the use of torture. He was seriously considered as John Kerry's running mate in the 2004 election.

McCain has almost always made the right decisions. He saw the need to remove Saddam Hussein, but loudly criticised the conduct of the Iraq war, becoming a strong supporter of the troop 'surge' which has reduced and contained levels of violence. He will stand firm against Iran, and against a Russia which is drifting into fascism. He has always stood up against special-interest groups in Washington, and has fought to limit their influence.

The Senator has his weaknesses. The most

important is his selection of Sarah Palin as his running mate. While not as disastrous as his opponents make out – Palin would not have the same destructive effect as Bush and Cheney – this is a serious error of judgment. However, the office of Vice-President is almost meaningless, so this will only become an issue if McCain should die before 2012, which is possible but very far from inevitable, for he has shown little frailty during a vigorous campaign. McCain's other weakness, the fact that he is a member of a discredited Republican Party, may work in his favour: having a Republican at the head of the executive will balance out a heavily Democratic Congress.

America cannot trust Barack Obama – yet. He is clearly a good man, who wants the best for his country and (to a lesser extent) the world. He is intelligent and extremely eloquent. His message – "Yes we can" – has echoed around the world.

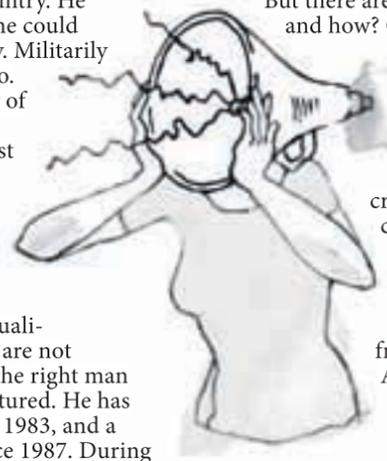
But there are two questions left answered: what, and how? Obama has shown little of his

political views since joining the Senate in 2005, after a middling career in Illinois politics. He has never authored a major piece of legislation, nor has he ever opposed the Democratic party line; his whole Senate career has been a preparation for a presidential run. The contrast with McCain's record is stark.

Moreover, there are reasons to be wary of Obama. He has frequently promised to prevent American jobs from going overseas: this makes a mockery of his promise to "spread the wealth", instead protecting the world's richest

country at the expense of its poorest. Obama broke his promise to take public funding for his campaign, which would have limited him to spending \$84m after his nomination. Instead, he has raised and spent at least twice that amount. This decision, which he has failed to justify, shows a cynicism and calculation far removed from his usual image. Obama's career has been short, and he has had little opportunity to screw up; given the chance, he has taken it.

I was born in America, and have the right to vote in New York. An instinctive Democrat, and a fierce opponent of the Bush regime, I cast my absentee ballot for John McCain. Although he has run a bad campaign, he is a great man, with an almost unimpeachable political record. His election is a gamble – a gamble that the McCain of old will show himself again, and that he will live out the four years – but it is not as much of a gamble as the election of a first-term Junior Senator. Obama means well, but he is not ready. McCain will change Washington.



## The Soapbox



Week 4:  
Jasmin Sandelson on  
American stereotypes

The stars and stripes are a visual cliché so ubiquitous that Ronald McDonald can only sigh wearily over his apple pie. The American flag incites both furious rage and passionate patriotism. Millions of American school-children pledge daily their allegiance to the flag and “the Republic for which it stands”. But is this really one republic and for what exactly does it stand?

Last year I spent six months voyaging 7,000 miles cross-country to find out. We drove through cities, swamps, canyons and deserts, but the geographical variety was dwarfed by the diversity of its inhabitants.

The miscellany that is the American people entertains and startles. Can this be one republic, where in New Orleans, the wealthy sample soft-shelled crabmeat steps from a flyover bridge sheltering hundreds of homeless? Or in Charleston, South Carolina, where a five-minute stroll along King Street takes you from antebellum mansions to the ghetto?

The plethora of lifestyles within a single neighbourhood is enough to shatter any prejudices about America. On a national level, stereotypes are doubly offset. For every obese child panting along the (surprise, surprise) Texan seafloor, there is a woman on the grassy midsections of LA dual carriageways star-jumping her way to waif-dom. And those Americans of, shall we say, questionable erudition (one Las Vegas native, upon hearing of our British roots, asked us where we learned “to speak English so good”) can seek solace in the fact that the USA possesses the sole educational institution to edge out our own *alma mater* in the global league tables, Harvard.

Amongst the ambiguity and incongruity, God might just be the unifying factor. From billboards declaring “Jesus healed my wife”, to bumper stickers decrying, “It’s not a choice, it’s a child”, the omnipresent spectre of the Church looms over Alabama and New York alike. God even wangled his way into the Pledge of Allegiance in 1952. Perhaps it’s a shame that Americans can’t live less for the guy up there and more for each other.

The dichotomies dividing America aren’t just amusing phenomena; everywhere people do live in racial enclaves, from Mississippi to California, where in certain areas advertisements are exclusively in Spanish. The North/South rift is still perceptible, and across the board these regional, racial or economic divisions engender hostility, fear and sometimes even hate. America might just be as prejudiced against itself as is anyone else.

Rob  
Stagg



## In defence of George W. Bush

The Left isn’t necessarily right

“Are you a right-on thinker?” goes the most tedious challenge on the Left. Yes? You must, then, be in favour of the following: an isolationist foreign policy, a compassionate social policy, some political truth-telling, and *change*. Support all those? Good. You have, my darlings, elected George Walker Bush circa 2000. For Bush made the running on all those things – not getting involved in foreign quarrels, ‘compassionate conservatism’, blunt phraseology, and being something of a Washington outsider. Dialectic can work against you, Marxists, even if only in retrospect. I know that comparisons between candidates are regularly lazy and unhelpful, but since the ‘New’ Left are intent on christening ‘their’ Barack Obama as some sort of dusky Messiah, it would be abject not to jump on in.

Two charges are frequently blasted at the outgoing president. He is, we are told, a cowboy. America’s leading political philosopher Maureen Dowd has taken to calling him ‘W’; we have discovered more degenerate nicknames. This was phrased rather differently in 2000, and has found itself recrudescing in 2008: Bush was an ‘outsider’, a ‘straight-talker’, someone who deviated from the presidential ‘norm’. And the blame for this little whirligig of spin can be tunnelled right down to: the Left, who have taken to encouraging difference without much distinction. In other words, if a candidate can claim to be one of ‘the people’, or to have a different hue

to his epidermis, or to possess irregular genitalia, s/he can be given the freest of passes. The ugly and bawling response to this trick being played against them is suggestive. When John McCain provided something of a rebranding of himself as a ‘change agent’ at the Republican National Convention, the Left howled that they had occupied such territory previously. They were the most established reformers. When Sarah Palin was prematurely inflicted on the campaign, the Left kept insisting that she was a traitor to her sex, an appalling caricature of femininity, and should generally pipe down and fall in line. A party that tantrumed every time President Clinton found himself answering questions about the taxpayer-funded smearing of women he’d debauched suddenly finds itself shrieking at Ms. Palin’s daughter for having unprotected sex above the age of consent when her mother wasn’t even being considered for the vice-presidency. The beef with Clinton was always that he didn’t stop even when he got into the White House. When this isn’t the Left talking point of the news cycle, it’s that Ms. Palin is so crass as to think that there were dinosaurs four thousand years ago, as though this is SUCH a *faux pas* and wouldn’t be tolerated around their dinner tables. It’s not exactly a ‘defining’ issue, is it?

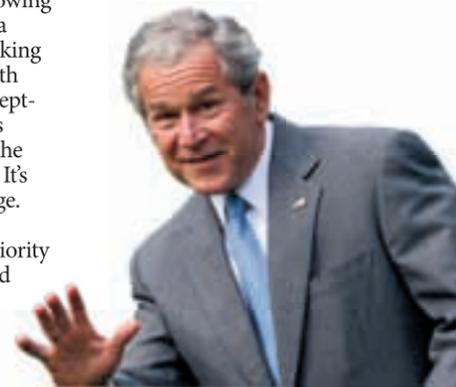
The second charge President Bush regularly faces is that of stupidity. Perhaps Clinton’s cerebral cruelty was preferable. Or maybe the Left couldn’t com-

prehend how this dumb young Texan was attracting Straussian philosophers (Paul Wolfowitz being the most notable) to work alongside him. Or, and this seems most plausible, the Left couldn’t identify an idealist when it blundered into one. Now that the Democrats stand only for herbivorousness and re-election and have shed any ideological ‘baggage’, they couldn’t understand why anyone would want to shift out of the Kissinger/Nixon ‘realist’ foreign policy school. An instructive question suffices. Trawl back to 2003 and the Left’s arguments against the Iraq War regularly focused on its potential to ‘destabilise the region’ – as though shaking up an autocratic and repressive collage of regimes was necessarily a bad thing.

Isaiah Berlin, amongst other philosophers, divided thinkers into foxes and hedgehogs – the foxes knowing many small things and the hedgehogs knowing one big thing. Bush circa 2003 was a hedgehog. He understood, in a blinking sort of fashion, that co-existence with dictatorship and fascism was unacceptable and ultimately impossible. This ‘neoconservative’ position is really the least conservative position in town. It’s all about – listen up, Barack – change. Those who oppose it are generally queasy about asserting moral superiority (over, say, the Taliban) and/or would rather not have heard any of this foreign-sounding babble in the first instance.

This doesn’t have to be the

‘defining’ issue of the Bush reign (Christopher Hitchens and Nick Cohen, take note), but it would be lumpen not to consider it an important one. Really, the Left’s charge vs. Bush is a conflation of Machiavellian evil and stupidity, which are difficult accusations to reconcile. For sure, Bush’s palpable glee at death (here one could cite the state execution cult he established in Texas) have a certain piggy-eyed coldness one only sees in the very stupid, but one should only find oneself making one criticism at a time. Those who confuse Hurricane Katrina (about which Bush could not constitutionally act quicker) and climate change (about which Bush has been indefensibly turgid) are liable to mix up anything provided it offers an inexpensive shot fired far too late. Diderot called it *l’esprit descalier*. If so, this is wit that belongs on the naughty step.



Katherine  
Waters



## Afghanistan’s ‘Forgotten War’

US and British forces agree on one thing at least: Nato’s incompetence

Afghans liken their government to thin soup; a weak substitute to the real thing. This week, events could lead many to the same conclusion about Nato in Afghanistan. Nato’s supreme military commander General John Craddock commented that “it’s wavering political will that impedes operational progress and brings into question the relevancy of the alliance in the twenty-first century”. These comments came just before a bloody Monday which left five children dead and two German soldiers wounded in a suicide attack on a military convoy, while in a separate incident, a British aid worker was shot on her way to work for allegedly spreading Christianity. It would seem that this is not the time for “wavering”.

The situation in Afghanistan is emerging at the fore of world news. Labelled as the Forgotten War, the conflict has been overshadowed by Iraq, but it would now seem that the world’s collective attention is turning again to Afghanistan, and this time with a healthy dose of guilt. The prevailing worry is that this renewed scrutiny is long overdue, and that perhaps now it is too late to halt the accelerating slide into turmoil.

As it is, Craddock’s attack on Nato stating that “a better way” must be found to deal with the spiraling situation seems justified. The apparatus for dealing with the current conflict has so far proven to be woefully

inadequate. No less than seventy national operational restrictions are used to regulate Nato-led troops’ movements; achieving consensus for any action is an arduous and time consuming process. If there are deep differences of opinion between US and British forces on how to deal with, say, the opium trade, there is

tray’s police force inspires something other than trust in the law, something is going wrong.

But then, Afghanistan is not a country for monochrome answers: ambiguity reigns. Michael Yon in his web-blog consistently reports on the geniality and friendliness of the people he encounters – in one entry,

than the Taliban’s fallen regime. But then, as so many Taliban leaders have been killed and the policy is to hand the position over to the nearest relative, contradictory analysis suggests that the Taliban has become equivalent to a “tribal force”, and once you get clans in a movement then the primary link is blood, not ideology. What can be ascertained is that the results of differences of opinion are already being reaped in the field of the drugs trade. While some Taliban members are happy to smoke a joint, others only take alms or “zakaat” from the poppy-growers, while others refuse to touch either money or drugs. That such fundamental differences in Koranic exegesis exists within the Taliban is, some say, an indication of a fundamentally weak organisation.

But the fact remains that however much the Taliban is compromising on its Islamicist credentials and, as some suggest, becoming indistinguishable from other brigands, Nato is still weak. Administration is slow to the point of inadequacy and officials have admitted that a commander in the field submitting an urgent request for equipment can expect to wait an average of 80 days. America’s assessment of Afghanistan, according to its spooks, is that it is “in a downward spiral”. With Nato’s constituent countries “wavering” in their “will”, this is one fact which does not need to be proven. It is evident.

“However much the Taliban is compromising on its Islamicist credentials, Nato is still weak”

one thing they can certainly agree on – that Nato, at this point, just is not up to the task.

As the situation on the ground worsens, no one really knows what to do. Commanders of the 55,000-strong Nato force are demanding 12,000 more troops. With an Afghan police force of 80,000 (compared to 250,000 in Iraq) who are mostly regarded – rightly or wrongly – as bandits, the deployment of more Nato troops seems to be the only option for law enforcement. Corruption in the country’s standing police force indicates either that legal entities are not strong enough to prosecute and persecute criminal behaviour, or that nothing will get done if only legal channels are adhered to. Either way, when a coun-

“Afghans kindly warned me not to go shopping in the market” – but then how does one distinguish an Afghan from an Afghan? This is a country in which the enemy is hidden and the best advice on how to identify a Taliban member, according to one civilian security expert, is to see if they are wearing tennis shoes. The Taliban fights mostly a covert war, using “asymmetric” tactics such as suicide bombers, but recently there has also been a surge in direct combat.

Facts are impossible to ascertain, so varying analysis with no absolute answer is promulgated about the strength of the Taliban. Some say that the Taliban are experiencing a resurgence because conditions under the Nato allies have become worse



Maisie  
Anderson



## Viragos pressed

*Yesterday's No Pay Day proves the glass ceiling still exists*

“We basically campaign for gender equality,” my easy-going neighbour said to me as we sat at the kitchen table sipping tea last April. Lovely, I thought. How worthwhile. How wholesome. The loaded term ‘feminism’, alongside its chain of negative and frankly fear-inducing connotations had not, as yet, crept into my mind. I was still blissfully ignorant of two things. Firstly that my neighbour was in fact the Director of the Fawcett Society, the most prominent feminist organisation in the country, well known for its vociferous activism at grass roots level as well as in Westminster. I was also yet to discover that I would be spending the best part of two months over the summer working for her and her colleagues – in effect ‘faking-it’ as a Feminist.

I think the reason I didn't immediately assume I had stumbled into the world of hardcore feminism was, to be honest, because I didn't realise it still existed. I mean, yes, they did wang on about gender in Part I History and there is the Cambridge Women's Union. But seriously? It's all so last millennium, right? Wrong. After just a few days in the Fawcett Society offices in Clerkenwell (yes, Fawcett's so hip it resides alongside funky modelling agencies and advertising companies so trendy that lunch breaks in Pret were a particularly

self-conscious experience), I couldn't escape the immediacy of the issues they address. From startlingly low conviction rates for rape in certain areas of the UK to gender-based employment discrimination and ‘Sexism and the City’, these modern day feminists have it covered. And it's not only Harriet Harman and Shami Chakrabati that wear Fawcett's eye-catching ‘This is what a feminist looks like’ t-Shirt. Bill Bailey does too.



When Bill Bailey signed-up to wearing the aforementioned t-Shirt, however, I wonder whether he knew as little about feminism as I did. I thought that making sure I was able to put the chain back on my bike, jump start a car, and reinstall Microsoft Windows was a feminist statement. I was, as you might imagine, put to shame very early on in my time at Fawcett. On asking one of the young campaigners when she first became a Feminist, for example, she replied “I've always been one.” In fact her very first essay at primary school was on feminism. “F\*\*\* me that's scary,” was my first thought. “I need to get out!” soon followed. At that age, I was at an all-girls prep school learning (amongst other more normal subjects) art appreciation, poetry recitation, and ballet. I had a glimmer of hope when I remembered they also taught us to do a proper tie knot, until I realised that was just preparation for when we became 30-something Sloane-rangers and our husband required us to do his tie whilst he took a business call. Damn.

As my time with the feminists wore on, personal grudges began to spontaneously re-emerge and I caught a little bit of that much-maligned angry feminist bug. Why was it that as a trumpeter in the National Youth Orchestra it was always assumed I couldn't play as loudly as my male peers? And why am I statistically far less likely to get a first in my History finals than if I were a bloke? I was like Lindsay Lohan in *Mean Girls*, initially just pretending to be part of the group because I was

intrigued, only to be sucked in without even realising it was happening. And we all know what's become of Lindsay. I needed to be more careful.

As the weeks went by, I left this unpleasant period of personal bitterness and moved into a more mellow and socially-acceptable stage I like to call rubbish or reluctant feminism. This basically stemmed from the realisation that – bra-burning and man-hating put very far to the side – there are some facts that just can't be ignored. Extremely pertinent to Cambridge soon-to-be graduates, for example, is the gender pay gap. You may be shocked to read that despite the Equal Pay Act of 1970, women in the UK in full-time employment earn on average 17% per annum less than men. Ouch. That's the equivalent of women receiving their last pay slip on October 30, yesterday, and working unpaid for the rest of the year. Even those of you terrified by feminism must agree that it's an unacceptable situation. And it's not just applicable to the low-paid sector. Those of you hoping (or now perhaps praying) to get a job in the city will probably find on signing your first contract there's a clause forbidding discussion of earnings with colleagues. So women won't even know if they're losing out on dosh.

However you decided to mark ‘No Pay Day’ on the October 30 – whether by joining the Fawcett Society, writing to an MP, forgetting that it even existed, or in my case triumphantly putting my chain back on my bike in a show of solidarity with reluctant feminists all over the world, bear in mind those impassioned women in Clerkenwell who are doing their utmost to keep feminism alive.

## Spk yr brains

*Chatroom chinwag between  
Wifi Wendies and Broadband Brians*



### Week 4: Deripaska-gate

he is a freekin spy and should be tried for treason. why not just give ourcountry to russian billionaires? this is teh party thats trying to get into power , and their using russian money to do it! makes ya think.... and i always thought gordon brown was the figure head of emerging communitism!  
**mellowNdark, Burwash**  
Posted Tues 19:27:31

What a slimey toad he is! YUK  
**CharmingExpat, Chengdu**  
Posted Tues 20:14:25

I would agree with you but why insult toads? Toads are OK. Osborne though is an arrogant tosser. Peter Mandelson is the last one to point the finger the jumped up little shit. And do your bit for gay rights Mandy and get out of the closet you coward!  
**Rabbithole, Derbyshire**  
Posted Tues 20:18:45

Mandelson and Osborne both Illuminati puppets, when are we going to wake up about these lying, scheming hypocrites in league with Russian mafia gangsters?  
**Queen\_kong, Scunthorpe**  
Posted Tues 20:34:19

Osbourne went to a party. The alcohol flowed (Russian vodka?) Things were said. He got excited by what he heard and couldnt resist spilling the beans to the media. Mandelson was enraged but didn't reveal what Osbourne had said about his colleagues. Instead he got Nat Rothschild to punish him for being an impetuous loud mouth and breaking the super rich men's club rule number 1: what happens on the island didn't happen.  
**UKLooney, Penge**  
Posted Tues 22:57:08

Osbourne will have to buy a dinghy or a rowboat now, gutted.  
**Wiggledytoes, Yarmouth**  
Posted Tues 23:01:27

Oh mandy you came and you found me a turkey, on my vacation away from worky.  
**Hutchy, Royston**  
Posted Wed 12:46:44

Yet another example of snouts in the trough, freeloadng.  
**Bluebell\_cottager, Stratford**  
Posted Wed 18:05:32

And your point IS? Friendship is all about sharing.  
**mask\_of\_tomorrow, Monton**  
Posted Wed 19:12:50

Mandy Lifeboats!!!  
**Jesper Hogh, Copenhagen**  
Posted Thur 22:14:33

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REPORTS AND PREVIEWS

# Footballers progress on penalties

» Two Ferguson saves in the shoot-out spare Blues' blushes



Captain Rutt opened the scoring

Varsity Sport

On Wednesday, the Blues travelled the short distance to Bedford to play the first round of the newly formed BUCS Cup competition. Although their opposition are a couple of divisions below them in the current university league structure, they provided the Blues with a stern test and in truth should have won this game.

The Blues started the game brightly and within the first two minutes had taken the lead, albeit in a rather fortunate manner. Captain Jamie Rutt swung in a left-footed cross, which seemed to deceive the home goalkeeper and nestled into the bottom corner.

This should have settled the Blues, however the opposition began to impose themselves physically with several very late challenges. The game descended into a midfield battle on an increasingly bumpy pitch that prevented any

Cambridge	2
Bedfordshire 2nds	2

Scorers: Rutt, Hartley  
(Cambridge won 4-3 on penalties)

clear-cut chances. On 42 minutes, a very late tackle on Matt Amos resulted in a brawl and a premature end to the half.

After the break, the match continued in the same vein. The Bedfordshire team to their credit were pressing forward much more, but were met by some stern defending by the Blues rearguard. They were ably supported by the impressive Stu Ferguson, who produced a string of phenomenal saves, continuing his great start to the season.

Nevertheless, the Bedford team did eventually find a way through. With about 20 minutes to go, the Blues were caught on the counter-attack and were

punished by the Bedford number 9 who smashed the ball low past Ferguson.

With the game tied at 1-1 after 90 minutes, extra-time was played. The first period began badly for the Blues, when a long ball over the top was controlled by the Bedford number 9 and again he finished with aplomb to leave the Blues staring an early exit in the face. However, Cambridge battled on and were rewarded for their efforts with the final kick of extra-time. A free-kick was awarded on the halfway line and Ferguson launched the ball into the box. Michael Stark managed to get a flick on and in the scramble that followed, Paul Hartley stabbed the ball home from ten yards to take the tie to penalties.

In the shoot-out, two saves by Ferguson provided the platform for Little, Rutt, Baxter and Hartley to convert, sending the Blues into the next round

**Star Player:** Stu Ferguson – another hugely impressive display in goal.

## College Catch-up

### Match of the Week

#### Queens' 51 - 30 Hughes Hall

An exciting first Saturday of play in the college basketball saw an early victory for newly promoted Queens'/Christ's. In their first game since joining forces, Queens'/Christ's moved into an early lead thanks to an attacking style of play and some important interceptions. Hughes Hall responded with a flurry of second half three pointers, but were unable to reign in the offensive play of the Division One newcomers, resulting in a confident 51-30 victory for Queens'. It remains to be seen whether the merger between these two sides is enough to propel them to the title, but with a strong line-up featuring two Blues, a good season is in prospect. Next up they face Downing in what will be a serious test of their credentials.

### Player of the Week

#### Mark O'Shea

Scoring his first goals of the season, second year Mark O'Shea got an impressive hat-trick as he helped St Catharine's defeat Girton and maintain their 100% winning record. Hard work and determination paid off as a tireless O'Shea put three past his opponents. The goals mean he is now joint top scorer of Division One, along with Girton's Matthew Cook. To put his feat into perspective, O'Shea has individually scored more goals than the St John's and Fitzwilliam football teams combined this season.

O'Shea has played a central part in St Catz' impressive early form. Having narrowly edged out Fitzwilliam 2-1 in their first match of the season, their latest victory means Catz have maximum points from their two games. They sit second in the table, trailing leaders Downing on goal difference. Yet to many they remain favourites to take the title. If O'Shea can continue his fine form, it will be a brave man who bets against them.

### Ones to watch next week

#### Trinity Hall vs St John's

The destruction of Jesus College last week has truly set up St John's path to Division One victory. Trinity Hall are faced with the joyless task of attempting to slow the Red Boys' seemingly inevitable march to this season's title. While heavy defeat is highly likely for Trinity Hall, there remains the tantalising possibility of a major upset. Go to Trinity Hall grounds at 2.30pm on Tuesday November 4 and see whether David or Goliath wins the day.

#### St Catharine's vs Jesus

Equal on points at the top of college football's Division One, this match makes for intriguing viewing. Jesus upset reigning champions Trinity in the opening game of the season, while St Catz have been this year's surprising success story. Both have picked up maximum points thus far. Both are strong title contenders. Yet only one team can retain their perfect record after this clash.

# Loughborough outclassed by Blues

» Bray hat-trick maintains Rugby League 100% record

Varsity Sport

Before Wednesday, The Rugby League Blues had gone ten years without a victory against Loughborough, but a superb display of power and aggression put pay to that statistic at Trinity Old Fields.

The Blues started strongly, with Rob Cox going over for an early try. Loughborough were clearly on the back foot and several incisive runs produced first half tries for hooker George Sykes and two for captain Matt Bray. Some well-executed kicks and clinical tackling ensured Lough-

Cambridge	32
Loughborough	0

borough would find no way through at the other end.

Sixteen points up at the interval, the Blues took their strong form into the second period with the Cambridge forwards ploughing into an increasingly disheartened Loughborough defence for Matt Bray to finish again and complete his hat-trick. George Sykes, an ever present threat, soon followed Bray onto the score sheet for a second

time, going over from short range. Carrying several heavy knocks, and unable to deal with the raw pace of the Blues' back three, Loughborough never really looked like getting on the scoreboard. Coach John Evans used the latter stages of the game to introduce a number of debutants. There were no more scores from that point but the brace of substitutions really did highlight the strength in depth Evans has at his disposal. With the score at 32-0 the referee called time on an impressive display from the Blues who are still unbeaten this season.

**Star Player:** Matt Bray – three tries and a constant threat from deep.



SEAN JONES

Loughborough could not handle Cambridge's running from deep



Captain Dave Saunders

# Hockey Blues in spirited fightback

» Late brace from Parks clinches victory

Charlie Pearson  
Sport Reporter

The Blues pulled off a classy comeback to beat Peterborough 5-4 in a thrilling encounter at Wilberforce Road on Saturday.

Peterborough started the game in fine fashion, taking advantage of time and space in the D to bully in two quick goals in the first ten minutes. Steadying the ship, it was not long before the Blues responded with a well executed short corner flicked home by defender Dave Madden to get Cambridge back in contention. Despite the home side beginning to dominate possession, Peterborough's trio of man-mountains appeared immovable at the back while the Cambridge defence continued to creak under attacking pressure. An inept, scything stick tackle in front of goal from fresher Rupert Allison produced a penalty flick that was sharply converted to take the visiting side's lead back to two goals.

Cambridge	5
Peterborough 2nds	4

Scorers: Madden, Belper, Bell, Parks (2)

Cambridge went into the break three one down but came out of it with genuine spark and obvious intent. Within minutes the deficit was reduced as fresher Mark Belper's shot was roofed emphatically to complete a formidable attacking move. A terrific piece of flair in midfield from first-year Nick Parks began Cambridge's most impressive attack five minutes later, allowing Dave Bell to slot the equalizer after some impressive stick work on the edge of the D.

The vision of Bell, who played the dreamy Cesc Fabregas role in the centre of midfield with some distinction, picked out Nick Parks with an immaculate long ball. Parks' strong reverse stick finish put Cambridge into the lead for the first time just ten minutes into the

half.

Tighter work in defense from the centre-back pairing of Dave Saunders and Jez Hansell saw off the Peterborough counter-offensive while at the other end left-forward Owen Kemp failed to put the match beyond Cambridge's opponents by agonizingly missing a gaping open goal.

A resurgent Peterborough looked menacing as the clock ticked down. A surprise aerial ball was hustled in to equalize just five minutes before the end, only to be mysteriously disallowed for high sticks, then re-allowed after a lengthy umpiring conference.

On the verge of bitter disappointment, a magnificent solo effort from Nick Parks saved the day when his powerful finish restored the lead with only moments to spare. It completed a spirited comeback and a tremendous afternoon's hockey, with Cambridge securing a deserved victory.

**Star Player:** Nick Parks – impressive flair play and physical presence

Sport Feature: Simon Barnes Interview

RICHARD CANNON



# Simon Says

ILLUMINATING REVOLUTIONARY OR PRETENTIOUS EGOTIST? BRITAIN'S SPORTS COLUMNIST OF THE YEAR SIMON BARNES SPLITS OPINION. HE CHATS CRITICS, COMPETITIVENESS AND THIRD CLASS DEGREES WITH BEN RILEY-SMITH.

"Sport tells us how we are." This is the heart of Simon Barnes' sporting outlook. It's clear within moments of meeting *The Times'* Chief Sportswriter that he holds a unique view of the sporting world. He talks of sportsmen as "super human creatures", cricketers as "mythical beings performing their mysterious stuff", and FA Cup finals as "a thing of wonder and beauty". Advocates of Barnes would say this is his finest quality; the ability to make sport relevant to a wide audience by tying developments on the pitch to the broader concepts of beauty and glory off it. But can you really compare George Best with Vincent Van Gogh, or a World Cup qualifier to the Battle of Dunkirk? Is this not simply over-intellectualising a meaningless athletic pastime?

"Sport is an essentially trivial pursuit," Barnes freely admits. "But I don't think the search for excellence

Whether legitimate or not, this stigma of pretentiousness has meant that many sports editors simply won't go near Simon Barnes.

Perhaps one reason why Barnes has such an unusual writing style is that, unlike most of his colleagues, he never was an avid sports fan. With parents whose interest in sport was limited – his Dad's only athletic endeavour was "playing Rugby of the kind where you'd go have three pints in the pub and then throw up over the touchline", it was writing which caught the young Simon's attention. This passion for words eventually led him to Bristol University, where Barnes promptly starting reading every book he could get his hands on other than those on the syllabus. The result was a third class degree but a first class literary knowledge that Barnes would come to constantly incorporate into his prose.

**"IF YOU'RE WRITING ABOUT POLITICS OR BUSINESS THEN YOU'RE WRITING ABOUT PEOPLE WHO ARE COVERING UP THE WHOLE TIME. AN ATHLETE IN COMPETITION IS STARK NAKED IN FRONT OF YOU"**

can ever be entirely trivial." The example he gives is that of Yelena Isinbayeva, the Russian pole-vaulter who propelled herself an astonishing 5.05 metres into the air to break the World Record and claim gold in Beijing. For Barnes, Isinbayeva's feat reminded him of the 1970s feminist movement which had been so prominent during his adolescent years. "Yes, jumping over a stick is trivial, but the freedom of women and the changing of society aren't. And one is a symbol of the other... That is something worth watching, worth experiencing and maybe worth writing about."

In a world where hard facts and objectivity remain the watchwords of sports journalism, it is unsurprising that Barnes's intellectual prose have met hostility in some quarters. *Private Eye* have led the barrage of abuse, attacking Barnes' "posturing narcissism" and the fact that "he isn't joking or mocking his own vanity". He scoffs at such misguided criticism. "Apparently stupid people like sport," Barnes responds, "and therefore an intelligent person who likes sport can't possibly be intelligent... Occasionally I've come up with some high floating notion and somebody will say 'what if Private Eye got hold of it?' I say 'well, fuck them. Let them get hold of it. I'm setting the bloody agenda here not these guys.'" Yet for all his valiant resolve, Barnes is well aware of the impact such personal attacks have had on his reputation. "It's cost me a great deal in the industry, and probably a great deal of money."

## The Barnstormer

- 1957 Barnes is born
- 1988 Joins *The Times*
- 2002 Becomes the paper's Chief Sports Writer
- 2004 Writes *How To Be A Bad Bird watcher*
- 2006 Writes *The Meaning of Sport*
- 2007 Becomes Sports Columnist of the Year for the second time
- 2008 Writes *How To Be Wild*

What was it that caught his interest? "Sport gives you a wonderful narrative," he replies. "If you're writing about politics or business then you're writing about people who are covering up the whole time. An athlete in competition is stark naked in front of you and you cannot help but be involved. They create the stories for you. They are the heroes of their own mythologies."

By applying his literary academic background to sport, Barnes has risen to the top and, despite dissent from some corners, has become an overwhelmingly popular writer. Twice crowned Sports Columnist of the Year, a title he currently holds, Barnes has mixed feelings about such accolades. "It's not like winning a gold medal, like being Usain Bolt and being faster than everybody else. You win it because everybody on the committee happened to think you were alright that year. Of course it's really great but if you think it actually means anything you're deluding yourself. I don't hang them on my wall."

Such modesty is admirable, but don't let it fool you. Simon Barnes really is a remarkable writer. His ability to interweave life's larger concepts into sport has gripped readers across the nation. At least, by employing this method, Barnes has successfully injected some much needed abstract thought into an area of journalism so monotonously dependent on cliché. At most, Barnes' unique prose has revolutionised the way we look at sport. Either way, just as "sport tells us how we are", we should count ourselves lucky that we have Simon Barnes to tell us 'how sport is'.

## Simon's Sporting Moments

In Barnes' long journalism career there are a handful of moments that have embodied the mythical beauty and unique excellence which underpin his love of sport. Steve Redgrave winning his fifth gold medal at Sydney is one. Another is Ben Johnson's world record-breaking 100 metres gold in 1988. But the moment that really stands out for Barnes is Pete Sampras' destruction of Andre Agassi in the 1999 Wimbledon Final. On the back of victory at the French Open, "Agassi was playing the best ever," Barnes recalls. "Tennis of absolute perfection. Sampras played him and said 'well, this guy's playing perfect tennis, there's only one thing I can do – go a level beyond perfection, not a problem.' He won in straight sets and everybody said 'what a dull final.' That was the most amazing detonation of individual excellence I have ever seen in my life. It was wonderful sport."



**Keith Akushie**

*Sport Comment*

## The art of college rugby emails

**On October 7 2008, 12:37,  
Joe Dalton wrote:**

Welcome to the St. Hall's College Rugby mailing list for 2008/9 - or as we like to think of it 'The Lad List', 'Man Mail', or 'The Bloke Blog'.

First off I'd like to extend a warm welcome to all the freshers who signed up and warn you all that initiation into the club is next Wednesday - if you're interested please bring a dozen toothpicks, some vodka and bag of broken glass - oh yeah, and say sorry to your liver in advance! (For non-drinkers we'll be having a movie night in the JCR which you are all welcome to go to)

Secondly I'd like to inform everybody that after a summer travelling Europe, Pickett is still a bloody lad - and apparently he had a good time in Amsterdam!

**On October 9 2008, 14:11,  
Joe Dalton wrote:**

Afternoon boys, this is just a quick message clarifying some important issues that have come up. I've had a few emails from the freshers asking what exactly the difference is between 'good banter' and 'good chat', so I thought I'd

offer a little help:

Good banter would be classified as anything similar to the stuff Pickett was coming out with on our swap with the Newnham Nipples, whilst 'good chat' is probably along the lines of what that fresher was saying before he started vomiting!

Hope that helps!

*Initiation into the club is next Wednesday - if you're interested please bring a dozen toothpicks, some vodka and a bag of broken glass - oh yeah, and say sorry to your liver in advance!*

Oh yeah and Pickett, next time you go to a toga party make sure you wash your sheets first, nobody needs to see the evidence of your conquests ;-)

**On October 12 2008, 16:32,  
Joe Dalton wrote:**

Evening Lads,  
The turn out last tonight was absolutely brilliant - this was possibly the best rugby club social in a

couple of years. I'd like to congratulate everybody for their good chat (glad the last email helped). I think we're in line for our most successful season yet - all of you freshers are all really keen and we've been really looking good in training, plus over the summer I talked to a South Asian medicine man and got him to cast an ancient magic

charm over our home ground - fingers crossed we can turn that place into a real fortress.

I thought I should just remind everybody that Tuesday's training session is being moved to 4 O'CLOCK. I know this isn't the usual time but I think we all need a little extra time to recover from last night - especially Pickett, who broke the club record yesterday by buying 50 VKs (10 of each flavour!)

**On October 15 2008, 11:14,  
Joe Dalton wrote:**

Morning gents, as you all know we're getting our stash made up over the next week. We've also decided to get a shirt commemorating the 2009 tour and we're not quite sure what to put on the back: right now it's a dead heat between, "There's too much blood in my alcohol system" and, "Whatever goes on tour, goes on Facebook" - any preferences would be appreciated.

Also we need to know what names you're going to put on them, so far I've got Lawrence "Me So Sorry" Cochran, Dave "Squeeze It" Anderson, Matt "Wolfman" Myles and Ed "Lad Juice" Castell - try and get yours in to me by the end of the week.

Finally, word has it Pickett didn't make it home from the freshers' initiation - according to local press reports he was last seen getting into a cab with two girls from Fitz, and apparently they were very fit(z)!

PS - Diwali is on the 28th of October this year and as such I'm throwing a little celebration in my room, any takers please send me a quick email and I'll put you on the guest list :)

## Ptaszynski's Trials



*Week 4: Fencing*

*Sporting layman Jamie Ptaszynski trains with a different Blues team each week*

Walking across Christ's Pieces last weekend I was approached by one of those shabby, dirty-looking youths who hang around drinking camomile tea (or something equally potent) on the grass. I quickened my step but he blocked my path and, drawing a dagger, pronounced he was going to 'do me'. "Gentle smackhead", said I, "put thy rapier up". But still he was keen to duel. Finally I explained: "Alas, sir, I cannot fence". Embarrassed and afraid I rapidly retreated for the safety of Subway. Wanting to avoid such shameful terror in the future, I decided to become a Blues fencer for a day.

Lightness of leg is an absolute necessity in the world of the modern swordsman. It's also important to have strong muscles in the toes, to aid one's spring. A thinner torso might make it harder for your opponent to score hits, particularly in the epee and foil classes. I'm not exactly the ideal shape, then: my toes are weak, my thighs could easily belong to one of those enormous Catalan hogs and it would be tough to find a trunk broad enough to fit my trunk.

Thankfully, Alex, one of the stars of the Cambridge University Fencing Club, spent his summer slashing at foreign opponents in a big tournament somewhere in China. Captain Anthony was also there as his sparring partner, while today's session coach, Dave, apparently refereed some of it. In fact, it's regularly the most successful sports club in the university. If I'm ever going to be able to defend myself at night in the parks of Cambridge, these are surely the guys to teach me.

We started with some basic footwork drills. Fencing is quite two-dimensional when it comes to moving your feet: lots of forwards and backwards but very little side to side. Practising this without a sword is excruciatingly dull and surprisingly hard work. All in a line, we're directed, like tentative aeroplanes taxiing towards a terminal, by Dave's altering hand signals. It's a bit like learning to walk again, so it should be pretty easy. The fencing club, however, has about one hundred and fifty active members, so the ladies and gentlemen gathered in this select squad must have achieved remarkable things in the art of shuffling up and down in a straight line. I am not so capable.

Eventually I am allowed to have a brief stab at the real thing with one of the girls. Wearing all the kit you look and feel about as threatening as a beekeeper. The hand movements required are startlingly quick and, more importantly, quite minute. I learn a couple of parries before she marks a hit - a very palpable hit - to my upper arm. Fencing, I fear is too fine an art for me. I'll continue my search for an effective defensive technique later, but for now I'll just have to make sure I'm in bed well before dark.

## Blues undone by Sarries

» *Injury-ravaged side suffer another heavy loss*

**Aaron Sonenfeld**  
*Sport Reporter*

Winter had certainly come early on Wednesday evening as the Rugby Blues suffered another heavy defeat to strong opposition. An injury crisis has hit the Blues changing room, forcing them into many last minute changes to the starting fifteen, with just half of those on the team sheet actually making it onto the field.

Saracens were quick out of the blocks with a try in the opening minutes, reminding us ominously of the previous week's defeat to the Ospreys. The Saracens team was a mixture of youth and experience with the side featuring a capped England international, and their organisation was beginning to show as a scrambling Cambridge defence was unable to prevent a second try. However, the Blues regrouped and started developing patterns of play, with Sandy Reid, playing his first game at fly-half, demonstrating why he has been trusted with such a pivotal role, passing well in damp conditions. Excellent rucking from Cambridge also saw them turn over a lot of ball, using the new Experimental Law Variations to

<b>Cambridge</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Saracens</b>	<b>59</b>

their advantage.

However a solid Saracens defence continued to deny the Blues the points they were looking for. Midway into the first half Cambridge showed a glimpse of their potential with a pitch-length run from full back Jimmy Richards who was caught just short of the line. But it was a sign of better things to come, and where Cambridge had struggled to convert possession into points last week, they conjured a try via an excellent kick chase from winger James Greenwood. With the scoreboard beginning to represent the evenness of the game, the Blues began to click. A game in which possession was continuously changing hands swung again to give Saracens the upper hand, with several Cambridge missed tackles allowing the Sarries flanker to score underneath the posts. The pressure heightened and Saracens had time to score again before half-time; seventeen-year-old fly-half Owen Farrell skipping through to make the half



Several missed tackles proved the difference between the sides

time score 24-8 in the Londoners' favour.

After the break the game became a little scrappy, with the conditions inducing several unforced errors, and the pace of the match slowed. Farrell showed maturity beyond his years, advancing the Saracens points tally with another try; however, the unpredictable nature of the game told again as Cambridge were able to bounce back and score a superb try in the corner,

scored by Richards, but orchestrated by excellent running from Sandy Reid. However, with both teams beginning to tire, Saracens were able to run in a couple more tries, and the final 59-15 scoreboard started to flatter the visitors. However, the Blues can definitely take heart from some encouraging attacking play in both halves.

**Star player** - Sandy Reid: Showed his versatility playing out of position with good hands in difficult conditions.

## The Week Ahead

### University

#### Rugby

The Blues return from their trip to Spain to face Crawshays Welsh XV. They will have to cope without fly-half Ross Broadfoot whose ankle injury will rule him out of the Varsity fixture in December.

*Grange Road, Wednesday November 5, KO 19:15*

### University

#### Hockey

Rosie Evans will be looking to get the Hockey Girls' season on track with a victory over Exeter. They lost their opening three games, including an opening day defeat to Oxford.

*Wilberforce Road, Wednesday November 5, KO 14:00*

### University

#### Football

The footballers contest their first home fixture in almost a month having drawn their only BUCS league game so far away to Northampton. They'll be looking to start their home campaign with a win

*Fenners, Wednesday November 5, KO TBC*

### National

#### Formula One

The final race of the season from São Paulo in Brazil. Brit Lewis Hamilton needs a top-five finish to win the title with Felipe Massa his lone rival to the crown, driving on his home soil.

*Watch it at The Avery, Sunday, November 2 from 16:00*

# Sport



Simon Barnes

»p34

Award-winning writer interviewed

## Jesus crucified

» No salvation for Jesus as John's convert chances in scrappy communion

Andy Ryan  
Sports Reporter

In a game seen by many as the title-decider, John's eased to a convincing victory over Jesus. The large crowds who braved the cold were not treated to a showcase of attractive rugby and neither did they get the thrills of a close contest.

Jesus opened well and got the first points on the board from a penalty kick by Tambara. John's, however, responded rapidly and Chun-Lin's try put them ahead.

An extremely cagey phase then fol-

**JOHN'S FANS BEGAN TO CHANT "JESUS CAN'T PLAY RUGBY COZ HE'S ONLY GOT TWELVE MATES"**

lowed, with neither side showing much penetration. John's, however, were enjoying the lions' share of the possession and it was no surprise that they made the breakthrough. The flowing passing move which led to Johnstone's try was perhaps the game's highlight.

The next period of play was rugby as siege warfare. A useful high kick left Jesus under heavy pressure on their own line. Jesus staged an impressive rearguard action, resisting a seemingly endless series of John's attempts to get the ball over. Ultimately, something had to give and Wilson scored. The successful conversion put John's 21-3 up at the break.

St John's	31
Jesus	3

Jesus' half-time talk focused on the fact that a quick score would get them back into the game. Unfortunately, these good intentions came to nothing, as John's scored within minutes of the restart, with Cheetham completing a simple move.

This try changed the nature of the contest. John's now looked like they could have as many points as they wanted, while Jesus had the air of a beaten side. John's were turning the ball over with ruthless efficiency, denying Jesus any sustained period of possession.

Soon another try-line battle followed and it ended with Cheetham driving over for his second. While there was no lack of commitment, Jesus seemed to lack the physical capacity to contain the driving of the John's pack.

With the contest over, the game faded. Jesus had something of a mini-renaissance, enjoying long periods of possession in the John's half but they were unable to gain a consolation try.

With the rugby poor and heavy rain starting to fall, the crowds put in an admirable performance. John's fans began to celebrate their imminent win with a series of novelty chants: "Jesus can't play rugby coz he's got nails in his hands", "Jesus can't play rugby coz he's only got twelve mates" and so on.

This game did not live up to its 'clash of the titans' billing but that will be of little concern for John's, who secured a crucial victory which could well go on to define their season.

*Star Player - Alex Cheetham. Quick hands and decisive in the moment.*



Jesus attempt a rare attacking move

### Captain's Corner

Jamie Douglas  
Real Tennis



For those in search of a hobby, whether disillusioned with the Cambridge *mode de vie* or simply looking for something a bit different, look no further than The Tennis Court, Burrell's Walk. Real Tennis captain Jamie Douglas gives us a taste of what we're missing out on. "Firstly, the server might serve a 'railroad' along a 'penthouse' to the receiver, who would return, forcing the ball into the 'dedans' to win the point immediately, or 'cut' the ball into a corner to win a 'chase' and regain the service end."

The jargon is intriguing and the game itself does not disappoint either: its asymmetric courts feature enormous sloping roofs and holes in the back walls. The captain highlights the sport's idiosyncrasies as a key factor in the 'tennis' experience: "The quirkiness really does add to the enjoyment. Every Real Tennis court is slightly different so they all pose different challenges, which makes the game a lot of fun."

Not only do Cambridge real tennis players benefit from having some of the best facilities in the country, but they can also boast a genuinely international pedigree. "This year we have two women in the world top ten and two men in the world top twenty." Douglas also reveals that the current (ten-time consecutive) world champion is a member of the club. It gets more impressive still. "The men's team has won Varsity for the last decade", he casually offers.

In spite of the club's apparent invincibility, Douglas insists, "We're always looking to attract more members". So you can go and try a truly unique sport with the best of the best and they'll welcome you with open arms. There's no reason not to.



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